

Educational Policy Committee Minutes

October 31, 2024

Hybrid meeting. In attendance: Fathima Wakeel, Joanna Mishtal, Linda Bell, Lucy Napper, Andreea Kiss, Terry-Ann Jones, Naomi Rothman, Ahmed Rahman, Stacy DeVivo, Tom Hammond, Yue Yu, Luke Eva, Aaron Cebrero, Megan Stratton, Dan Warner, Jessecae Marsh, and Tim Uhrich

Brief announcement that we have two more undergraduate reps starting. Student Senate wasn't able to get College of Health or IC program reps this semester because there's no one else who was willing to serve and able to meet at the set meeting time. So, they will do another election in the spring for these positions.

1. Approval of October 10 minutes.

The minutes were approved.

2. Ed Policy C&C presented 5 course changes coming from Business that were previously approved in Ed Policy C&C Subcommittee.

There was very little discussion as these were routine changes (e.g. course deactivation of a course no longer being taught, new internship course for CPT/international students, updating pre-requisites). Course change proposals for ACCT 001, ACCT 309, ACCT 373, BUS 203, and MGT 301 passed unanimously.

3. Dan Warner from Admissions; discussing potential changes to 3.2.3 (process for transferring colleges).

Currently, the policy states that students must “have achieved sophomore status and have completed at least 12 credits while in their college of matriculation before pursuing any transfer to another college within Lehigh. Students on academic probation may transfer between colleges with the permission of the committee on standing of students. In addition, each receiving college may require the completion (with a minimum grade of C-) of no more than three introductory courses – courses without prerequisites – before transfer occurs. Students considering such a transfer must confer with their advisers to begin the process.

The College of Business requires a student to successfully complete either MATH 081 or MATH 021, and ECO 001 before transferring to that college. Courses considered equivalent to these courses will also satisfy the requirement such as approved transfer credit (including AP courses) for these courses taken at other institutions, or the successful completion of MATH 075 and MATH 076, or MATH 031, which are equivalent to MATH 021. A completed Petition to Change Colleges must be submitted no later than three weeks prior to the start of registration for the semester in which they wish to make the transfer."

Background was provided that this is being brought forward for discussion as there is a concern from Business-intended students who are admitted through CAS that they can't get into Business classes until their second year. Should we have a process for appeals to allow them to move colleges sooner? This was discussed at a recent meeting with the Associate Deans & Deputy Provost Terry-Ann Jones, and while having some sort of appeals process was discussed, a number of potential downfalls to such an approach were raised. The general sentiment at that meeting was to not change R&P regarding the college change policy, but questions emerged about what admissions looks for in determining which students are eligible to apply directly into the College of Business, thus leading to the discussion in Ed Policy today with Dan Warner.

It was reported that there is a dynamic and complex set of considerations that admissions uses when assessing a prospective student's level of quantitative or calculus abilities. Admissions also has to take into account considerations of equity, or context, and of space. Over and under-enrolling colleges can create a lot of issues. Admissions staff goes through rigorous training to understand context and in trying to apply an equitable metric along the way. Staff complete a conflict of interest form to avoid influence from familial relationships, etc. These protocols limit potentials for bias in admissions process.

It was reported that Admissions will entertain requests for students to change colleges before the start of the fall semester; however, the extent to which this can be honored is largely determined by capacity constraints.

Much of the ensuing discussion centered on how prospective students are encouraged to apply into CAS if they are not prepared for Business due to a lack of demonstrated quantitative abilities.

There were many questions about the standards for admission into the College of Business; it was reported that it varies every year, and then in general the applicant pool has been getting larger & more competitive. In consultation with the CoB Dean, it has been decided that there needs to be significant quantitative preparation in order to be able to handle the CoB curriculum. Admissions takes the approach that this does not necessarily mean that applicants must have taken calculus in high school, especially as some high school students get put on a track that does not include calculus or have access to calculus courses. If their application

materials suggest that if they have other strong quant abilities, they are still considered for Business. While a lack of calculus puts an applicant at a disadvantage and the majority of students that are applying to CoB will have had calculus in high school, Admissions does look at and take into account the entire quantitative background of CoB applicants.

