

Academic Update for Spring 2005

Bring on the sunshine...our long wait for summer has arrived! But, before we grab our swimsuits, let's take some time to reflect on a few important events that have happened during spring semester 2005....

Professional Development Opportunities

This semester, we conducted three faculty forums. Dr. Thackeray started the semester with some readings from his book, *The River of Milk 'n Honey*. The March forum featured Dr. Richter on *Touching the Future: Enhancing Student Learning and Engagement with Futures Studies*; the topic of the April forum was *Play Therapy* presented by Dr. Sellers. Beginning academic year 2006, the Research and Development Committee (Lanny Wilke, Chair) has agreed to take over the planning and implementation of the monthly faculty forums as well as possibly implementing monthly round table discussions. This committee will also be planning the professional development workshops (on Thursday) for our fall retreat.

During February we had our first assessment and program outcomes training workshop. Drs. Rowland and Batchelder from The University of Montana conducted the session. Some programs have been very active in completing their assessment plans; some programs will be on a tight schedule for completion during fall 2005.

This semester we hosted three teleconferences, *Leading and Managing Academic Departments*, *Future Trends in Higher Education*, and *Learning Beyond the Classroom Walls: Undergraduate Research as Means to Facilitate Deep Learning*. The teleconferences provide some excellent information; we will continue to look for these types of opportunities for faculty and staff during AY 2006.

In April, the nursing faculty sponsored a Diversity Conference in Great Falls. The speakers presented a variety of perspectives on Native American, Hutterite, and Pakistani cultures. Implications of *Indian Education for All* were also covered. Suzanne Lockwood and Lisa Scheresky-O'Neil did an excellent job planning and coordinating this workshop.

During May, the team from the Burns Telecommunications Center presented a two-day workshop on using WebCT. This excellent workshop provided faculty and staff with a beginning skill-set to begin the transition of offering courses online or creating course enhancements using the WebCT interface. Our full transition from e-College into WebCT is scheduled for January 1, 2006. We still plan to offer *Developing an Online Course* this fall. Please contact Jan Brady if you are interested in taking this class.

Accreditation

During March, the NLNAC (National League of Nursing Accreditation Commission) visited our campus. The initial review for both the BSN and the ASN programs were completed; we will have final results from the Commission in August. The State Board

of Nursing was unable to make the March review. As a result, the Nursing Department will be going through a state review in September. Director Pappas and the nursing faculty and staff were turning cartwheels down the hallway when they received this news! If you haven't already done so, please be sure to thank Mary Pappas, the nursing faculty and staff, and Dean Rawn for the many hours they spent getting ready for the NLNAC review.

We have been granted an extension on our follow-up visit for ABET. We are still in the process exploring the possibility of offering the civil engineering bachelors degree in Great Falls beginning fall 2006. This degree would be offered in collaboration with the Great Falls College of Technology.

This fall, we will begin gearing up for three accreditation visits during fall 2007—Northwest, and the joint Office of Public Instruction and NCATE review. This summer I will be working closely with the Chairs, Deans, and Assessment Committee to set frameworks and timeframes for these reviews.

Grants

Two proposals for equipment (\$512,000) were approved this semester. Since these grants have a 1:1 match, over \$1 million in new equipment will be purchased for our two-year career and technical programs during the coming academic year. The match was made possible through monies provided by the very generous donation of Mr. and Mrs. Hensler and equipment provided by Toyota Corporation.

Enrollment Management

One goal we've met so far this year with enrollment management is the implementation of our online application. So far, our online application has yielded 21 new student applications. Special thanks go to Steve Jamruszka, Marianne Hoppe, Betty Clark, and Jim Potter for making the online application a reality.

Summer enrollment is currently up. Our optimistic projection is that we will be up a few FTE from last summer. As per usual, our Director of Extended University, Jan Brady, has been working very hard to make sure our summer school goes very well. We are still hoping that fall enrollment will at least be even with fall 2004.

One goal of our enrollment management team is to make sure our BSN program is fully supported. Right now, we are still missing a few online general education courses. Dean Rawn will be working closely with the faculty to make sure we meet this goal by summer 2006.

During spring semester, we pilot tested some new processes in recruiting. One major change in recruitment process was scheduled school visits (including demonstrations) by the faculty in COTS and home visits by our recruiters. Obviously, we started this process in the spring rather than fall, so it is too early to make any projections as to whether this process will yield increased enrollment. However, we're going to continue to assess and implement the process; in fact, we will widen the scope of this procedure next academic

year by including faculty in other content areas. Special thanks go to Will Anderson, Mike Lee, Joel Brodeur, Stephen Don, Wane Boysun, Kevin Johnson, Tom Welch, Krista Milligan, Jerry Franson, Byron Opus and Greg Kegel for being active members in this pilot test.

Judy Oveson and Kari Thurston in Great Falls have also been trained in the recruitment process. Judy and Kari are very active recruiting in and around Great Falls; in fact, they will be in charge of setting up the Northern's booth this year at the Montana State Fair.

Our tele-marketing campaign has been going well. So far, the students working this campaign have made over 3,000 contacts. Unfortunately, Susan Anderson is taking a job elsewhere, so we will need to hire someone to replace her. However, Susan has done an excellent job getting this component of recruitment off to a great start.

Transfer Issues

The findings from the legislative transfer audit led to some significant changes implemented by the Board of Regents during the May meeting. The new policies are posted on the web sites of the Board of Regents and the Provost. Three of the policies will be discussed in detail at the fall retreat: system of controls, implementation of the +/- grading system, and the general education transfer policy.

