

AAC Meeting Minutes: April 8th, 2021

In attendance: Jazmyn Thomas, Sarah Roth, Clint Smith, Lana Summers, Crystal Nourie, Emily Ullsmith, Derrek Drenckpohl, Janet Tulley, Soemer Simmons, Brent Kane, Wendi Whitman, Amy Hurd, Jess Ray

- I. Chair's remarks
- II. Secretary/Treasurer Report
 - a. Approval of minutes
 - i. Motion to approve by Brent, second by Jazmyn.
- III. Old Business
 - a. Advisor Caseload Concerns – Brent
 - i. The Provost has some funding for additional advisor positions on campus. It is not an easy process to determine how to allocate these funds. We know there are very high caseloads in the College of Business. Advising a number of sequences adds to the complexity, and some advisors have a number of duties outside of advisement. The reasons for that vary and may be specific to that department and staff. The motivation for additional responsibilities can vary and could be outdated. The physical space adds to the complexity- a lot of places don't have extra office space. This adds another challenge.
 - ii. We need to look at redistributing uneven caseloads within the department as well. Why does one advisor have a lot more than another within the same unit?
 - iii. There are currently some part-time advisors and full-time advisors. A lot of areas need half of an advisor, and we need to find solutions for that issue. Can areas share a person?
 - iv. Some units still have faculty advisors and we know there are often issues with that model. Some advisors have 9 or 10 month contracts and when that advisor is off contract, all of that goes to University College.
 - v. We see the same people going to training. Those staff that create errors that can add time to degree aren't at training and that's a problem.
 - vi. Access to CS advisor notes is critical- those were very helpful this summer and fall.
 - vii. Currently, there is a large difference in salaries among advisors. Quite the range.
 - viii. Floating advisors a possibility based on enrollment- move them where they're needed.
 - ix. Minors are another factor to weigh. Some IDS minors are advised voluntarily by staff while others are compensated. Some students want more access to a minor advisor and to get their insight/expertise as opposed to self-advising their way through a minor checklist.

- x. Student Success Center advisors could be an option. CAST and COE working on this. So far, it seems the purpose is going to be pretty different between the two. Mennonite has a faculty member who is a student success person, which is very different from an advisor role.
- xi. Need to look at different metrics. We retain Honors students at 95%. Should we expand the Honors Program? Should we add another advisor there so they can add 125 students?
- xii. Hiring additional advisors is related to the issue of job descriptions. If this type of funding is infused into academic advising, there are expectations of being very intrusive with advising. As the advising caseload gets down to a manageable number, how should that shift expectations?
- xiii. Intrusive advising has already been increasing- a lot of things funnel through advisors right now. Title and job duty differences- coordinator vs. advisor.
- xiv. We need an audit of advisors. What do we need to examine?
 - 1. Caseload, overrides, student workers/peer advisors/GA, drop-in advising, minors, sequences. Special initiatives (e.g. specific cohort), expectations for interacting with prospective students, course scheduling, curriculum committees. Accreditation reports, program review. internships, student teaching. Combined programs (3+2, 4+1)- more complex undergrad/grad programs. Running a student ambassador program. Do they teach as part of their job description? International advisor/special population, Honors liaison, study abroad involvement, committee work. Admissions and scholarships.
 - 2. A spreadsheet with checkboxes- does this person do these things?
 - 3. Academic expectations a factor- would Teacher Ed have a higher expectation for intrusive advising because they need to maintain a higher GPA than a POL major, for instance?
- xv. What is the future of advising? Because it's so decentralized, it would not be an easy task to tackle. What can we do to implement best practices more readily? Want this to be advisor led. Amy Hurd would like to have some sort of plan that shows where we want to be. 15 years ago that type of planning created this committee.
- xvi. Do Chairs and Deans know what they need in regards to advisement? Lack of context can make it hard- they aren't aware of how their situation compares to others.
- xvii. Some part-time advisement is wanted- some advisors are looking for that and want that. It has worked well in some departments.
- xviii. Sharing advisors could possibly work when there's overlap. A person could be trained on multiple areas.
- xix. Continue sharing feedback with Amy Hurd and Amelia.

IV. New Business

- a. Marginalized student working group update – Jazmyn

- i. Working group is considering best practices for working with marginalized students. Readings could go on the Wiki- How To Be An Anti-Racist book is an example. The working group wants to focus on this and share resources publicly that advisors could use and summarize best practices. University College has a Teams site that is similar. Make it a space where people can add things like articles, books, podcasts, etc. Include Lana's "Let's Talk Race" notes since students talk about their classroom and advisement experiences. Lana currently sends notes to U College and staff and administrators find it helpful. Lana looks for resources to share at each session.
- ii. Jazmyn collaborated with Christa Platt when she started working with PHENOM students and that was very informative. For new advisors who haven't worked with marginalized students before, the Wiki could be a good place to get information.

