

INSTRUCTION COUNCIL
MINUTES
April 13, 2012
204 WH

Present: Celeste Campbell, Steve Edwards, Chris Ormsbee, Shiretta Ownbey, Jeremy Penn, David Porter, Chris Ross, Jean Van Delinder, Missy Wikle, James Knecht, Lynn Brown, Amy Martindale, and Pamela Fry.

1. **GradesFirst Update – James Knecht**

James noted that he is working with the company on the final stages of the purchase of the GradesFirst program. Human Sciences, Engineering and Academic Services for Student Athletes will pilot the program. Areas will request and complete an access form and the login to the program will be the individual's Okey accounts. The name of the program will change to reflect OSU's branding name of "**STAR**" (**Student Tutoring, Advising, and Retention**); star.okstate.edu. The plan is to begin the process this month. Members asked if they could have access to the demo and James replied yes and added that Information Technology (IT) will schedule a date for training and demos will be available this Summer. Business asked if they could have access by Fall. James assured members that there is a full team assembled, including individuals from Information Technology (IT) and the Institute of Teaching and Learning Excellence (ITLE), to assist in the training process. Once piloted, there will be a better idea of the time commitment needed for future training and implementation. James will need a contact identified for each unit and a current list of advisors. It was noted that faculty advisors seem to be enthusiastic about the process.

2. **Curricular Requests**

College of Education

RECREATION MANAGEMENT AND THERAPEUTIC RECREATION, BS (180)
Program Modification: Option Name Change

Option Name Change from Leisure Service Management to: Recreation Management
The College of Education at Oklahoma State University requests the option name change to reflect changes in the undergraduate course prefixes and to reflect practice in degree professional areas.

Members Approved.

3. **Academic Alert Task Force Report – Celeste Campbell**

The Academic Alert System was developed as a communication tool to facilitate undergraduate retention and success. Instructors use the system to voluntarily report concerns about the attendance and academic performance of the students in their classes. The resource is available during the first 12 weeks of the semester and uses the same online Faculty/Advisor Self Service (SIS) that is used to report grades. The alert generates an email message to the student and provides information to the student's advisor. Students are asked to contact their instructors to discuss ways to improve and to contact their academic advisors to obtain help with developing a plan for success. Academic advisors are expected to initiate contact with students identified by the alert to provide advising assistance and appropriate referrals to tutoring services, career counseling, personal counseling, the Learning and Student Success Opportunity Center (LASSO), and other campus resources. Dr. Campbell noted that she and Drs. Fry, Martindale, and Harris met about the Academic Alert process which is still in use this semester. In order to assess the process both Advisor and Instructor Surveys have been conducted. There were over 3,300 reports made by instructors and over 2,500 by advisors. The Instructor Survey revealed that for the most part instructors were satisfied with the process but expressed some concern about the follow up to students by the advisors. Dr. Martindale noted that the results of the Advisor Survey revealed that advisors were also satisfied with the process and were able to see moderate to significant improvement in some students. Advisors did express the need for more student accountability, burden of time to respond to alerts, students' lack of response to advisor contacts, desired improvement for the ease of system use, and more accurate student contact information. Members asked how many students withdrew from the class after receiving the alert and Dr. Campbell replied that 70% dropped the course and 30% did not and received Fs. It was anticipated that interesting responses will be received from the students when the Student Surveys are conducted.

4. **PreFinals Week Policy for Online Courses – Pamela Fry**

Note: the following concerns were raised by a faculty member. Dr. Fry suggested that Instruction Council discuss the issues.

Current Policy

1.01 Final examinations are scheduled at the end of each semester and are preceded by prefinals week which shall begin seven (7) days prior to the first day of finals.

1.02 During prefinals week, all normal class activities will continue; however, no assignment, test, or examination accounting for more than 5% of the course grade may be given; and no activity or field trip may be scheduled that conflicts with another class. This excludes make-up and laboratory examinations, out-of-class assignments (or projects) made prior to prefinals week, and independent study courses.

1.03 During prefinals week no student or campus organization may hold meetings, banquets, receptions, or may sponsor or participate in any activity, program, or related function which requires student participation.

Procedure

2.01 Any deviation from the above policy must have prior approval of the Department Head, the Dean of the College and the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research.

Concerns

1. First is the move to more "Ongoing assessment" throughout the semester.

"If all course offerings were ideal and had equal weekly assessments, which would amount to 6.67% grade points each of the 15 weeks, which would violate the current policy of no more than 5% during prefinals week. Some courses are assessed weekly (x15) through students actively contributing to discussions regarding the weekly content presented and their analysis and conclusions relative to the course material."

2. Second is the requirement for "Final Examination"

"This is a concern when one has a weekly assessment as in an online course paradigm, and a substantive, final examination may not be the appropriate assessment instrument for the course."

Dr. Weiser noted that some business courses do not fall within the regular course pre-finals/finals timelines and the statement on the Provost letter seems to be conflicting. Celeste will check. Members also noted that all policies in regards to online offerings might need to be revisited.

5. **Faculty Council Recommendation: OSU Attendance Policy – Pamela Fry**

Members approved the recommendation pending a modification to remove the first two sentences in 1.09.

6. **Faculty Council Recommendation: Veterinary Medical Research Scholars – Pamela Fry**

Dr. Ross noted that the Faculty Council's recommendation for a Veterinary Medical Research Scholars designation was triggered by the Undergraduate Research Scholar designation proposal and Dr. Ross took that proposal and tweaked the document to align with Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Graalman's office will coordinate this effort.

Members Approved.

7. **Student Survey of Instruction Results Fall 2011 – Jeremy Penn**

Dr. Penn noted that in the Student Survey of Instruction materials are the results from Fall 2011. Now the scores are kept in a database so that the reports can be run. Dr. Penn asked members if they wanted to keep the same categories and if different categories are needed to let him know. It was noted that online courses evaluations are not getting responses from the students and colleges don't know what type of document is sent to the students. Tina Meier and Konrad Brandemuhl coordinate the process.

8. **Other**

The General Education Advisory Council (GEAC) asked that a three week deadline prior to each meeting be imposed for general education designation requests. The Council also stressed that this deadline should be strictly enforced.

Next agenda – General Education Process

Dr. Martindale is chair of the newly formed Advisor's Task Force and noted that some of the issues being discussed are:

- Evaluation of advising loads
- Rewards system for advisors
- Effectiveness of advising

This will be discussed in a future meeting.