

3-25-2003

## Academic Policy Advisory Committee meeting minutes, March 25, 2003

Minnesota State University Moorhead

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March 25, 2003 APAC Minutes

Members present: Midgarden, chairperson; Bolduc, Borchers, Conteh, Dobitz, Enz Finken, Flack, Gess, Jeppson, Max, Mills, Quigley, Shaw, Shreve, Wallert, Weckler.

Members absent: Olerud, Ruth, Schwartz, Simpson, Stockrahm, Strong.

**1. Approval of the 3/4/03 APAC Minutes**

Flack moved. Conteh seconded to approve.

Motion carried unanimously.

**2. Women's Studies Program**

(This item was tabled at the March 4 APAC meeting.)

Susan Imbarrato was present to answer questions.

Shreve moved. Bolduc seconded to remove the following proposal from the table.  
Motion to untable carried unanimously.

Change the list of electives: Eliminate SOC 375: Sociology of Health and Medicine [C] (3 cr.) and add SOC 308: Introduction to Gerontology (3)

Motion to approve carried unanimously.

**3. Reducing the number of credits currently required to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree**

Vice President Midgarden stated that an on-line survey would be developed to receive feedback from the campus community. The Student Senate will discuss the proposal and submit a recommendation. The Deans will discuss the proposal with their Student Advisory Board Committees. APAC members will be sent survey information and other feedback as soon as it is available. APAC action on the proposal is scheduled at the April 15, 2003 meeting.

Midgarden distributed the list of departments that offer a Bachelor of Arts degree and their vote of either: In favor, Not Opposed/Neutral or Opposed. She also distributed a list estimating the number of current electives that each Bachelor of Arts degree has after subtracting Liberal Studies courses and degree requirements.

President Barden was present at the meeting. He distributed a memo to the committee that included the following information to support this proposal. (This memo was also distributed to the campus community on March 14 [prior to the APAC meeting]):

- ❖ MnSCU Board Policy states that a Baccalaureate degree may be awarded at the level of 120 total credits.
- ❖ Most MSUM students take more credits than is necessary to graduate.
- ❖ Reducing required credits can mean improved student success.
- ❖ Reducing the number of credits does not affect the perceived quality of a baccalaureate degree.
- ❖ Our students need some sort of financial relief.

He stated that the B.A. and the B.S. degrees are distinguishable by the MnSCU Board. He noted the following:

- ❖ 120-128 semester credits is the requirement of the MnSCU Board of Trustees. A full time student generally enrolls in 15 credits per semester for four years which adds up to 120 credits. Students can then go on to graduate school if they want to continue their education.
- ❖ Reducing the B.A. degree requirements would help the student be efficient with their time and tuition. We live in a culture where students are not always focused on a plan that efficiently produces their careers as educated people.
- ❖ The University of Minnesota, the University of Wisconsin Madison and other national institutions require students to complete fewer credits than 128 for a degree.
- ❖ There is no prestige attached to a specific number of required degree credits.
- ❖ MnSCU expects their institutions to be accountable. Midgarden currently serves on an MnSCU Accountability Task Force. The efficient use of state appropriations, the student's and family's ability to pay and the ability to match the learning objectives are all measures of accountability.
- ❖ MSUM has responsibility to new entering students to assist them with the economic consequences of obtaining students loans vs. working, borrowing less and spreading out their course load. Developing a workshop explaining the economics of a college education and the choices students must make would be helpful for students and families to make informed decisions.

Barden stated that the economic situation of the University is not a compelling argument to not reduce 8 credits from a student's program. Barden stated that MSUM will continue to work hard to recruit new students. He mentioned that some state institutions have capped their freshmen admits. MSUM may have to consider capping enrollment as the budget details develop and limit what we can cover with the resources available to us. Education is our main objective and we must meet our objectives. Midgarden stated that the New Center currently has 309 students admitted for the 2003/2004 academic year and have had to stop admitting students for next year.

Midgarden stated that MnSCU recently approved revisions to the policy for baccalaureate programs which changes the number of required upper-division courses. The policy states: "a 40-credit minimum in the number of upper-division credits [The previous minimum was 1/3 of the total number of credits, which meant that programs with more the 121 credits had to have more the 40 upper-division credits.] MSUM will need to determine if its current policy should be revised as well.

