

Transfer Credit Subcommittee (TCS) of the Study Abroad Committee
1 PM - March 11, 2008
Meeting with Dean Phillips

Present: Alex Douglas, Deenesh Sohoni, Kim Phillips, Theresa Johansson

1. Review of problems

Those present reviewed the suggestions of the TCS and acknowledged that the current process is too much work for both students and faculty. Kim raised concerns that the current process offers too many possibilities for students to acquire credit for sub-standard coursework and both Kim and Theresa acknowledged that there is confusion over whether transfer credits can apply to major requirements (currently, Banner applies them automatically).

2. Clearinghouse

Reiterated the possibility of establishing a “clearinghouse” or “gateway” to bundle credit transfer applications. Theresa noted that Reves plans to re-hire a coordinator who could oversee such a clearinghouse.

3. Standing Approval

Briefly questioned the usefulness of standing approval and the possible resistance to such a procedure from departments. Alex re-iterated that standing approval would represent a non-binding option to faculty and Theresa reminded the group that Reves already keeps the necessary records.

4. Hours on Campus

The group acknowledged that some departments have reservations about which core classes, and how many major hours, can be taken abroad. Alex suggested that departments be encouraged to unilaterally set clear requirements for “hours on-campus” so that credit transfer decisions remain separate from this issue. Deenesh commented that this could lead to further departmental differences and confusion.

5. Major Advising Sheets

Theresa explained a new Reves initiative to create “major advising sheets” to inform students about the best foreign courses and institutions for their major. This project will require several years and involve Reves, department chairs, and other interested faculty.

6. Pre-Approval

Theresa explained that the pre-approval process puts unnecessary burdens on faculty without producing consistent results. Kim suggested that process is unnecessary. Theresa explained that it serves as a promise to students that their credit will count, but that often students are forced to take other classes on arrival. Alex commented that the pre-approval process fills a psychological need and that general guidelines from each major about which credits will transfer might be more useful. Kim argued that pre-approval could be replaced with specialized academic advising, which could be required before study

abroad. Another possibility would be to use a registrar clearinghouse for pre-approval requests, which would then be batched and sent to departments.

7. Departmental Variation

Deenesh introduced the problem of variation within and between departments. Kim suggested that guidelines be published for chairs and advisors on how to “manage their major”.

8. Conclusion

The assembled group agreed to meet again with the registrar. They acknowledged but did not address the issue of resources. Kim suggested “exit interviews” to better understand the student credit transfer process.