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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes – January 25, 2011

In attendance: Barry Levis (Chair), Rick Bommelje (Secretary), Gloria Cook, Chris Fuse, Sebastian Novak, Hillary Roviario, Dawn Roe, Kristen Trucco, Martina Vidovic

Guests in attendance: Larry Eng-Wilmot, Lee Lines, Sharon Lusk, Toni Holbrook

The meeting was called to order at 12:35 PM.

Minutes. The minutes of the January 18, 2011 meeting were approved.

Announcements

Barry welcomed Hillary Roviario, Holt representative, to the committee

Old Business

1. Revisit Chinese Minor

Barry stated that there is a problem with the approval of the Chinese minor. He consulted with Udeth Lugo who indicated that there is a problem with Lei Wei administering the program since he has not earned 18 graded graduate hours in language which is the minimum SACS requirement. There is not an issue with him teaching in the program. Since he does not meet the SACS requirement, Barry recommended that we should not go through with approving the Chinese minor based on this new information.

Sebastian made a motion to rescind the approval of the Chinese minor from the 1/18/11 meeting. Chris seconded the motion.

Motion passes unanimously.

2. Maymester

Barry summarized the recommendation to date which includes raising the residency requirement will be increased to half the hours, approving Maymester as a four week program, that the science division offer laboratory courses in the 6-week Holt School. The final issue is whether or not we will require Gen Ed's to be taken here. The science division discussed this issue extensively and Paul Stephenson emailed Barry identifying problems with the OPN courses. Barry invited Lee Lines since OPN courses are being offered in Environmental Studies. Barry is hoping that one way to ease the crunch is to open the OPN environmental studies courses to non-majors. Larry stated that Paul's email also suggests that Environmental Studies majors who take the OP and ON courses are required to take an additional O and a P. A Biology major is required to take chemistry courses and a physics course which are PN courses. Lee stated that there is an inconsistency and pointed out that in the past the OPN could be used in the major; however there since has been a strict re-interpretation of the by-laws that prevents this practice.

Toni stated that unless there is a statement added to the catalogue changing the General Education requirements there is double dipping going on that shouldn't be. Toni indicated that this committee needs to create a policy that states that students who graduate with degrees in the following fields (Physics, Biology, Molecular Biology, Chemistry, Marine Biology, and Environmental Studies) are exempt from completion of O P or N and in some cases Q courses. It is not anywhere in policy. Barry emphasized that we make the requirement that students must take their Gen Ed courses here. However, they could appeal to the Academic Appeals committee on the basis of circumstances beyond their control of if they had made a good faith effort to take the courses here and could not because of scheduling problems. Rick asked if this would overload the Academic Appeals Committee. Chris stated that perhaps it is possible that this could be done administratively. Toni pointed out that this would take an enormous effort. Lee emphasized that he believes it is not prudent to require all students to take their Gen Ed courses at Rollins. Barry emphasized that if we are charging students \$50,000 a year and we cannot have them finish without having them take courses elsewhere, this is unethical. Lee stated that the reality we are facing right now is that we currently do not service the Gen Eds the way we should. Forcing the students to take them all here will compound the problem. Barry responded that Maymester was created to alleviate the Gen Ed demand. Toni pointed out that Maymester was not created for laboratory courses. The N requirement is a problem for our students as well as transfer students since we don't offer a stand-alone laboratory course. Toni also stated that it's not just an issue of capacity but also about student preferences. Barry opined that he does not sympathize with students who want an easy way out. Lee questioned if it is possible to restrict students from taking courses at institutions deemed lower quality. Toni indicated that this is problematic, especially if the school is regionally accreditation. Lee emphasized that the Environmental Studies department would not be able to shoulder the additional load for P and OPN courses due to limited faculty. Rick stated that, based on all of the considerations, it appears that requiring students to take Gen Eds here is not a viable option.

Chris pointed out that the drop period is so long that there are vacant seats in OPN courses. Shortening the drop period would help to eliminate this. Larry stated there is a relationship with the earlier the drop date and retention. Toni emphasized that getting clarity on the drop day and time is essential. Barry indicated that the drop add issue is far less of a problem in Holt because there is a financial incentive. Sharon confirmed that there is a sliding scale for drop adds. Sebastian queried if the shopping period could be cut down if the students could do it during the break period. Toni stated this would be problematic, especially since the College would be closed and there would be no technical support available. Hillary queried if there is a way to attach course syllabi to course offerings as a way of cutting down on the shopping process. Toni stated that this is something that could be explored.

Barry stated that the issue of requiring students take their Gen Eds here may have to be postponed until some of the other issues are dealt with. Rick asked if we could take a straw poll on the inclusive Maymester items:

- Approving Maymester as a four week program
- Faculty can teach only one course.
- Each course is for 4 credit hours credit. Gen Ed's courses are recommended; elective courses can be offered.

- Students can take only one course. There is an appeal process to take two courses.
- Recommended that the Science division offer laboratory courses for 6 credit hours in the Holt School.
- Students will be allowed to take Gen Ed's elsewhere and that this issue will continue to be examined.

Students will be discouraged from taking two Maymester courses. There was discussion about the appeal criteria for students to take two Maymester courses and the consensus is that the students must have a minimum 3.0 grade point average. Sebastian stated the SGA Exec Committee did not feel comfortable with students not being able to take Gen Eds elsewhere. Toni stated that the Rollins Plan will prompt this issue to be raised again.

The straw poll was converted into a formal motion by Rick. Dawn seconded the motion. A majority of the members voted for the motion and one member dissented.

Motion passes

New Business

1. Clarification for Honors Violation

Don Davidson asked Barry to bring before the committee a problem that has arisen because AAC previously passed the requirement that all students must receive a grade at the end of a course. This has proven to be problematic with students who have been accused of an honor violation. The faculty member is being asked to submit a grade that later might be reduced or turned into a grade of HF if the student's case goes against them. Don is asking that we allow the faculty member not to turn a grade in until the case is resolved. Toni stated that there is a formal statement in the catalogue that requires that faculty must submit grades for all courses. She recommends that an exemption be added to the statement that includes having a separate grade code be issued for students who have pending Honor Violations. Students with pending honors violations will receive a special grade code until their case is adjudicated. Barry pointed out that since this is not a major policy issue it will not have to be approved by the full faculty.

Committee members unanimously agreed that the process to issue a new code should be implemented.

2. New Course Sub Committee

Chris explained an issue that has come to the new course approval subcommittee that involves a proposal for a stand-alone, 2 credit hour lab course. This is atypical since it is not connected to a knowledge based course or lecture segment. Chris pointed out that the Physics department has a 4 credit hour, stand-alone lab course however it is connected to another course. Barry queried if there has been a conversation with the faculty member. Chris stated that this has not been done yet and he will contact the faculty member to arrange for a meeting to gather additional information.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:57 PM.

Rick Bommelje
Secretary