The committee discussed the following:

- ❖ The history of why 128 credits was set as the required number of credits for the Bachelor of Arts degree.
- ❖ Why not a lower number than 120 credits?
- ❖ The proposal to reduce the Bachelor of Science degree. (That proposal will be discussed at a later APAC meeting.)
- ❖ Financial impact on the University if the B.A. degree is reduced.

- ❖ Working students prolong their college education because of job and course conflicts and their ability to pay for their education.
- ❖ The perceived erosion of quality in education if the B.A. degree was reduced.
- ❖ Some students come to college lacking background knowledge so MSUM should not reduce the amount of required education.
- ❖ Collaborate with K-12 education to improve students' background knowledge prior to them entering college.
- ❖ Consider students' needs and let them make the choice of taking additional courses after they have completed their degree requirements. They may choose to use their education for other experiences that are just as valuable as being in a classroom.

APAC will act on this proposal and decide on a motion of accepting either 120 or 124 credits to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree at the April 15 meeting.

#### **4. Master of Liberal Arts**

Dean Quigley answered questions regarding the proposal as Mark Chekola was unable to attend the meeting.

Bolduc moved. Wallert seconded to approve:

Dropping MLA 601: Introduction to Liberal Arts Research (1 cr.) from the program

The committee discussed how students in the program would obtain the skills to research if this course was dropped.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Reduce the number of credits required for the MLA degree from 32 to 31.**

Weckler moved. Conteh seconded to approve.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **5. Accounting Department**

Lee Dexter was present to answer questions.

Shaw moved. Wallert seconded to approve the following:

Drop the following courses:

ACCT 320A: Employment Law (2 cr.)

ACCT 320C: Employment Law (4 cr.)

ACCT 495: Advanced Topics in Business Law (1-3 cr.)

Motion carried unanimously.

The committee had no concerns with the following minor changes:

- ❖ Change course number of ACCT 320B: Employment Law B (3 cr.) to: 320
- ❖ Change course description and prerequisite of ACCT 330: Intermediate Accounting I (3 cr.)
- ❖ Change course description of ACCT 460: Audit I and ACCT 461: Audit II.
- ❖ Remove the following sentence from all upper-level accounting course descriptions  
"Prerequisites may be waived by consent of instructor."

## **6. Business Administration Department**

Tom Pearce and Jim Swenson were present to answer questions.

Bolduc moved. Wallert seconded to approve to add:

Speech 301: Business and Professional Communication as another option for Finance, International Business, Management and Marketing majors.

Motion carried unanimously.

Borchers moved. Shaw seconded to drop:

MGMT 421: Decision Analysis (3 cr.)

Motion carried unanimously.

Bolduc moved. Wallert seconded to approve the following:

Business Administration majors who now must take one of five quantitative courses from a list that includes MGMT 421, must now take one quantitative course chosen from a list reduced to the other four (ECON 370: Econometrics; MGMT 424: Management Science; MKTG 419: Distribution Management or MKTG 422: Marketing Research).

Motion carried unanimously.

Pearce requested that the "I" in the title of MGMT 480 be removed.

The committee had no concerns with the following minor change:  
Change the course number and course title of MGMT 424: Management Science to  
MGMT 480: Management Science.

## **7. Technology Department – Construction Management B.S. Degree**

Scott Seltveit was present to answer questions.

Wallert moved. Borchers seconded to approve removing:  
CM 370: Construction Documents and Specifications (3 cr.) and a Mgmt elective (3 cr.) and  
add ACCT 205: Environment of Law (4 cr.)  
Motion approved unanimously.

The committee had no concern with the following minor change:  
Decrease credits of CM 465: Construction Safety from 3 to 2.

Weckler moved. Conteh seconded to approve changing:  
ENG 243: Eng Mechanics I – Statics for students to take either: ENG 243: Eng Mechanics I or  
TECH 223: Statics for Technologists.

Selveit requested that the prerequisite for TECH 223 should be listed as Math 142 OR  
Math 229.

Motion carried unanimously.

Enz Finken moved. Bolduc seconded to approve adding:  
MATH 142: Pre-Calculus (4 cr.) and dropping MATH 229: Fundamentals of Applied Math (3 cr.)  
Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.  
Gloria Riopelle