

Degrees and Certificates Minutes

January 8, 2014

Downtown Center 317

2pm to 3:30pm

In attendance: Janeen Hull, Kathleen Bradach, Eriks Puris, Kendra Cawley, Sally Earll, Phil Christain, Shasta Buchanan, Joanne Harris, Anne Haberkern, Cheryl Scott, Alex Jordan, Djambel Unkov, Beth Fitzgerald.

Old Business:

None

Discussion Items:

Math Competency: Debrief from EAC discussion, finalize formal proposal for EAC/President approval

Discussion:

Janeen hands out new draft paperwork for the math competency language. Susanne and Janeen worked on another draft of the competency language requirement; added “mathematics or computation” to definition in response to suggestions from the discussion at the EAC meeting.

Clarifying discussion: standalone course – is it 3 credits, or 3 credits or better? 3 or better. Embedded related instruction – grade of C or P or better, is it all courses contributing to the 90 hours? What if a SAC designates more than 90 hours – is it possible to get C or P or better in any combination of the constituent courses that equate to 90 hours? Can’t make it so complicated that it becomes challenging for students/advisors/banner/student records to interpret.

Final agreement: keep wording for final bullet point as is.

Action: Chair incorporated final wording recommendations from DAC members into draft for formal recommendation to EAC for vote at January meeting; approved by DAC.

Focus Award Guidelines: Review and discussion

Discussion:

The chair asks for clarification: what is committee’s role with Focus Awards? To what degree are the guidelines “guidelines” only and to what degree are they intended to be proscriptive?

Reminder of Guidelines presented to EAC & approved in June.

Previously, the question regarding maximum number of credits are allowed in a Focus Award was discussed. Currently, the “Standard range” is 12-16 credits; does not explicitly prohibit SACs from

bringing forward proposals with more credits. What should policy be, and does it rest with committee or elsewhere?

One option would be to make rules “hard and fast”; another would be to keep as guidelines, but explicitly state that SACs wishing to propose an award that is outside of the guidelines should be prepare to justify why.

Credits: specific issue is how much of the degree it takes up. Could create issues for students who want to get the award and don’t look at it until they are well into their program; if they want to go back at that point and start an award that is significantly larger than 16 credits, they may end up with lots of “extra” credits because they have already fulfilled requirements met by focus award courses. Can’t assume all students will know they want to do award early on. Financial Aid issues as well.

Perhaps makes sense when Focus Award is very interdisciplinary to allow more credits than for Focus Award which is very discipline-specific; point is that Focus Award should encourage students to follow their interest in a particular area, but balance that with broad and interdisciplinary nature of transfer degrees.

Side Note: State discussions about possibility of allowing majors for LDC is very relevant; if majors are allowed, interest will probably shift away from Focus Awards. However, same issues are involved; “major” will likely not make sense to have 8/10/12 courses in a single discipline, because for most transfer students it is not in their interests to have an overly narrow focus at the lower division level.

Issue of “grandfathering”: It does say in Guidelines that faculty are responsible for keeping Focus Awards up to date with course offerings and requirements.

Final agreement: Revision of Guidelines to state minimum of 12, standard of 16-20 credits; proposals outside these parameters would need to include rationale and may be denied if committee does not feel rationale is strong enough. Clarification of need for regular (5 year) review of each Focus Award;

Action: Chair to make changes/revise the current Guidelines. DAC to edit, add & approve, before bringing forth to EAC for approval. After EAC discussion, chair to craft message to Focus Award faculty “owners” outlining need for regular review/update and asking those that have not been reviewed in the last 5 years to bring through proposal that aligns with current guidelines by January 2015 (for 15-16 catalog).

Looking ahead: Remaining 13-14 meetings review, discussion of meeting options & logistics for 14-15

Discussion: Discussion of meeting locations and times for next year; feedback was noted by chair and further discussion will take place at next meeting. Committee was asked to think about how best to utilize technology (conference call, video, itv) in lieu of attendance/presenting materials to the DAC (revisions, new, only pathways, only minor revisions, etc...), with further discussion to take place over the next few months.