Conversation with Robert Oct 1 2015 about the search for classes

1. Robert actually uses the three-letter codes for departments when he searches. I asked Robert why he doesn't just search for classes by name instead of by departments, and this is because someone told him that classes in the same department "go together", and there it is a good way of ensuring that the classes he takes actually applies to his degree.

2. His biggest problem is the time limit; perhaps if we can continue to set up in a format, as we are now, in which there is no time limit, and then save the results (as we plan to do) , is there an ability to autopopulate the choices in DegreeWorks, Scheduler, etc. ?

3. An example of a course that was in his department, but did not apply to his degree, was Indian studies. His program of study is ISS Anthropology and Criminology -- the course had a prefix of Anthropology, so Robert thought it would apply to his degree. He was told after he took it that it did not apply to his degree. He selected the Indian studies course inside Degree Works, which is one of the most robust methods of telling a student which course applies to his degree. Perhaps tying selections into the four-year plan would have helped prevent Robert from taking a course unnecessarily.

The upshot is, a combination of an interface that allows students with an unlimited amount of time to choose, (not logged in) and then had a way to check his choice against a four-year plan, that would probably help alleviate the frustration of (?many) students who take courses unnecessarily because they are uncertain whether the course applies to their degree. It's a reason that students look for the three-letter program code when they search, because they are trying to make sure that the courses apply.

We returned to the OASIS search http://www.registrar.usf.edu/ssearch/staff/staff.php

Robert puts in a lot of search options because the form forces him to do so in order to get some results. But if he had his way, he would only use the term, the campus, and section number. (Section number is not available on the OASIS search).   We looked in particular at the option called, "Degree Program Attributes" and Robert felt that it was something the advisor would normally deal with, not anything he would search for.

And, he said, to not even get started about searching for the books….

Regarding the syllabus, he said he would use it to look at tasks for the class, but really it was not a make-or-break option--he uses it to try to find out how many papers he would have to write for class. His case is probably special in this regard.