

Academic Advising Council

Annual Report 2013-2014

To: Dan Edge, President, OSU Faculty Senate
From: Claire Colvin, Chair, Academic Advising Council
Date: July 30, 2014
Subject: 2013-2014 Academic Advising Council Annual Report

The 2013-14 academic year was productive and issues-focused for the Academic Advising Council (AAC). Our objective was to furnish support, information, and guidance to those units on campus that provide academic advising for undergraduate students, as well as to make policy and procedure recommendations to the Faculty Senate for consideration.

Unlike many Faculty Senate Committees, AAC membership is fixed and does not rotate. Membership consists of voting members, as found in our Standing Rules, and non-voting members, as found in our Guidelines. The leadership of the AAC and their external responsibilities were as follows:

Brett McFarlane, Chair (2013-April 2014), College of Engineering, served as chair and led the AAC meetings.

Carey Hilbert, Immediate Past Chair (2012-2013), College of Public Health & Human Sciences, represented AAC on the Curriculum Council. She will continue in this role for 2014-15 due to the absence of Brett McFarlane who would have filled this role.

Clay Torset, Past, Past Chair (2011-2012), College of Forestry, represented AAC on the Academic Affairs Committee.

Claire Colvin, Secretary and Chair-Elect (2014-2015), College of Science (COS), was responsible for the reporting of minutes for all but the last two meetings in May and June when she assumed the chair role. Brett Jeter volunteered to be secretary for the remaining meetings of the 2013-2014 year.

Brett Jeter, College of Agricultural Sciences (CAS), was elected at our June meeting to the position of Secretary-Elect (2014-2015) and Chair (2015-2016) in accordance with our Guidelines.

Action Items and Highlights of the Year Include:

Student Representation on AAC: At our October meeting, Nina Nguyen, Chief of Staff for ASOSU, attended representing ASOSU's Academic Affairs Task Force (AATF). While Brianna Tanaka would have been a natural choice for representing ASOSU AATF, her class schedule prohibited her attendance of meetings. Nina Nguyen was happy to represent AATF on ASOSU's behalf. The AAC unanimously approved Nina's membership on the AAC and a continuous presence from an AATF representative on the council moving forward.

NACADA Awards: As decided last year, AAC will forward nominations to NACADA for the various advising and administrator awards on behalf of the campus. It was noted we need to solicit nominations earlier, prior to our first meeting of the school year, because submission deadlines are in October. This year no submission was made to the NACADA awards committee.

Report from First Year Experience Task Force (FYETF) and Endorsement of FYETF Recommendations: A great deal of work has been done across campus to address the First Year Experience over the last two academic years. The work of the subcommittees from the Task Force was brought to the AAC for their review and approval. The key components of the First Year Experience relevant to the advising community include: Course-based Early Alerts, Advising Syllabus, and Advising Structure.

The Course-based Early Alert program, led by Clare Creighton (ASC), was being fully implemented in CH 121 and CH 231 sections, and piloted in select sections of MTH 111 starting Fall 2014. The program included interventions by Success TA's from Chemistry, invitations to struggling students to participate in CH 199, which provided more practice and exposure to CH content, and alerts to academic advisors after each midterm regarding students who were struggling. This enhancement was well received and widely supported by the advising community.

The subcommittee working on the Advising Syllabus, led by Kerry Kincanon (UESP), presented their on-going work to the AAC. The syllabus is intended to provide transparency to students about the expectations for learning and engagement in the advising experience. This was one way to provide students with a consistent message across our diverse colleges. Each college was tasked with supplementing the university-level syllabus with an insert appropriate to their college experience and expectations. The syllabus was finalized and included in START folders beginning summer 2014.

The Advising Structure subcommittee, co-chaired by Louie Bottaro (CLA) and Claire Colvin (COS), submitted its recommendations regarding how advising should be structured across the university. The recommendations were as follows:

1. Advisors will utilize the first-year advising syllabus to guide and structure advising meetings with students.
2. Colleges will utilize unique registration PINs that change each term to force a scheduled advising meeting at least once per term during a student's first three quarters at the university.
3. The university will implement an online change of major process that requires a meeting with an advisor from the new college or major and immediately updates a student's degree checklist in MyDegrees.
4. The notes function in MyDegrees must be utilized to track students' contact with advisors.
5. Advisors will have dedicated first-year advising FTE noted in their position descriptions.

These recommendations were endorsed by the AAC at the November meeting. Further, the ASOSU AATF, in concert with the FYETF, put on a Student Symposium in April to help educate current students about the changes coming to FYE, so they could be informed ambassadors to incoming students.

Conversations with the Registrar's Office are ongoing regarding how to automate the change of major process. A survey was circulated to the colleges to collect information regarding process for changing majors within each college.

Implementation of ALEKS Campus-wide: Lyn Riverstone from the Department of Mathematics came to AAC to educate and inform advisors about the changes to how students place into their first Math course at OSU. Prerequisites are now enforced for all Math courses, a decision enthusiastically endorsed by advisors across campus. Students either need an appropriate ALEKS test score or prerequisite course completed to place into courses. New students will receive communications regarding math placement prior to their orientation, and scores would be loaded into the system prior to registration.

Resurrection of MyDegrees Task Force: With MyDegrees now in place as our degree audit system for several years, users have discovered limits of the system that place policy and practice at odds. It was recommended by the AAC to the Registrar's Office to resurrect this work group to look at and address systemic issues. The AAC also agreed a quarterly report from such a group would be very useful.

Solicitation of Pressing Issues for AAC to Consider: At our January meeting, the chair solicited the group to consider: a process or system that is confusing for students to navigate, an area of needed staff training, an issue that is being ignored, or any other issue AAC should address. Issues identified include: usage of single sign-on and the OSU portal,

the waitlist process, addressing transfer student issues as a campus, and student decision making surrounding the S/U process. The OSU Portal issue has been addressed by the institution and now the primary log-in directs users to the portal. The other issues will be discussed further during the 2014-2015 school year.

Informational Subjects: (Details on each in AAC Minutes)

Raising awareness of hybrid courses with students
Update on the MTH requirement for transfer admissions
Change of campus process clarified
Changes in Registrar's Office structure
Updates need to be made to informational resources available to students regarding Waitlisting and navigating MyOSU portal
Uploading batch notes in MyDegrees process defined
Flourishing Initiative
Function of the Dean of Student Life Office
Review of OSU's Learning Management System and Testing of Canvas, Spring 2014
Changes to WR 121 Curriculum and WR II Learning Outcomes
Concern over Bacc Core offerings moving to 4 credits rather than 3 credits
Changes to Supplemental Instruction for 2014-2015
Implementation of the Online Alcohol and Sexual Violence Prevention Learning Modules with first-year students
Changes to Beaver Jobnet coming for 2014-2015

Conclusion

We are pleased to have addressed the issue of having a student representative at the table. It is hoped that next year we will continue to have a student present at all AAC meetings, this will require close communication with ASOSU. As we advocate for students in our policies, discussions, and decisions, the student voice and perspective is critical.

The 2013-2014 academic year saw the culmination of a lot of hard work by individuals from all corners of the university addressing the important issues of student success and engagement especially during the first year. The AAC was productive in providing input and clarity into matters of import to Registrar's office, University policy and guidelines, and Admissions.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Colvin
Chair, Academic Advising Council
Head Advisor, College of Science