During Fall Semester 2004, Bill Lanier and Julie Strobel completed our yearly transfer survey as required by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. Results from the survey are posted on the Provost's web page.

Curriculum

The new general education core has been approved and will be in 2005-06 catalogs. The General Education Committee (Greg Clouse, chair), the Curriculum Committee (Wane Boysun, chair), and Academic Senate (Janet Trethewey, president) should be commended for their many hours on this project. The 33-credit core will allow some students the ability to complete their general education core within one year. However, several scheduling modifications will still need to take place before this can happen beginning academic year 2007.

For the first time in many years, we have a one-year course schedule for students and advisors. The schedule is still in the "rough stages," but we will continue to move in this direction. I have asked Gregg Hester to chair a working committee this summer to explore the possibility of moving to a 60-minute class schedule during AY 2007. The committee should have a draft ready for discussion during September.

The P-20 committee is still working on a state-wide dual enrollment policy. The committee was hopeful that a consensus would be reached during the spring. However, this didn't happen; we probably won't see a policy until sometime during AY 2006.

The AAS program in Electrical Technology should be ready for full Regent review during the September 2005 meeting. If approved, we will begin the development of apprenticeship and marketing materials during fall 2005.

As a result of program review, the bachelors degree in Computer Information Systems and the bachelors degree in Computer Engineering Technology will be combined into one degree—a bachelors degree in Information Systems Engineering Technology. This change has been approved by the faculty; a Level II proposal will be forwarded to the Board of Regents in September.

The following programs should be ready to present their program reviews during fall 2005:

- Liberal studies, B.A.
- Native American studies, minor
- Agricultural mechanics, operations, and technology (all degrees)
- Business technology (all degrees excluding the secondary education business education major and minor)

In addition, reviews of the following programs need to begin fall 2005:

- Graphic design, A.A.S. and B.A.
- Diesel technology (all degrees)
- Automotive technology, A.A. S., B.S., and minor

Please note that all programs in education are no longer listed in the above review schedule. The new Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards and Procedures (PEPPS) standards will probably not be approved by the Board of Public Education until late 2005 (or early 2006). The standards were initially scheduled to be approved during the September meeting. However, a review by the U.S. Department of Education for the state's compliance with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) means more changes need to take place before the new standards will be implemented. In addition, the Board of Regents approved a new schedule for program review. Instead of five year cycle, program review is now on a seven-year cycle. In addition, when programs are slated to go through a national (or state) accreditation visit, the self-study for the visit will also be used for program review. All education programs are scheduled for an accreditation visit fall 2007.

Graduate Programs

Our new cohort in Learning Development began in Browning during Spring Semester 2005. We anticipate the cohort will retain 15 students. Jonathon Richter, Curtis Smeby, and Bob Kurtz did a nice job of organizing several components of the program and getting the cohort off to a good start.

John Foley and Darlene Sellers completed a three-year schedule of classes for Counselor Education. This schedule should make it easier for students in the program to plan when and where they can take their coursework. Due to the efforts for Drs. Sellers and Foley,

we are starting to see an increase in enrollment and the number of graduates in this program.

During the past year, we had six students complete the internship for the K-12 administrative endorsement program. Our pilot test of the internship manual developed by Dr. Duane Bigler went well—we will be making final revisions this summer.

Employment Opportunities...

We have several faculty searches in progress including history, elementary education, civil engineering technology, and nursing. Hopefully, we will have these positions filled by the end of June. Byron Opus will return to teaching business full-time and leave athletics up to the new athletic director.

We also have several other positions that are currently open including (but not limited to) a field experience director for education, recruitment specialist, and women's basketball coach. If you haven't already noticed, Human Resources now host a section on our web page for employment opportunities with MSU-Northern. Special thanks to Jackie Salveson and Marianne Hoppe for making this happen!

And Additional (those not mentioned above) Kudos goes to...

Lynn Stilger along with all faculty, staff, and students who assist with the SkillsUSA Conference...Over 400 high school students attend this annual event and numerous faculty and staff work very hard to make this event a reality!

All the staff (and especially Cindy Small) who organized the Awards Day ceremony...

Darlene Sellers for being nominated by the National Education Association (NEA) to the NCATE Board of Examiners. Darlene will attend a one-week training session during the summer. The appointment will be for three years.

Tom Welch and Bill Danley for their many years of advising the Postsecondary Agriculture Students (PAS) club...This year the club competed at the national conference in Albany, New York. The livestock team placed third.

Carol Reifschneider, Larry Strizich, Kevin Johnson, and Steve Jamruszka for being active members of the OCHE transfer audit committees...

Randy Bachemeier and Bruce Patera for completing their master's degree in Learning Development through MSU-Northern...

Chuck Jensen, Carrie Molitor, Byron Opus, Jackie Salveson, and Nate Larson for completing their MBA degree at The University of Montana...

Steve Jamruszka for spending significant time and effort writing code in Banner that will allow the system to complete timely degree audits...Steve will be conducting a training session for Registrars throughout the Montana University System on how to use the audit

procedure. Steve received training on the basics on this type of procedure when he attended a Summitt training session in (unfortunately!) Hawaii.

Suzanne Tilleman and Roger Stone for spending many hours preparing for the play, *Proof*. Hopefully, everyone reading this update was able to attend this outstanding production.

And, a special note of recognition to Krista Milligan...As many of you know, Krista had some health problems this semester. However, Krista showed up (with her camera) for the SkillsUSA awards day and the University Awards day to congratulate the students on their awards. Thank you, Krista, for being such an excellent role model for all of us!

May the sun be with you...
Cheri