Academic Standards Committee

Minutes
Wednesday, October 22, 2008
4 p.m. 1320 Ullsvik Hall

Attending: Elizabeth Frieders, Philip Sealy, Irfan Ul-Haq, Mary Rose Williams, David Krugler, Roxane Gunser, Kevin Haertzen, David VanBuren

Absent: Angela Udelhofen, Ray Spoto, Nancy Turner, Shane Drefcinski

Guest: Mark Mailloux

Meeting called to order: 4:03 p.m.

Minutes: Sealy made a friendly amendment; minutes approved as amended.

Report from Mark Mailloux: He looked over our questions and determined that all were answerable. One issue he raised, however, is that there is a confound for English/Math placement test scores. If the student didn’t take the test, it is recorded as zero in People Soft. If a student takes it and scores a zero, it also is recorded as a zero. So, the question is, did the student score zero or simply miss the test? A database is being created that will accommodate this problem, but it is a back burner project. For now, we have a confound for which we cannot account. Otherwise, Mark can address other questions. John Krogman is the institutional research gatekeeper. He decides Mark’s priorities. Mark will speak with John about our information request; he will let us know when he gets the green light from John to work on the information we need.

S: Drive: ACS has a work group on the S drive to which all members should have access. Irfan will send Mike Sherer a note to ask him to update the ACS S drive work group to include all committee members’ names as well as Mark Mailloux. Mark will then be able to post the information we requested on the S: Drive for us to view.

Math Review: We will review Math on November 12.

Grade Inflation: Irfan asked how we want to address it? A general discussion ensued. Hear-say information about Monday, Oct. 6 meeting on changing grades, which was open to the public, was provided: only a handful of people attended and an attendee believed the process was moving too fast. Sealy agreed that they’re pushing this too fast. He’d like to see a straight percentage. Van Buren expressed concern for too much quantification. Krugler suggested that the issue of grade inflation may not be worth pursuing until we see how this vote shakes out. Others thought this vote shouldn’t stop us. Frieders said there’s been a lot of talk about variations between departments and asked if we want to pursue the facts and report to the Faculty Senate.
It was pointed out that Faculty Senate didn’t define grade inflation, so we could define it, pronounce it exists then make a recommendation.
It was suggested that if we were to find, hypothetically, that one department is giving high grades, it might have wide ranging implications beyond the university. The question remains, how we’re going to address grade inflation. The group was charged with finding evidence to the effect that, in general in academe, grade inflation does exist. So, for the November 26 meeting we should come with the research we’ve done on grade inflation.

Meeting adjourned 4:45 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Mary Rose Williams