V. Campus Solutions/Registration

a. Opportunity for Future Delayed Registration – Jazmyn

- i. U College advisor approached Jazmyn to ask if it was possible to delay registration in the future like we did this semester. Currently, it's early in the advising window so it's hard to say how things will play out this semester. It has been nice for U College staff to have more time to meet with students. Peer advisors have more availability as well. Staff won't have an issue seeing students prior to registration. Department/School advisors can feel like the intensity of registration has been prolonged.
- ii. Dept advisors say they'll have a better idea once juniors and sophomores have registered. Main concern this semester has been Transfer Days.
- iii. Will have more feedback at the next AAC meeting.
- iv. More confusion among students this semester because the dates have changed. Most students aren't on campus and that's been challenging for communication. Department advisors are worried next week is going to be very overwhelming.
- v. Jess is looking at how we compare to other institutions regarding enrollment/registration time frames. He will send an email to the group with information.
- vi. Have to look at billing due dates, when scheduling needs to be done, textbooks, instructors assigned. If we extend it, are we going to have more problems getting that information in time? From a scheduling perspective, it could be beneficial because the fall time frame is very short. However, right now we are scheduled to shut off registration the Friday of finals week. That's not a long window for advance registration.

- vii. Do we continue to turn registration on and off? Northern, a PeopleSoft school, leaves it on. That would be a cultural change. Some departments like having it shut down so they have time to respond when things are not constantly changing.
- b. Related issue- WX time frame. Continue having a later date?
 - i. Housing and Athletics have strong opinions- could have a negative impact on them. But the majority of stakeholders who responded said it was fine. Retention likes moving it back so students have more assessments to help them make a decision. Not sure how far to go- current time frame may be a little too far, may want to move it up slightly from where it's been this year.
 - ii. From the student perspective, the late W/X and registration time frame is working well. They can drop a course and then register to retake it. Transfer students often used to late withdraw option at their previous institution.
 - iii. Jess will return to Academic Affairs group in August to make a recommendation. If we have a best date for students, let Jess know.
 - iv. Unfortunately, some students are reporting they still don't have a graded assessment at this point in the semester.
 - v. Some students are able to wait, get tutoring, and work with their professor and end up doing well. Some do better withdrawing earlier, and investing their time in their other courses.
 - vi. It should be easier to track course withdrawals with the new online form. Could compare data from this semester to previous semesters. Are there trends?
 - vii. Some students are now dropping a course after they've registered for fall and the course they drop is a prereq. We allow drops for current co-requisites for most departments other than Chemistry and a few others.
- c. Related conversation- Does a large group have priority registration? Not as large as some of us initially thought. May be adding eSports in the future as they travel sometimes. Some students are part of multiple groups. Groups come and go- BRMM, library, and dining employees used to have it. Sarah will send Judy Curtis' email with priority groups and overall numbers to the council.

VI. Committee Updates

- a. Assessment
 - i. Goal to have report to AAC by finals week. A lot of what is in the report mirrors what Amy and Amelia commented on at the beginning of the meeting. Hope that the report will reinforce this message.
- b. Technology

- i. Considering topics and expectations for training. Talking to AT about security of advising notes in various locations.
 - c. Teacher Education
 - i. Discussed having an update session this spring but planning to delay that until fall in the hopes that ISBE will have more clear-cut, permanent information at that point.
 - d. PDT
 - i. Has not met since last meeting.
 - e. Mentoring & Connections
 - i. April is a very busy month for advisors this year due to registration and the committee wanted to delay a coffee hour until May.
 - f. AAC Awards Selection
 - i. Recognition ceremony happening this fall? Soemer wants to communicate the plan to the recipients. New fiscal year starts July 1- if we want to recognize this year's recipients in fall, then we need to account in the budget for 2 ceremonies next year- 1 in the fall for 2020 and 1 in the spring for 2021 recipients. We have already ordered and paid for the plaques. Would need to consider food and rental costs.
 - ii. More special to do an in person recognition. Founder's Day was different this year and they missed out on that. We can give them an in person recognition.
 - iii. In 2020, we had an early February Spring Advisor Day at Alumni Center with recognition ceremony immediately following.
 - iv. Could do them both together in the spring of 2022 following Spring Advisor Day. Is that too long of a wait for this year's recipients?
 - v. Plan to recognize this year's recipients immediately following Fall Advisor Day and 2021-2022 recipients immediately following Spring Advisor Day. This is if Fall Advisor Day can be in person.
 - vi. We need to make sure there will be enough space for honorees' family and friends to join. Will need to consider food- order cookies.
 - vii. Right now let's hope for fall, but the back-up option is to recognize both next spring.

VII. Student Representative Report

- a. No update this week.

VIII. Other Business?

- a. Wendi said HR is interested in pursuing a baseline advisor description because they see this may be a gap. However, they see the issues we discussed previously in terms of the issues creating that.
- b. Advising pieces included in [Institutional Transformation Assessment \(ITA\) Pilot \(aplu.org\)](http://aplu.org). We are going to start this later in the spring and all of next year. Focus on student success and equity. Amelia will post things on the Wiki to keep everyone involved.

IX. Next meeting – April 22nd

Submitted by:
Sarah Roth
April 14, 2021