

Student Academic Development and Achievement Committee (SADA)  
Meeting Minutes for November 15, 2012

Attending: Sandra Wildfeuer, Sarah Stanley, Joe Mason, Cindy Hardy, David Maxwell, Dana Greci

We had a number of members absent, so we limited our meeting to discussions.

Learning Commons update: Dana Greci reported that the Learning Commons has made progress with the next step for the committee is to look at the comments to see what mandates and what surprises arise from the responses. The committee will send representatives to a statewide meeting on Gen Ed in Anchorage, January 10 and 11.

Attendance Policy (CAC motion): We read this and discussed the motion. We wondered how this will be communicated to students.

Statewide alignment of courses: This was a follow up to the earlier discussion of the October 19 statewide meeting on alignment of DEVE/ENGL placement and courses. David reported that he had checked with his colleagues in Math and couldn't find evidence that a similar discussion of coordination had happened in math. He noted that the UAF cutoff scores for Math classes are higher than those at UAA. He also noted that the Math Department is not happy with Accuplacer.

We discussed the advantages and difficulties of developing a specific placement test in math or English. We noted that UW has its own placement test aligned with their statewide HS curriculum, and that colleagues from that institution report that it was a huge effort and took some time to develop. Sarah noted that English and DEVE faculty have been discussing designing a writing placement test, based on a common writing prompt and human scoring. David noted that multiple choice tests work better for math, and that the issue with Accuplacer for Math faculty is that it can't distinguish Calculus 1 and 2 placement. He also noted that Math is looking at the lower level classes to see if they are doing what the Math department wants to prepare students for higher math. He noted that UAF's Accuplacer contract is up in 2014. We considered drafting a motion that UAF not renew Accuplacer contract in 2014. We will revisit this at the next meeting.

Follow up on discussion with the Provost: Sandra noted that she recently attended a conference where there had been lots of discussion of reforming the current model of teaching developmental ed. She notes that the model at UAF, particularly in DEVM, is outdated. She noted that she is piloting classes which stress different pathways including math literacy and critical thinking. She is interested in the co

requisite model such as Intermediate Algebra and Precalculus taught together. She recommended bringing Uri Triesman, who is advocating math reform and pathways, to UAF to speak about his model.

We noted several attempts to pilot models to get students to “bridging” classes faster. We also noted that there has been discussion of moving students AAS degrees to the Bachelors and bridging classes such as ECE math to DEVM 105. David noted the Math Department’s bridging programs to bring students to precalculus and calculus level and the DEVM Fast Track classes to bring students through DEVM classes through a short intensive refresher.

Sarah and Dana G noted that DEVE and English are combining an English 111X class with a DEVE 068 class for students with high DEVE 070 placement. Alex Fitts in General Studies is paying student tuition for the additional 068 credit during the trial period of this model. We also noted that there are no computer lab classrooms in which writing and computer literacy can be taught in the main classroom areas on campus. Sandra noted that IAC is now offering writing tutoring for their DEVE and DEVM classes and that this is having an impact.