**Undergraduate Council Meeting Minutes**

**November 9th, 2022**

**Voting Members Present**: Michelle Berry, Molly Bolger, Joan Curry, Leslie Dennis, Jennifer Donahue, Melissa Goldsmith, Dana Lema, Shujuan Li, Moe Momayez, Holly Nelson, Karin Nolan, Liza Rezende, Amber Rice, Claudia Stanescu, Caleb Simmons, Joost Van Haren, Paul Wagner, Suzie Weisband, Pat Yango

**Voting Members Absent**: Jeff Millburg, Jennifer Schnellman

**Non-voting Members Present**: Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski, Cassidy Bartlett, Carmin Chan, Greg Heileman, Frederick Lewis, Melanie Madden, Liz Sandoval, Abbie Sorg

1. Molly Bolger called the meeting to order at 3:32pm
2. Approval of Minutes from the UGC Meeting on October 11th, 2022– Molly Bolger, Undergraduate Council Chair

Suzie Weisband motioned to approve the Minutes from the UGC Meeting on October 11th, 2022, Joost Van Haren seconded. Motion carries with 11 yea, 0 nay, 0 abstain

1. Reports:
   1. Advising Resource Center / Advising Community Report – Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski, Assistant Vice Provost, Academic Advising

The advising community is busy right now with students coming in to make sure their schedules and registration are set for Spring 2023. The advising community is also taking advantage of this busy time by sharing additional resources and opportunities with those students. Advisors are currently working on developing a philosophy of academic advising that will encompass advising across the entire campus. This development of this philosophy has helped in reflecting on advising practices across campus as well as policies and what implications those have for students. The two units that report to me specifically are the Advising Resource Center, centered on training and development for academic advisors and the A Center, the advising center for students who are exploring or confirming majors, minors or certificates as well as well as supporting students that explore paths for pre-health and pre-law. The Advising Resource Center will be hosting Lunch and Learns in November and December that can be found online, anyone is welcome to attend. The A Center is currently doing drop-in advising until November 15th to cover as many students as possible. After November 15th they will return to appointments. On Friday, November 18th, The A Center will be hosting Campus Coffee Connect, an event where all undecided students will be invited to come and connect with advisors. There will be a tour of things on campus that the advising community hopes these students will engage with as well as provide an opportunity for these students to discuss any issues they may be having.

**Q:** Can you elaborate on what is going into the development of the Academic Advising Philosophy?

**A:** An overarching philosophy for academic advising will address where the practice comes from, approaches to advising, questions like “who is advising there for?” and “How do we engage with other members and stakeholders of the community?”. The goal is to develop a broad overview of advising perspectives and not railroading all offices on campus into one approach. Academic Advising comes from a literature and scholarship base, and it is important that we are intentional in how that work is done.

* 1. Online, Distance, Continuing Education Report – Carmin Chan, Director, Online Student Success

Priority registration just began for all campuses, however, Online and Distance Campus students are just beginning their first wave. So far there are just under 2,000 undergraduate students registered, a 9% increase year over year compared to fall 2021. In total, including undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, there are just under 3,000 individuals registered across Arizona Online. In addition to registering for Spring 2023, students have the option to register for Winter 2022. Historically, Winter Session has been actively prevented due to the 3-week duration and intensity of the session. As populations have grown, there has been an increase in students with demand for Winter Session registration. Allowing students to registration for Winter Session will be self-determined on a departmental basis. Students will be alerted a week in advance about the University’s winter closure and that the advising team will be observing.

Some changes have been made within the Online Student Success Team, to realign some of the team members towards Success Coaching. This initiative hopes to support college partners in retaining Arizona Online learners and supporting students’ degree completion goals and will officially launch in Summer and Fall of 2023. This will be a realignment of our current team, from a model that was very focused on the front end and helping students get across the initial threshold instead to a focus on persistence and degree completion. We plan to focus on initial outreach, ongoing communication and encouragement, and at-risk outreach. In preparation for this shift, an orientation refresh has been going on throughout Fall 2022. In Spring of 2023 we plan to begin phasing in Success Coaches with the goal of ramping up the intensity by Summer 2023.

