

Idaho State University
Council for Teaching and Learning
Minutes

Tuesday, October 14, 2008
4:00 PM
Faculty Senate Conference Room REND 301

In Attendance: Eley, Enos, Diedrich, Groome (Chair), Ford, Knudson, Leung, Neill, Reynolds
(Vice-Chair), Rudd, Smith, Wong
Excused: Reis, Rhoads
Absent: Hill
Non-voting: Wallace (Recording Secretary), Wasden (Student Assistant)

1. Minutes from September 9, 2008

Discussion about whether Larry Ford is considered a voting member or *ex-officio*. Dr. Groome noted that based upon his bylaws from 2005 all members of the council are voting members; therefore, it was determined that Larry would be considered a voting member.

Motion made to approve the minutes by Larry Ford. Second given. Discussion included teasing discussion regarding inconsistency in capitalization between faculty and administrative reps.
Minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Continued Business

a. Minimum Classroom Standards and Survey report and recommendations – Priscilla Reis
Reis could not attend today's meeting because of illness. This item was **deferred** until the next meeting.

3. New Business – first topic to work on this year is Advising.

a. Areas for Focus for Advising. Advising was the clear choice for priority scores and ranking within the topics being considered. Therefore Advising will be the first charge taken on by the council. Groome opened floor for discussion.

Larry Ford informed the Council of the new program being implemented this month by Academic Affairs entitled "Be Advised." ASISU has endorsed the campaign and it is being widely advertised throughout the campus and through targeted e-mailings to encourage students to access advising resources prior to the opening spring registration.

Discussion questions that were tossed out included: What are the natural/artificial impediments that impede faculty advising? What can we do to correct those things to make the process more seamless? How do we get faculty to engage in advising when they don't see a direct benefit? How can we encourage collaboration between departments and colleges? How can advising needs of students be better identified? What happens to students who apply to programs and do not get accepted; how can they be better targeted?

Larry Ford noted that one of the main barriers experienced now is the nature of the student body and the fact that they have families and other things that pull them off campus as soon as their classes are finished which limits the amount of contact that they may have with their faculty members.

Larry Ford also noted that advising is not mentioned in the revised faculty work-load policies that are circulating and therefore feels that it will be hard to see any tied benefit to advising.

Two possible barriers noted – coordination between departments and colleges and the career center as well as non-traditional students and access to those students. Also, access to information can also prove to be a barrier to students, hopefully the new computer system will help alleviate this particular barrier.

Larry Ford also noted that College of Technology does an excellent job of getting students access to advising. However, it is a much different situation at College of Technology than it is on the remainder of the campus based upon the regimented curriculum offered. It is much easier to control advising and retention if you can maintain control of their progress.

Mark Neill also shared that one difficulty experienced by the Department of Education is the fact that students are not always attending solely on the ISU campus. They have, he noted, students in Wyoming and other states which often have computer systems that do not directly talk to the systems at ISU, etc. which results in a lot of access barriers for students and faculty. He noted this may be one area the council wants to examine in this effort.

There is some movement within the administration to gather advising protocols from all departments which may impact this investigation. This may resolve “declared” students but leaves undeclared and entering students as a high need and perhaps a high risk for attrition. Larry Ford noted that we lose about half of first year students each year to attrition. Other grade levels are not as drastic, but first year students provide the big drop off. Are they under prepared? Are they “I don’t know what I want to do” students? Are they leaving for missions? Other?

Need to have students that are better prepared so we can have a smaller remedial load to carry. Question posed regarding how good is the advising the students are getting in high school before coming to ISU, especially in light of early college opportunities. How consistent is what the students are being told? What do they need to know to better prepare them for the college experience and interaction with faculty and peers at the college level?

Academic Standards Council is currently looking at admissions requirements and resident credit/work experience exams. We want to be certain that this council looks at things it can control and items that are within our purview. This council has no ability to control high school or counselors, but we can influence how our freshmen faculty teach at ISU.

What can we do at that point in teaching freshmen level classes to specifically retain more students in any major for first and second year? What are positive and negative experiences that faculty are experiencing? Brings council back to the question of what aspects of advising can we have an impact on? What are the issues we can address? What is the mechanism we will use? Students who are failing or leaving are generally the least likely to seek advising. What about having high risk advisors who will work with students who are failing or have other additional issues (i.e. English as a second language)?

Big differences between colleges and departments with regard to how advising is done. Also, big differences between colleges and departments with the types of challenges relating to the advising that are experienced.

Faculty are responsible for advising majors but it's before the students declare that major where the biggest window for helping their success occurs. It may be useful to find a way to get faculty involved in Advising Center and develop ways that faculty may become invested with students before they begin attending, like smaller campus models.

Should we be asking JoAnn Hertz about her experiences? Should we be asking faculty whether or not they think access to faculty impacts student attrition?

Jim Groom noted that based upon discussion he is hearing two things:

- 1) Advising is about laying out a sequence of curricula for students to be successful in obtaining a degree
- 2) Reduce dropout rate, increase retention

Need to build a bridge between students and faculty. Students that are personally connected to faculty member will increase their likelihood of success.

Faculty time investment in student advising must count and be rewarded for within the culture of the ISU.

Plan is ultimately to put Advising next to registration, financial aid, scholarship, trio offices, etc.

Larry Ford will invite JoAnn Hertz to next meeting and/or someone from registration to answer ERP related questions.

For the next meeting members will **bring concrete faculty concerns** to discuss.

John Eley wants everyone to bring **written definition of "advising"** so a working definition for the council can be formulated.

4. Adjournment: 5:00 p.m.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 11, 2008 at 4:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Salazar
Volunteer Transcriber
Health and Nutrition Sciences

Approved by Council for Teaching and Learning: December 9, 2008

Accepted by Faculty Senate: December 15, 2008