

IIT's Participation in IAI Committees

I'm IIT's representative on the Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (www.ibhe-fac.org), and that body has been getting a good deal of cajoling from the staff of the IBHE to help them fill vacancies in the membership of the Illinois Articulation Initiative's subject panels (itransfer.org). IAI provides a mechanism to attempt to simplify arrangements for transfers of academic credits between colleges, particularly transfers of credit from community colleges to 4-year schools. It has a bunch of committees that meet semi-annually, either live or via electronic conversation. There are about 27 of these panels, including a Steering Panel, six Gen-Ed panels, and 20 or so Major panels. Both the community colleges and the 4-year schools are encouraged to have people involved in these panels so that the panels can rule on the appropriateness of transfer credits for specific courses. Each of these panels typically has slots for about 20 members, roughly evenly divided between community colleges and 4-year schools, often with some slots specifically reserved for independent universities like us. Almost every panel has vacancies, particularly among the 4-year private and 4-year public schools: see <http://www.itransfer.org/IAI/faculty/panel/viewPanel.aspx?section=faculty&subsection=panel>

Currently IIT has only one representative on only one panel: Greg Welter, who is on the Engineering Panel. When I talked to Greg, he explained that the Undergraduate Studies Committee decided about fifteen years ago that IIT's participation in IAI, and therefore in their committee processes, would be limited to Engineering transfers, because IIT prefers to do its evaluations of transfer credits on its own. So the fact that we don't have anyone on any of the other panels is a product of a policy decision, but it's a policy decision that was made over a decade ago. I don't have strong feelings about this issue one way or another, except that a decision like this probably needs to be revisited periodically in case our perspectives (or the perspectives of the Provost!) have changed in the interim. So I'm encouraging the UGSC to think about where IIT wants to go with this policy, and, if the decision is to participate more fully in IAI activities, to appoint some representatives to some of the panels. I have stated at the April FAC meeting that IIT is not currently planning to put forward any additional names for these committees until and unless our policies change. But if UGSC does change its position on this, I'd like to know about it.

Respectfully submitted,
Andy Howard