

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES COMMITTEE

September 16, 2008

4:30 – 5:30 PM

Hellstedt Room

MINUTES

Members Present: Jeff Abernathy, Dan Corts, Patrick Crawford, Ann Ericson, Stephanie Hortsman, Rick Jaeschke, Taddy Kalas, Adam Kaul, Mary Koski, Josh Morgan, Sven Steen, Ritva Williams, Michael Wolf

Guests Present: Tim Schermer

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM.

AGENDA ITEM I – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion-Wolf, Second-Morgan APPROVED

“To approve the minutes of the September 2, 2008 Educational Policies Committee meeting as revised.”

Motion-Jaeschke, Second-Kaul APPROVED

“To approve the minutes of the September 9, 2008 Educational Policies Committee meeting as presented.”

AGENDA ITEM II – NEW BUSINESS

- A. Teagle Foundation Proposal for The Senior Capstone Transformative Experiences in the Liberal Arts

Tim Schermer, who heads up the Teagle Study at Augustana, presented the Teagle-funded four-year research project aimed at assessing the degree to which a universal capstone contributes to outcomes that lead to lifelong learning. Augustana College stands as an outlier in this study, in that the other colleges have had their capstone project implemented for many years. However, Augustana looks at that variance as an opportunity to learn a great deal from the other colleges. Representatives from Augustana met earlier this year to identify research goals. A handout of those goals was distributed at the meeting. Tim discussed the methodology of the study and the phases that will be gone through. Both students and faculty mentors would be completing surveys and it is hoped eventually that alumni will also take part in the surveys.

The committee commented on the timing of surveys, as all disciplines across campus have different capstone implementation dates. It is important to note that many students define their capstone project in the spring of the junior year, which would be too late to begin the study. It was suggested that flexibility be considered in the timing of administering surveys. Many may need to commence in the winter of the students' junior year. Also of concern was how burdensome these surveys would be to faculty mentors. Tim assured the group the level of burden would be minimal. Jeff asks the EPC to take a more strategic stance on this issue, and encourages developments in the departments by reviewing assessment data and encouraging shifts in the curriculum.

The current, ongoing Teagle grant involves six colleges: Luther, Gustavus Adolphus, Whittenberg, Alma College, Illinois Wesleyan Univ. and Augustana....six very similar colleges. Skills explored in this study are writing, critical thinking/analytic reasoning, and civic engagement. Mike Nolan's participation in this study engages Augustana faculty to think about these areas. A tool in this study was a civic engagement survey given to students. The result of this data was passed out to the committee. Augustana placed last in the rating of civic engagement attitudes of students, and Jeff feels this should be a concern with this committee, and an impetus to respond. EPC should think about what it might do to increase our students' civic engagement experiences. Schools that scored high in civic engagement had a high level of faculty involved in personal engagement. Other effective measures were emphasizing the school's concern and investment in service activities of its students, for example, as described in their admissions materials, or providing a center to coordinator service learning. Some schools had scholarships for students who were engaged in service. Jeff invites the committee to share their thoughts on this survey and to provide guidance on how we might encourage service learning classes and/or get students to think about their civic engagement experiences.

One obvious suggestion is to make service an in-course or extracurricular requirement of graduation. Those who have already implemented this think it's worthwhile. There could also be a load reduction incentive for faculty who offer service learning classes.

AGENDA ITEM III – OLD BUSINESS

A. Contract Major Check List Revision

A new step six was inserted that calls for a meeting to be conducted with EPC representatives prior to the date EPC votes on the Contract Major. The committee made a slight change in the proposed wording. A motion was made:

Motion-Crawford, Second-Wolf APPROVED

“To approve the revised Contract Major Check List, inserting a new Step 6 as revised (change noted in italics):

“A meeting should be scheduled with the Chair of EPC (Dean of the College), the main faculty advisor, the *relevant EPC divisional representative(s)* corresponding to the proposal, and the student before submitting the proposal to EPC. The meeting is intended to make sure the proposal has the necessary information for EPC and to advise the student about any possible concerns.”

The meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Koski