ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
Monday September 15, 2014 3:45-5:15 Frost Commons  

Attending: Deb Tobine, Roxana Wright, David Zehr, Stephanie Halter, Christin Chenard, Roger Blake, Kerry Yurewicz, Jason Cordeira, Jennifer Green, Jim Hundrieser, Kelly Swindelhurst, Chris Ramsden  
Absent: George Gilmore, Jamie Hannon, Brandon Pierre  

1. Introductions and welcome new members  

2. Elect chair  
Stephanie Halter was unanimously elected chair! Congratulations!  

3. Review AAC charge  
Jim Hundrieser is a member of the committee currently. The bylaws will be adjusted accordingly (remove the Senior Associate Director of Admissions membership from the composition language).  

Jamie and Roger will continue to co-chair the Integrity Panels.  

A review of duties may show areas for future committee work:  

- A new tool - Student Success Collaborative – will allow us to drill down more on student categories as related to academic performance- in relation to point (5) in the “Duties” (Jim).  
- Point (6)- advising practices evaluation- may be an area for more development for the committee this year (Stephanie).  
- For point (7), Deb Tobine provides advisor training to new faculty and follow-up sessions. A subgroup of the committee will be looking at the First Year Experience Task Force comments for suggestions on advisor training and consider what other institutions are doing: Roger, Stephanie, Deb, Jim, David.  

4. Additions/changes to spring meeting minutes?  
No.  

5. New Business:  
   a. Review Warnings, Probation and Severance counts sent to us by Deb Tobine, Undergraduate Advising last May (Attached).  
Decline/improvement over the years was due to changes in admission standards, more proactive activities with students in academic difficulty, a specialized “home” for deciding students, more communications to students and advisors, more advisor follow-up, more counselling of students to withdraw, the CARE process, families understand the financial impact better and advise students accordingly, etc.  

Deb will send a report that is more broken down by gender, residency, etc.  

The motion to require six weeks grades for all students was defeated twice by the PSU Faculty. The Student Success Task Force recommends six weeks grades for all students. Faculty opposing the motion seemed to state that junior and senior students should be able to do this on their own, rather than viewing this as an early warning system. Reframing the issue may change the vote.  

Additional issues for consideration/issues that could add to the rationale:
Could a grade of NR be entered in the six grade report for upper level students?
Could we at least link the six week grades submission to academic difficulty?
Do we know of practices at other comparator institutions?
Student Success Task Force could be enlisted to help talk to faculty about the benefits of six weeks grades for all students.
Should the motion be voted down, the system could be open on a volunteer basis?
David will bring back the motion.

c. Discussion on issues with current PSU minor policy by David Zehr, Associate VP for Undergraduate Studies

David: PSU does not have a good definition of a “minor” program. David visited with the PSU Curriculum Committee today and asked for input on a proposed new language (handout). A definition and a change in policy would come from AAC.

Additional considerations:

- Jim: Lack of clarity makes it challenging for Admissions to promote minors.
- Deb will bring back information on how many minors will be affected.
- The difference between a minor and a certificate is unclear.
- Having a minor may differentiate graduates or create a talking point for job interviews.
- May be perceived by students as a plus.
- A stricter definition may be penalizing our students, where at other institutions it is “easier” to get a minor.

Will be placed on the next meeting’s agenda to give David an opportunity to talk about it.

Other discussion:

Roger: Currently, the advisor does not get notification about the student’s academic integrity’s “history”. The concern is that the information should be treated with the best intend for the student to succeed. Advisors are also faculty.