Undergraduate Studies Council
1/29/09

PRESENT: Berger, Choi, Crump, Hall, Jaffee, Jones, Kaye, Milatovic, Perry, Reedy, Taylor, Schwam-Baird, Senior (for Roberts), Wilburn

David Jaffee opened the meeting at 2:35pm.

Minutes from the November 19, 2008 meeting were reviewed and approved.

First Year Experience
Marnie Jones distributed a handout with information about a proposed pass/fail distance learning course for Fall, 2009. She explained that COAS dean Barb Hetrick suggested the development of an online course for freshmen after the First Year Experience subcommittee ran into difficulty when trying to extend Week of Welcome and incorporate academic components into its programming. Jones said the class would be focused on facilitating student transition to UNF, and would be aimed at addressing retention and time-to-degree issues. She said that it was being suggested that the course be facilitated through Blackboard, and she would be the instructor.

The group discussed the proposed course:
  o Katrina Hall suggested that guidance for life and responsibility issues be incorporated into the curriculum in some way. The group further discussed the curriculum for the course.
  o Marnie Jones said she would be working with Karen Reedy to determine how this course would overlap with APP and SLS courses.
  o Jones said there had been discussion about whether this course should be credit-bearing, but it had been determined that it would be a 0-credit, pass/fail course.
  o There were concerns shared among the group about the logistical operation of maintaining a course enrolling all freshmen students.
  o Vivian Senior asked what the consequences of failing the course would be. It was determined that it would show on a student’s academic transcript, but not affect his/her GPA.
  o Concerns were shared about the technological capabilities in Blackboard to manage student work for a very large course. It was suggested that Marnie Jones meet with CIRT about this issue.
  o Shira Schwam-Baird asked about data on the effectiveness of first year seminar courses at other institutions. David Jaffee said that there is good data from some institutions that use sound methodology, and negative data from others. He said he thinks UNF does not currently do enough in this area and he would encourage the trial of new ideas.
  o Katrina Hall suggested that perhaps a conversation with a group of students could help in designing the course in a way that would be most useful for them.
UNF Reads!
David Jaffee reported that a book had been selected for the Fall, 2009 UNF Reads! program: *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* by Daniel Pink. Jaffee said the book will be given to all freshmen during orientation, but it’s unlikely that the University will be able to bring in the author to speak. He told the group that many of the same programming that was done in Fall, 2008 will be implemented again for the 2009 program.

Freshman Learning Communities
David Jaffee said that the current Freshman Interest Group (FIG) structure is not sustainable due to the budget situation. He said there is also an issue of scalability within the current model, since FIGs were widely promoted but never more than 10% of the freshman class participated in them. Jaffee reported that in the future, large sections of social science general education courses will connect with smaller sections of ENC1101. The ENC 1101 instructors will know that their students all share another common experience, and will have the discretion to decide to what extent they will take advantage of that opportunity. Jaffee said that a significant number of freshman students are expected to be linked in this model.

Week of Welcome
David Jaffee reported that he had communicated the Council’s recommendation that the WOW program be expanded to the provost and the president. He said that President Delaney strongly supported this recommendation, but said there was an issue of financial resources in implementing changes. Jaffee said that WOW will start on Friday this year instead of Wednesday, as proposed by the Council; once resources are available, the program will be expanded.

Strategic Planning
David Jaffee reported that the strategic planning teams are still in process, and are currently trying to identify comparable institutions which have been very successful in particular areas for use in setting benchmarks for UNF. Jaffee said that Provost Workman has instructed the groups to think in terms of what should be in place ideally, even though resources may not be available to support initiatives immediately. He said the process should help the Council with future planning.

Director of Center for Community-based Learning
David Jaffee reported that a director had been hired for the newly-instituted Center for Community-based Learning. Jaffee said that Mark Falbo would be starting in early February, and would be asked to join the Undergraduate Studies Council.

Meeting adjourned at 3:35pm.
Minutes submitted by Melody Taylor