

Basic Skills Committee

Thurs. May 1, 2014

2:00-3:00 Room 902

Adopted Minutes

Basic Skills Coordinator Melissa Reeve called the meeting to order at 2:07 pm.

Present: Isabel Anderson; Melissa Reeve; Genele Rhoads; Josh Scott; Chuck Spillner

I. Approve minutes from: March 20 & April 3

March 20 – Approved by consensus.

April 3 – Approved by consensus as amended by Melissa.

II. Budget update

Melissa reported a balance of \$21,500 remaining from the \$94,000 at the beginning of the year.

Melissa gave an update on changes since the last meeting.

- The approved embedded tutors may be funded through strategic proposals.
- The Committee approved sending five people to the On Course workshop but, since dates were not good for interested faculty, only Melissa and Tracy Schneider may go, which reduces the expense.
- Melissa shared ideas for using money not spent. She spoke with Tracy about getting all FYE instructors together because progress hadn't been made with integrated assignments due to lack of coordination time for planning. They agreed a half day retreat might be a good way to get FYE instructors together to work on planning with a goal to get as many FYE instructors together (approx. 10-14) as possible before fall while syllabi is still in play at a cost of around \$4500. Members agreed to support up to \$4562.40 for the FYE faculty group to meet for training and planning for the next year.
- Amanda Greene is the FYE Coordinator through the end of summer. No one has heard about the strategic proposal process and results. Melissa will ask IVP White if the position can be advertised contingent on funding for the FYE Coordinator starting in the fall and if Amanda's term can be extended for one year. Amanda would like to continue and she was also the only candidate. This position was only advertised for one year due to year-to-year funding.
- The final budget item was a request from Karen McCord asking for Umoja conference support for up to two people at \$1200 per person with travel. The Committee agreed to fund the registration fee of \$500 each / \$1000 total. Melissa will request a breakdown by next week from Karen and the Committee can decide by email if more funding could be approved.

III. Coordinator hiring update

Melissa followed up with IVP Diane White this week about BSI coordinator hires. The first response was, if needed, extend positions for another year. The next day IVP White messaged that she carefully reviewed all reassign positions and had forwarded to HR months ago which ones needed to be advertised. She would double check and reconfirm if any should be advertised that hadn't. Likely positions will be extended into next fall with the possibility to change positions in January, which can be discussed in the fall. Melissa believes her term should end December 2015 so a new person would start in the spring. Melissa wants to transition new positions properly and added that new blood would be good to replace coordinators who have worked hard for a long time. Melissa will communicate with IVP

White that Josh would like his position advertised as soon as possible for January replacement and to extend Genele's term for the next academic year.

IV. New summer funding proposal: FYE faculty retreat (Reeve)

See Item II.

V. Year in review and goals for next year:

A. Math (Genele)

Genele reported on major accomplishments, ideas, and goals.

