ACADEMIC POLICIES COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT: 2013-2014

Committee Membership

Lenore Koczon (VPAA, non-voting member)
Rebecca Porter (Registrar, non-voting member)
Kris Warmoth (CEL dean, non-voting member)
3 faculty elected at-large
Jynette Larshus (14)
John Webster (15), Chair
Nikki Medalen (16)
3 faculty elected by college
Linda Olson (14) Arts and Sciences
Erik Kana (15) Education and Health Sciences
Frank Moseley (16) Business
1 student
Emily Anderson

Summary of Activity

September 3, 2013: Received a request to consider a policy for posting concentrations on transcripts
September 12, 2013: Meeting at 12:30 in Swain 220 to approve a policy for posting concentrations
September 19, 2013: Reported to Faculty Senate on the approved policy for posting concentrations
December 11, 2013: Received a request to consider a policy on course substitutions
January 24, 2014: Meeting at 2:00 in Moore 112 to discuss a course substitution policy
January 27, 2014: Meeting at 11:00 in Moore 112 to discuss a course substitution policy
February 14, 2014: Meeting at 2:00 in Swain 220 to approve a course substitution policy
March 27, 2014: Reported to Faculty Senate on the approved course substitution policy
March 30, 2014: Received a request to consider a policy on COMPASS retesting
April 16, 2014: Meeting at 1:00 in Swain 220 to discuss a COMPASS retest policy
April 25, 2014: Meeting at 11:00 in Swain 220 to approve a COMPASS retest policy
May 1, 2014: Reported to Faculty Senate on the approved policy for COMPASS retesting

Minutes of Meetings (approved policies outlined in boxes)

Academic Policies Committee
Minutes for September 12, 2013 Meeting
12:30 in Conference Room 2nd Floor Swain

Members present: Rebecca Porter, Jynette Larshus, John Webster, Nikki Medalen, Erik Kana, Frank Moseley (5 of 7 voting members present)

Members absent: Lenore Koczon, Kris Warmoth, Linda Olson, Emily Anderson

1. Organizational business

John Webster passed out weekly schedule forms for committee members to block of days/times when they are not available for meetings (in general).
Nikki Medalen requested that an item of business from Nursing be added to the agenda.

2. New Business

   a. Posting of Concentrations for Non-Degree-Seeking Students

      Question from Rebecca Porter to Faculty Senate (Kevin Neuharth):

      We recently had a question concerning concentrations. A non-degree seeking student wished to complete only a concentration and have that concentration posted on her transcript. Under the major and minor requirements in the catalog is a statement that clarifies a student cannot complete a major or minor without being degree seeking:

      Major:
      Students may not earn a major without also earning or holding a Minot State University degree.

      Minor:
      Students may not earn a minor without also earning or holding a Minot State University degree.

      We have been working diligently this year and should be able to post all concentrations (with a minimum of 12 credits) on transcripts for students graduating at the end of fall term. Since we previously did not post concentrations, it was likely not a concern to have a statement that discussed a stand-alone concentration. There may be other reasons for this statement not being included as well. On our side, this is the most plausible explanation.

      This leads to my questions/request: Should a student be able to complete a concentration independent of a degree, major, and/or minor? If not, will you please pursue recommending this policy change to be reviewed and/or updated by the Academics Policies Committee?

      Charge to Academic Policies Committee from Kevin Neuharth:

      The Academic Policies Committee is asked to develop language re. concentrations and the non-degree seeking student similar to that currently in use dealing with the majors and minors.

      Rebecca Porter provided some additional background on the issue, which involved the Driver Traffic Safety concentration. A non-degree-seeking student wanted the concentration to be listed on her/his transcript. It turns out the concentration doesn’t involve enough credit hours to be transcribed (12 cr minimum); nonetheless, after some discussion, Jynette Larshus made a motion (seconded by Frank Moseley) to use the same requirement and language for a concentration as is used for majors and minors. The language to be added to the catalog would be:

      | Concentration: |
      | Students may not earn a concentration without also earning or holding a Minot State University degree. |

      Motion passed.
b. HMS Minor

Nikki Medalen described an issue Nursing wants to be considered. Students majoring in Nursing had also be earning the HMS minor, and are now being told that will not be allowed. Rebecca Porter added some additional background. After reviewing the requirements and finding there was only one course required for the HMS minor that was not required for the Nursing major, a decision was made to stop allowing students to earn the minor if they are earning a major in Nursing. There is confusion caused by the fact that it is only under degree requirements for the Bachelor of Arts degree that there is a statement that “Majors, minors, and concentrations cannot be in the same content area.” After a brief discussion, John Webster suggested that Nursing bring the issue to Faculty Senate, since the business of the Academic Policies Committee is carried out at the request of Faculty Senate.

Note: After review of the Faculty Senate Bylaws… The business of the Academic Policies Committee is carried out at the direction of the Faculty Senate President, who has discretion to decide whether Faculty Senate discusses the business before being passed on to Academic Policies.

3. Committee Chair

John Webster asked if anyone was willing to take on the duties of chairing Academic Policies (he is also chairing Curriculum Committee). No decision was made; members will consider it.

Meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm.
Course Substitution Policy and Implementation

The new policy regarding course substitutions is:

A course used to substitute for a required course in a program cannot be another required course in that program; in other words, one course in a program cannot be used to fulfill two required courses in that program. The substitute course must be one that is not already required by the program. The reason for the substitution must be a circumstance outside of the student’s control (time conflicts or changes in frequency of offerings); poor planning on the part of the student does not constitute sufficient grounds for course substitutions.

To state a new policy about course substitutions, it seems an addition to the MSU catalog would be appropriate. The policy would be part of a new section of the catalog that explains course equivalency and course substitution.

Course Equivalency and Course Substitution

Students who transfer courses to MSU that might meet program requirements of a particular major, minor, or concentration should have the courses evaluated by the appropriate program. Students should be able to provide information on each course involved, such as a detailed course description or a course syllabus. When a transfer course is found to be equivalent to a particular MSU course, a Course Equivalency form should be submitted to the Registrar’s Office. This form allows any future transfers of the same course from the same institution to automatically be accepted as meeting the requirement of the particular MSU course (valid for five years). In cases where the transfer course is not similar enough for equivalency, but is deemed appropriate as a substitution, a Course Substitution form should be submitted to the Registrar’s Office. This form only applies to that particular case for that student.

There may be times when a student cannot take a particular MSU course required for a program because of time conflicts or changes in a program’s frequency of offering. In such cases, the program may allow another course to substitute for the required course. However, the course used to substitute for the required course cannot be another required course; in other words, one course in a program cannot be used to fulfill two required courses in that program. The substitute course must be one that is not already required by the program. The reason for the substitution must be a circumstance outside of the student’s control (time conflicts or changes in frequency of offerings); poor planning on the part of the student does not constitute sufficient grounds for course substitutions.

This section could be inserted into the catalog in various places, but the recommended place is as another subsection within the Degree Requirements section of the Academic Information part of the catalog.

Rebecca Porter distributed a new draft of a revised course substitution form. There was some discussion about whether the signature of the coordinator/chair of the program offering the course for which the substitution is being made should be required; in some cases this will be a coordinator/chair outside of the program within which the substitution is being made. Following some discussion, the committee agreed it should be kept, that it would be a good idea to document that the rationale for the substitution is reasonable. There was no formal action taken regarding the revised form (which has space for two substitutions) because it is really the purview of the Registrar’s Office.
**Academic Policies Committee Minutes**  
**April 25, 2014**

Members present: John Webster*, Frank Moseley*, Linda Olson*, Nikki Medalen*, Rebecca Porter, Warren Gamas* (proxy for Erik Kana)

Members absent: Emily Anderson*, Erik Kana*, Kris Warmoth, Lenore Koczon, Jynette Larshus*,  
*voting members

Webster called the meeting to order shortly after 11:00. Warren Gamas was approved to serve as a proxy for Erik Kana (Olson/Moseley). With five voting members present, a quorum was achieved.

Webster distributed a draft of the policy regarding COMPASS exam retesting. One modification to the policy draft received from Faculty Senate was to change “one week” to “7-day period” (see policy below). Olson moved to approve the new COMPASS exam retest policy with the slight modification (seconded by Moseley). Motion passed.

**Current Retest Policy**
Students are able to take the COMPASS as many times as they’d like. There are no restrictions as to when this retake occurs (same day is possible).

**Proposed Retest Policy (showing approved modifications)**
This retest policy mirrors COMPASS’s official Test-Retest Policy with the exception of proof required to demonstrate change in the examinee’s ability. COMPASS leaves it up to individual institutions to decide if that change has occurred. Examinees may only retake the COMPASS if one of the following criteria is met:

- Outside factors influenced the examinee’s performance on the assessment and thus it was not a true measure of his/her abilities. Examples include the examinee becomes ill during the exam, technical difficulties, or a disturbance in the test room.
- A significant change has occurred in the examinee’s ability. For example, the examinee completed additional education in the area of assessment. If an examinee wishes to take the COMPASS more than three times, documented evidence of additional training must be provided.

In the event a retake is authorized, the retake may not occur on the same day as the original test. No more than two tests may occur in the same week 7-day period. Also an examinee may not take more than three of the same assessments in a 30-day period.
Approved Retest Policy

This retest policy mirrors COMPASS’s official Test-Retest Policy with the exception of proof required to demonstrate change in the examinee’s ability. COMPASS leaves it up to individual institutions to decide if that change has occurred. Examinees may only retake the COMPASS if one of the following criteria is met:

- Outside factors influenced the examinee’s performance on the assessment and thus it was not a true measure of his/her abilities. Examples include the examinee becomes ill during the exam, technical difficulties, or a disturbance in the test room.

- A significant change has occurred in the examinee’s ability. For example, the examinee completed additional education in the area of assessment. If an examinee wishes to take the COMPASS more than three times, documented evidence of additional training must be provided.

In the event a retake is authorized, the retake may not occur on the same day as the original test. No more than two tests may occur in a 7-day period. Also an examinee may not take more than three of the same assessments in a 30-day period.

There were no volunteers to serve as chair of the committee next year, so there was no election for chair. Linda Olson agreed to serve as the organizer of the first meeting next year.

Meeting adjourned at about 11:30.