Some of the challenges or issues discussed in terms of communication surrounding a calculus requirement for admission into Business included issues with athletic coaches giving bad advice to prospective students. Some of the unclear or inaccurate messaging about the need for calculus could also be coming from High School counselors or online sources like Reddit.

Concerns were raised that a large proportion of CAS first-year students say that they intend to move to CoB from day one on campus. CAS advisors consistently find that students who want to move to CoB report that they were encouraged to apply into CAS due to a lack of high school calculus. The number of students expressing an interest in leaving CAS from day one on campus can be demoralizing for CAS advisors, and some students whose skill sets don't align with the curriculum in Business really struggle in their first semesters at Lehigh in trying to take the necessary prerequisites, including calc at Lehigh, to make the switch to Business.

Some CoB faculty did note the importance of admitted students have quantitative training, and in calculus in particular. However, equity issues in terms of not all high schools or high school students having access to calc courses was brought up as a concern at several points in the discussion.

Admissions does not want this to be the message that students are hearing (that they must have calculus). There is a need for enhanced communication.

There was some discussion and questions, mainly coming from the student representatives, on the different leveling and calculus options.

Some other discussion points included the need to include the Deans and Provost in discussions about if there is a need to require high school calculus for CoB applicants, the need for continued and increased messaging on the importance of applying to the college a student actually wants to be in for cohort building, professional opportunities, etc., and the observation that in comparison we see far fewer college changes from CAS to Engineering, where students also need to take calculus as part of the core curriculum. It was raised that perhaps there is more movement into Business than Engineering from CAS because there is a greater diversity in the academic offerings in Business as compared to Engineering.

The Math department is experimenting with A and B versions of MATH 081, as well as revamping prep for calc classes, in order to help more students be successful in calculus at Lehigh.

The general conclusion of the discussion was that no one is really interested in revising the college change policy. But we really need to think about the kind of messaging and communication that occurs with admissions, and then once students are admitted and on campus. Questions emerged about the number of students who express interest in changing colleges, the numbers that actually do, and for those that change colleges, are they successful? Getting fine tuned data on the latter is likely challenging and not straight forward.

4. Decided to skip agenda item on R&P 3.7.1 as the folks leading that discussion could not be here today. Moved onto a discussion of 3.2.2.1 regarding cross-listing courses.

RAS is seeking clarification on why classes should be cross-listed. RAS says that departments sometimes say that they are cross-listing a course for marketing purposes, and that marketing is not an appropriate justification for cross-listing. The concern about cross-listing also comes from the perspective that cross-listing a course is cumbersome and a lot of work for staff in RAS.

It was discussed that cross-listing in CoB is sometimes done to allow departments to set aside seats for groups of students; it is a means of controlling and predicting capacity in courses.

In CAS, cross-listing is mainly done for courses in interdisciplinary programs. It gives an indicator to students of the pedagogy that is happening in a class. An example was presented about a cross-listed course in PSYC & HMS. This cross-listing tells students that this is not a normal PSYC course and that it will be taught from a different perspective; it will be a course that has more than PSYC students in it. So cross-listing allows students to come in informed of the approaches that will be taken in a class and in this way cross-listing is an important signal to students about the content of the course.

There are lots of challenges with cross-listed courses, such as there being more than one CRN for a course, students are often not sure if they will get different credit depending on how they register, the inability to have different prerequisites for the different subject codes, challenges in submitting grades for cross-listed courses as they appear in separate domains, and it's hard for students to see when cross-listed courses are full. Being able to have a cross-listed course under one CRN would make a huge difference with many of the current limitations. However, one CRN would take away the ability to limit seats by subject code, which would create challenges in Business.

At the faculty level, the University has come out saying that interdisciplinary is part of the strategic plan, we will continue to hire more faculty who have interdisciplinary backgrounds, and they will be offering interdisciplinary courses. Many faculty have MOUs that require that they offer cross-listed courses and this is evaluated as part of their promotion and tenure. Being able to document teaching across units for joint appointed faculty is very important.

The reasons for the need to cross-list courses also apply to provisional courses, which should not be prohibited from being cross-listing.

It was decided to revisit this topic at the next meeting when other representatives from RAS will be present.

5. There was a reminder that the next meeting is on Nov 14th, and that this meeting would be fully virtual. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Kelly Austin