**Q:** Regarding DEW rates for online students, have you seen different trends coming out of COVID? Do you plan on tracking with this initiative to determine if completion rates are increasing?

**A:** At the start of the pandemic, retention and persistence rates initially went up as students had more time on their hands. Post-pandemic, students are again balancing busy lives and competing responsibilities which have ripple effects on student performance. As the corporate student population has grown, time management has become even more fundamental as a part of students navigating through school, however this is compounded by financial dilemma and other layers above and beyond academic thinking. Looking at other institutions that are doing online learning at a 10,000-20,000 scale, we see the success coach model as a commonly used method to address unique needs of online students. This is specifically through using proactive strategies to retain these students.

**Q:** How are you using data to make these decisions? Are you looking into AI or software to monitor these things and help with that process?

**A:** There definitely is. The data ecosystem is one of the fundamental pieces we are working to put into place. We already have some great pieces that are in-place that are maybe underutilized due to teams that are not at full capacity. For example, we have a dashboard that shows us various information relating to student performance in the LMS. If a student hasn’t logging in 7 days, performs poorly on an assignment of significance or turns an assignment in late, the team is shown that information, allowing them to contact the student to provide support. Additionally, an outside service tool, Smarter Measures is used to help students self-assess their online learning readiness. All our online students have access to it, but it is currently optional. We intend to make this tool mandatory soon.

**Q:** Regarding online readiness, is this something that would be available to main campus students? There are now courses that are being offered in these online formats and many students struggle with them while others do very well.

**A:** It won’t be publicly available, its paid for and licensed for our Online and Distance Campus student populations, however I believe the insights from the report could be applied to other student populations.

* 1. Registrar’s Report – Alex Underwood, Registrar

Alex was unable to attend the meeting but sent notes that were relayed by Abbie Sorg. Registration has started, as of today 16,432 undergraduate students have registered for Spring. Main campus sophomore students’ priority registration begins Thursday, November 10th with first year students’ registration beginning Monday, November 14th. Academic policy revisions have been implemented for this particular Fall semester in which students can initiate a withdrawal until the last day of classes. It is important to note that this policy exception is for student-initiated withdrawals and not administrative initiated withdrawals. The Office of the Registrar’s website has further information available.

**Q:** Have students been made aware of the policy change?

**A:** Yes, there was an email sent out to students on October 20th notifying them of the change. Faculty and Advisors were also notified the day before.

**Q:** If a student withdraws after taking the TCE, are they still included in those TCEs even though they withdrew?

**A:** Will find out and share back with the group. (After the meeting: Becky Perez in the University Center for Assessment, Teaching, and Technology on the question about TCEs (now called Student Course Surveys) responds “If a student withdraws before the SCS open period (28 days prior to the end of the class), they do not complete the SCS. If they withdraw once the surveys are open, they can complete the SCS and it will be included in the results.”)

* 1. University-wide General Education Committee Report – Joan Curry, UWGEC Chair

UWGEC is at the end of the initial rush of proposals that we had been working with. We are trying to get revisions in and meet all of the Curricular Affairs’ deadlines. We will be opening up for new proposals in the near future.

**Q:** The ATFC, Articulation and Transfer met last month, a lot of the questions from the community college were questions the representatives did not know how to answer. How are the community college and transfer issues going? How should we communicate these questions like “why is there only one science class in the natural science perspective?” **A:** There’s not just one science class, there is one called Natural Science. There are 3 building connections classes as part of the total 7. Those 3 building connections can be all kinds of things, including science. There is only one science class required in that sense, but many of the building classes include a variety of things, like science. AGEC is still being accepted. If a course transfers, it transfers. If you haven’t satisfied AGEC, you can take courses and reverse transfer it, or, a student can transfer after a year and then satisfy the UA’s general education requirements.

* 1. Subcommittees

1. Academic Programs Subcommittee Report, October 25th, 2022 – Suzie Weisband

We had 5 proposals. Two modifications for both a Minor and BA in Studies of Global Media, a New Certificate in Additive Manufacturing, a New Minor in Consciousness Studies, and a Modification for BS in Nursing. The BS in Nursing Modification was tabled due to the errors submitted proposal conflicting with the initial intentions of the change.

1. Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee, October 25th, 2022 – Joost Van Haren, Chair

Had further discussions on the two policies that will be voted on today. Also discussed the current appeal process and what is needed to be updated.

* 1. UGC Report – Molly Bolger, Chair

Discussions on how to proceed following the conversations about Campus Safety in the previous meeting, we are working on a draft letter that could potentially come from this group. The Minor in Addiction and Substance Use and the Minor in Entomology passed without any discussion at Faculty Senate. Additionally, the GRO Policy Amendment was passed despite being pulled off of the consent agenda for discussion.

* 1. Academic Administration Report – Greg Heileman, Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education

See Section V, Item B.

1. Consent Agenda Items
   1. New Certificate: Additive Manufacturing (Engineering)
   2. Modification: BA in Studies of Global Media (SBS)
   3. Modification: Minor in Studies of Global Media (SBS)
   4. New Minor: Consciousness Studies (SBS)

Caleb Simmons motioned to approve. Suzie Weisband Seconded. Motion carries with 15 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstain.

1. Items for Discussion
   1. Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee – Joost Van Haren, Chair
2. Leaves of Absence Policy Amendment proposal

These changes are being made due to updated state law. The main changes requested by the Curriculum & Policies subcommittee have been to make the language more inclusive (i.e. extended language from “spouse” to include “domestic partner” and “dependents”. The other thing that was changed, was the criteria for which previously required for the deployed individual to leave the State or City. This has been expanded as there are many cases of individuals who are on active duty yet remain in Tucson.

1. Military Excused Absence Policy Amendment proposal

See previous item.

Caleb Simmons motioned to approve. Melissa Goldsmith seconds. Motion carries with 16 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstain.

* 1. Academic Administration – Greg Heilman, Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education

The amount of work that it takes to get things through and up to ABOR can be overwhelming. The current set of Regents is asking that we come forward with a strategy on what we are intending to do with specific programs. With that in mind, there are two things we are currently working on and hoping to get the program approvals through expeditiously. In February, we hope to come forward with a basket of programs that are computing relating. We’re putting a package together to present how we are serving the state by doing this. Secondly, in June we are hoping to create a new college within Arizona Health Sciences 5 to 6 different programs included.

1. Potential Change of Requirement for Letter of Support for Academic Program Proposals

One of the most common complaints received since starting here is the process of new program approvals and the amount of time it can take. One of the first things we’ve tried to do is identify what each committee in this process should be doing. We have streamlined the process by having proposers present to a committee once rather that multiple times for each committee. Complaints regarding the approval process often specifically highlight the requirement for a letter of support for every course outside of the proposing college. I suggest that we do away with the letters of support. In its place, the proposing party will inform the department with ownership over the courses that will be used in the proposal, the department then has 10 days to respond and deny use of the courses in the proposal. With the new system that were going to have, this method will make things even more automated.

Committee agrees that the Letters of Support are outdated. The concern stems from a lack of communication, courses being requested not having the capacity, space, or resources, as well as whether or not the change will be the best thing for students. The hope is to avoid proposals being thrown together with little thought as to how the different courses will work off one another. Concerns are also raised over projection rates not being an accurate way of determining the enrollment numbers for a course. Additionally, it needs to be clear that the correct party received the request, the proposing party should need to verify in some way. Members of the committee disagree that approval should be assumed upon lack of response. Duplications are also an issue that could arise with an increase in proposal approvals.

Greg points out that the 4-page preliminary review has been added to the process specifically to combat this. Greg also points out that the number of courses relating to the same subject area can cause confusion for students who already have an idea on what they want to do. A project is being worked on to create a structure above these colleges that will streamline the process for new students coming into the University.

Committee requests that Greg has someone from Academic Administration attend a future meeting to give a more detailed presentation.

1. Meeting adjourned at 5:03pm

*Respectfully prepared by Frederick Lewis*