- A standard set of assessments was developed but a challenge was getting faculty together for discussion and knowing how many instructors used the assessments. Genele is planning to work on the sets more in the fall, have them available, and look more closely into how the database is used. She will plan optional Flex Cal math days for a few semesters.
- Instructors who attended conferences have all made good presentations, including On Course type basics to get students involved, and one is coming up at fall Flex.
- Eight tutors were hired and worked with six instructors. Feedback included: a need for more training; get instructors to work with tutors (it was left up to each instructor how to use them); most tutors felt effective in the classroom; tutors were not utilized as hoped outside of the classroom. How to make tutoring work out of classroom hours will be looked at. The conclusion was that it seemed very productive in the classroom for teachers who wanted tutoring. Chuck noted Marie Mayne wants to revamp the training with more online access and standardized across campus. She may want to change the Tutor 050 course (which was full). Separate tutor courses may be needed for English and math. Feedback should be given to Marie. Josh noted mentors were set up last year with English faculty which the College should institutionalize. Funding is pending feedback from tutors and teachers. Sections should be compared that had and didn't have tutors, a good question for Peter Cammish next fall. Chuck suggested that just having tutors spend more time in class would work better. Melissa suggested instructors administer a small student survey in classes with embedded tutors asking what was helpful. It might produce valuable feedback for tutoring and for funding. Make surveying students a requirement for instructors with embedded tutors.
- Genele has been working on an alternative pathway to transfer level math; counselors are still leery but Dean John Yu seemed comfortable with ideas for statistics/math students; hopefully will get it to work better, find out who the population is, and get going; Genele worked with another instructor to put together a package: if they have common students, one level below transfer, get them together for cooperative assignments in math and English; will attempt to do even if there are only a few students.
- Genele is the faculty advisor for a summer pilot with the goal to get students in the correct math class; Benicia and Winters high schools will have presentations; have students drop in early, give them a registration form and intake questions about what math they've had, when etc.; have them do math; see where they are at based on what they can do on preliminary worksheets; Pearson gave us 300 copies of My Math test, basically a review program similar to My Math lab; study skills will be included. The plan includes: have students realize what math class entails; prepare them for what is expected with study skills and review; decide the best class for them; give them advice. The pilot will run a full 8 weeks from 12:00 -4:00 pm.
- In the fall create a ½ unit lab class for a total of 24 hours and maybe do in chunks, if it works well; 6 week session from 12:00 – 2:00 pm; adjunct Pam Sheehan will work with students from 2:00 – 4:00 pm every day and 12:00 – 4:00 pm the last two weeks. Chuck offered to tutor if available. Genele reported that Karen McCord wants to bring Umoja students in one week and FYE students will come in singly. At least 95 students will be served. Chuck has a SARS computer and could add a tab for math enrichment.

B. English (Josh)

Josh reported on main tasks worked on over the year and some resulting accomplishments.

- Josh took a large role to work through the Program Review process that included writing SLOs and a narrative and setting goals for the department.
- Fall accomplishments included: English 305 was changed to a lab class; the CME grading rubric was rewritten; various meetings were held.
- This spring an English 310 tier process was created to be an alternative or replace English 305 on the main campus. There will be 20 cohorts in the lab and students will spend three to four hours working on homework in the lab each week, rather than taking it home. All English 305 instructors recommended moving to a lab based course, creating an in-house assessment, and working in the lab with small groups and one-on-one. Students will be tracked once the lab is established. Writing activities are similar to English 305 work but students will have more faculty support. Only about 11% of students have progressed from English 305 to English 001 and the English 310A lab, approved by the Curriculum Committee last Tuesday, is expected to make it a better process.
- English 310B is in CurricUNET and English 310C is being created. BSI funding was approved to develop and build courses over the summer. The majority of instructors on the Basic Skills English Committee are interested and involved.
- Last week the Curriculum Committee approved a modification restricting English 360. English 350/355 students will be enrolled in English 359 with the same COR. The title and outline are different. This new course is a way to protect students showing real progress and who would have progressed in the old model. The majority of students complete their course work, persist in class and move on to English 001. Students who are far behind, even though they work diligently, need more support and that puts a strain on instructors. It was illuminating for Josh when the borderline English 360 students last fall, who fit the English 350/355 descriptor, worked hard but completely bombed in English 001. Melissa noted borderline students last year also failed. This experience the last two years shows they didn't make it to continue with their cohorts. Although it was only a few students, they are important and it would have been good to reward what they've done and give them more time.
- Our vision for 359/360 is similar to the current English 350/355 model where ESL students are mainstreamed in the same room with the same instructor with a 25 class cap and students won't know who is in English 350 or 355. English 359/360 students will meet in the same class and will be taught to English 360 outcomes.
- Many 305 students may get to English 001 in one semester and some see it as an unattainable goal. Josh pointed out there are a few ways to build in safety nets for students and their goals can be recalibrated mid-semester.

C. Overall (Melissa)

Although this year was especially challenging, due to funding changes and waiting on the outcome to know how to move forward, a lot has been accomplished. Melissa thanked the Committee for their work and perseverance.

The meeting adjourned at 3:09 PM