Minutes  
Academic Advising Council  
Thursday, September 20, 2007

Chair: Phil Gaines for Greg Young, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Present: Bonnie Ashley, Diane Dorgan, Florence Garcia, Janet Heiss, Rob Maher, Linda McDonald, Lynn Owens, Amy Thompson, Melody Zajdel, Carina Beck, Judi Beckendorf, Jim Burns, Pat Hanson, Chris Lamb, Pat Lane, Cindy Meldahl, Jody Ogata, Kylie Perlinksi, Kathy Weaver, Brenda York

1. Diane Dorgan discussed the new admissions processes in handling course equivalency evaluations, developed in response to recently established MUS policies. She distributed a Credit Evaluation Worksheet and reviewed the sample Transfer Equivalency Worksheet on the back of the form, which includes a breakdown of specific parts of the form and should make it easier for departments to understand.

Phil distributed the Admissions Advising Newsletter which focuses on the transfer of core courses. Diane Dorgan said advisors need to be aware that policy states if a given course was considered core at another MUS institution, it will be considered core at MSU.

Phil distributed a narrative from Jeff, “Guidelines on Transferring Courses to Montana State University.” He recommended that advisors and students use it as an aid in determining how credits transfer within the MUS system and suggested it be posted on the Academic Advising Center Web site.

Diane responded to a question from Rob Maher about how a department can get a course listed on the transfer equivalency chart. If the department’s certifying officer firmly believes a certain MSU course is equivalent to one from another institution, they should submit their request using a Transfer Equivalent Sheet, available in admissions.

There was some discussion about whether all courses taken at the college level should transfer. Diane explained that the Office of Admissions does accept all college courses taken and passed in one of three ways: 1) as a direct MSU course equivalent; 2) strictly as an elective; or 3) as an elective with core. The committee agreed this was an appropriate standard.

Phil will talk with Diane Dorgan about the best way to blend the information from the Credit Evaluation Worksheet and the Guidelines on Transferring Credits.

2. Judi Beckendorf announced the development of an Advisor’s Toolkit, posted at the revised Academic Advising Center Web site. She asked the committee to review both the Toolkit and the revised site and contact her with any feedback.

3. Carina Beck reported on the upcoming Career Week which begins September 24 and culminates in the Annual Career Fair on October 3. An Etiquette Dinner to be held on September 25 will be attended by local community and business leaders. A wind-down event on October 3 will allow faculty the opportunity to visit with representatives at the Career Fair.
Carina also mentioned “MyCatCareers,” an online program created by Career Services to build and maintain relationships with employers to hire MSU grads and interns. This free service, accessed at MyCatCareers.com, allows students and grads to create profiles and post resumes and unofficial transcripts. Carina distributed information concerning both the Career Fair/Career Week and MyCatCareers.

4. Announcements:

a. A NACADA Workshop will be held October 5 in Missoula. Interested individuals may register for the workshop up through Monday, September 24, and space is still available on Greg Young’s bus. Jim Burns will be one of several presenters.

b. A New Faculty Advisor Workshop will be held October 9 in the Alumni Building. Those interested in attending should RSVP to University Studies by Wednesday, October 3. The workshop is part of the new faculty orientation and will take place annually. A flyer was distributed.

c. The Fall 2007 Academic Advising Workshop & Luncheon will be held October 16 in SUB Ballrooms B and C. Breakout sessions will target four specific student populations: student athletes; Native Americans; disabled students and veterans; and academically at-risk students. Other topics will be discussed in future workshops, including how to select courses in preparation for specific careers, and advising the “net generation.” A registration sheet was distributed.

d. Judi Beckendorf distributed an update of Campus Advising Contacts for 2007-08. The list includes names, phone numbers, email addresses, and locations of advisors in each department. Judi asked the committee to review the list for accuracy and contact the Dean of Students Office with any suggestions or corrections.

e. A “Reminders for Advisors” flyer created by Jeff Adams was distributed. The flyer, which will be sent to all departments, includes several points advisors should consider when talking to students. The committee should contact Jeff with any suggestions or corrections. Jim Burns noted that he would like to be listed as a contact for faculty who have questions about advising American Indian students, and will contact Jeff about this addition.

f. Pat Lane has begun working on the Spring Semester Academic Advising Update and would like departments to contact her with their updates.

g. Phil Gaines mentioned several positive changes transpiring around campus in terms of advising, including campus-wide refinement and improvement of advising; sharing of ideas between Academic Advising Council members at these monthly meetings; spreading of advising across campus at the grass roots level; and increased support from the Provost’s Office.

h. Diane Dorgan announced the establishment of a limited number of new scholarships for resident and non-resident transfer students in addition to a generous number of new freshman scholarships, all for Fall 2008. She distributed three informational handouts.

i. Brenda York announced an At-Risk Students Workshop to be offered October 9. Please see
attached document for more details.

j. Bonnie Ashley announced that the Registrar this week dropped approximately 350 students for non-payment but have re-registered about 100. They will still be re-registering students through the middle of next week and she asked the committee to remind faculty to send students to the Registrar’s Office for assistance.

k. Kathy Weaver reported that HHD advisors are experiencing a problem when they meet with transfer students in that they often do not have an evaluation by admissions or a transcript, and if the transcript is faxed it is difficult to read. Diane said Admissions is currently working on that issue and it should not be a problem in the future. A second issue Kathy addressed concerned students under University Studies who change to Health Promotion or Food & Nutrition at the end of their sophomore or beginning of their junior year. This may put them behind a semester or two for graduation if they have not completed the required undergraduate classes. Judi said the students are sent to HHD as soon as they decide on a major and many do not decide until then.

l. Janet Heiss reported that the Board of Regents is planning to change admission requirements again and may establish some provisional admissions. If students are deficient in one area they may be advised to take an appropriate developmental course. Additionally, the COT in Bozeman is working on developing new programs. A 2 year health care program and a veterinary tech program are the current focus. It is unknown at this time when they will be approved and ready for students.

m. Pat Lane announced University Studies has added a page to their Web site containing a definition of the Pre-University Studies student at http://www.montana.edu/wwwgs/preus.htm.

n. Carina Beck announced that Career Services has renovated their conference room to support all of their workshops, presentations, resume critique, and eventually virtual interviewing (based upon employer demand). All Career Services & Student Employment presentations will now be in this room (SUB 124) instead of other locations in the SUB or buildings on campus.

o. Amy Thompson reported that the Portal Operations Team and Portal Steering Committee are considering adopting a different student email system and are working with ASMSU to collect student feedback. She will keep the committee posted on any developments.

p. Rob Maher announced that his term on the AAC has expired and that he will talk to Greg Young about a replacement.

q. Chris Lamb commented on the large number of students she has talked to who want to add classes on the ninth or tenth class day. Because students will have missed a significant amount of class time by that date, Chris would like the deadline on adds to be moved up to the fifth class day. Phil recommended that she bring her concern to the Assistant Deans’ Council.

5. Next meeting: Thursday, October 18 at 10:00 a.m. in 325 Leon Johnson Hall.

The meeting was adjourned.