Undergraduate Committee  
December 10, 2008; 10:00 a.m.  
Minutes

Present: Michelle Dean, Annette Easton, Gary Grudnitski, Kathy Krentler, Bill Sterk  
Absent: Josh Lyon (ABSC Representative), Sandi Williams

1. Future Meeting Planning  
The Committee tentatively agreed that the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, between 10:00 a.m and noon were good meeting times for the Spring 2009 semester. Grudnitski (chair) will confirm this with all members, and if appropriate, schedule the Dean’s Conference Room for the Spring term.

2. International Programs Update  
Krentler updated the Committee on the progress through the curriculum process of two international programs previously approved by the Undergraduate Committee.

   - **San Mediterranee Program** – This program was approved by the University AP&P Committee on 12-9-08.
   - **IPC Certificate Program** – This program will be discussed by the CBA Steering Committee on 12-15-08.

3. Assessment  
The Committee discussed benchmarks for our students’ oral communication skills. It was determined that two levels of standard would be appropriate – a percentage of students that we believe should meet expectations for oral communication, and a percentage of students who should exceed expectations. This provides a “floor” of acceptability and also puts an emphasis on striving for excellence. After discussion the Committee established the following benchmarks:

   - 85% of our students should meet or exceed expectations for oral communication skills.
   - 50% of our students should exceed expectations for oral communication skills.

It was further discussed and determined that these benchmarks should apply to each of the five criteria that comprise the oral communication skills rubric, because the “grand total” score is less meaningful due to the compensatory nature of the scoring rubric.

Krentler then distributed a preliminary report of the findings from the data collection effort that has occurred over the past two weeks. We have 60 observations. It was agreed that Krentler would check with Jim Lackritz, regarding the acceptability of this sample size. The Committee noted that in the current sample the benchmark of “85% of our students should meet or exceed expectations for oral communication skills” was achieved for the criteria of Organization, Voice Quality and Pace, Mannerisms and Body Language, and Professionalism and Appearance. The benchmark was not achieved for
the criterion of Rapport with Audience and Use of Media. Further, for the benchmark of half of our students meeting or exceeding expectations for oral communication skills, the only criterion meeting this benchmark was “Professionalism and Appearance.”

In light of these preliminary findings the Committee discussed where in the program students learn and practice oral communication skills. All students are required to take an oral communication course as part of their general education requirements. Beyond this requirement, the Committee agreed that it was uncertain as to the extent students are required to make presentations, especially in upper division CBA courses. It was agreed that an inventory needs be taken to determine which required courses in the College require students to make oral presentations. This information will be used to further inform a discussion of the implications of the data.

4. **Accounting Issue**

Grudnitski introduced a discussion of means by which stronger performance in the Accounting major might be achieved. The SOA hypothesizes that stronger performance in ACC 201 and 202 (or their community college equivalents) predicts stronger overall performance in the major. If assessment data supports this hypothesis, the SOA is interested in considering a change to require a grade of “B or better” in the two lower division prep Accounting courses (ACC 201 and 202). The Committee discussed whether this type of change is better accomplished by instituting the grade requirement as an admission to the major criterion or as a prerequisite to ACC 321, the first course required of Accounting majors. The pros and cons of both approaches were considered. It was agreed that no further discussion of the issue was appropriate until an analysis of the supporting data had occurred.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m. This was the last meeting of the Fall semester.