

Minutes of the
Student Academic Development and Achievement Committee (SADA)
September 13, 2013

Attending: Cindy Hardy, Alex Fitts, Sarah Stanley, Joe Mason, Gordon Williams, Colleen Angiak, Curt Szuberla, Libby Eddy

Not attending: Bradley Uzzel, John Creed
Still need committee members from: Student Support Services, Kuskokwim Campus, CTC

Committee elections: We reviewed the committee definition from the Faculty Senate handbook. We are considering adding an additional CLA representative who is not from English. We reviewed the committee actions from last year: we had philosophical/pedagogical discussions about curriculum changes and placement levels, had conversations with the provost, with the registrar, and with visiting Writing Program Administrators. A number of us have made curriculum changes or designed trial courses based on those conversations.

We elected Cindy Hardy and Sandra Wildfeuer as co-chairs, with 7 people voting.

Cindy will continue to sit on Curricular Affairs as SADA chair. Sarah, Cindy, Alex and Sandra serve on the GERC committee.

Placement: Last year we were tracking statewide English and math alignment, after several statewide meetings last year.

English and DEVE faculty agreed to align ACCUPLACER entry points for all three campuses for DEVE and ENGL 111X courses. This is scheduled to be implemented in January (note: since this meeting it has become clear that this change will need to happen in Fall 14).

We touched on the idea of a new statewide admission alignment for the baccalaureate. The proposed alignment wouldn't change much for UAF. (Note: we will be discussing the SAC proposal at the 10/11 meeting).

Math placement—Gordon brought a draft motion to change the math placement method. He noted that there have been problems with success rates in core math courses and that part of the problem is placement. The Math and DEVM faculty propose replacing all currently used math placement tests (ACT, SAT, Accuplacer, COMPASS and ASSET) with ALEX PPL. This would not impact course descriptions but will impact placement. The MATH/DEVM faculty plan starting a trial of this in spring and have it in place for all MATH/DEVM placement in the fall. They report that other universities who have used this method see improvements in student success in Math.

With ALEKS PPL, students signing up for a course, will pay \$25 for the placement test, and will take it online. If they don't do as well as they want, they can work in modules to practice their skills before they retake the test. They can retake the test up to 4 times.

We discussed several concerns with this proposal. We agree that the Registrar, Admissions, and Advising need to work on this proposal. Some other concerns include whether the \$25 fee will be a disincentive to students to enroll at UAF. Gordon noted that UAF will be the first campus to pilot this, but the others plan to follow. We asked if students must take the refresher modules before they retest. The faculty and registrar are still working on when the test would need to be taken—May would be best, but many students don't enroll till August. Tech support needs to be sorted out. The Math/DEVM faculty will meet with Admissions and OIT to address these questions. Gordon also noted that ALEKS, unlike other placement tests, gives a student information on specific areas they need to work on.

We also discussed issues of access for rural students with limited connectivity. We also noted that students can be admitted to a class through instructor permission.

We noted that we are committed to Accuplacer as an institution, but that there may be some savings from students not taking the Math placement. Perhaps that savings could defray some of the cost of ALEKS?

We discussed whether this is a minor catalog change or if it needs a motion to change the original Faculty Senate placement motion. We decided that the original motion and catalog language do list other tests specifically, so we will need a motion. This will need to happen quickly since the faculty working on this hope to have a pilot ready for students in January. They plan a massive information campaign to inform students and advisors.

Student Satisfaction Survey: Alex noted that the BOR want a system-wide student satisfaction survey, and she is on the task force. This will be similar to NSSE but not identical. She invited members of the committee to submit three questions we would like to see on the survey.

Cindy noted that this fits in with our interest in developing a survey on obstacles to student success. We noted that there is institutional data on success, but no institutional data on failure. We recognize that there are many reasons why a student fails beyond prerequisites and course content but we don't know what impacts students and to what extent.

Times for meetings: 2nd Friday of the month 10-11:30pm.