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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, February 15, 2011

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes – February 15, 2011

In attendance: Barry Levis (Chair), Rick Bommelje (Secretary), Gloria Cook, Sebastian Novak, Dawn Roe, Hillary Roviario, Martina Vidovic, Deb Wellman

Guests in attendance: Don Rogers, Benny Balak, Harry Kypraios , Charles Rock, Eric Schutz, Kenna Taylor, Sharon Lusk

The meeting was called to order at 12:33 PM.

Minutes. The minutes of the February 1, 2011 meeting were approved.

1. Proposed Changes to INB Major/Minor

Barry introduced Don Rogers who presented the rationale for the INB proposal for changes to the major and minor. Don stated that the rationale begins with the AACSB recommendations for curricular improvements in the department two years ago. Don referenced two documents that had been provided: 1. the AACSB team visit report that highlighted items to pay attention to; and 2. a consultant's report that included recommendations but the department did not have to do anything with. Whatever is done with changes to the curriculum must be done by August 2011. The department decided that a 200 level introductory to international business course should be offered as the first course in the program. It was recommended that this course would be taken before the economics courses. Don emphasized that there has been an assessment of the INB students' writing skills for several years which indicates that the students are consistently at the lower end of the scale. The proposed course will include a major writing component. There are also concerns that have been raised on course overlap. Additionally, there is a need to create more elective courses which has grown out of students' concerns. One of the limitations that the department placed on itself was not to grow the 18 course major which includes the foreign language requirement. Another problem surfaced in that AACSB expects a balance of 60/40% between 300 and 200 level courses (i.e. 40% of 100-200 level courses and 60 % of 300-400 level courses. With the current major the ratio is 55/45 and the proposal will raise it to 57/42. Don stated that even though it does not exactly meet the AACSB standards but it is close enough to make a strong case. Don summarized the proposal: to add a new course, INB 200, that will focus on the international business environment and provide an introduction for the international business major. This will require the reworking of INB 300 and change the course title so that it will focus on business functions. The change in INB 372, International Financial Management, increases it from a 4 to a 5 credit hour course. This will allow for a tutorial for the quantitative methods segment of the course. This allows for the addition of one elective course on the International Business course and the one more course on the Liberal Arts side. INB 345, International Management, will be dropped as a required course. The proposal also includes dropping EC 202 and EC 203 as required courses and making them electives. The net effect is that there is still a 18 course major and 75 credit hours as opposed to 74 hours and no new faculty are

required to implement the changes. Barry gave a historical perspective of how the INB major was created. He stated that it was very controversial and the faculty was concerned about rigor. The inclusion of the language requirement was important for this major to be passed. Another thing that sold it to the faculty was that it was clearly interdisciplinary, requiring courses from others disciplines. Barry stated that this proposal ends that requirement. With the exception of language courses, students would be able to take all of their courses in the INB department. Don stated that currently the students are required to take at least 3 A&S courses as electives from a list of A&S courses. Out of the 18 course curriculum, 8 are not business courses. Barry indicated that other than the foreign language requirement, there are no other courses required outside of INB. Don stated that he understood this yet did not it could be implemented and also fulfill AACSB standards. He also pointed out that on the department's wish list that EC 202 and EC 221 would be retained to insure that there would be more than one economics course. This is not acceptable to the economics department. Don indicated that it is important to maintain a 60/40 percent balance between lower and upper division courses. Even with this proposal, the exact percentage balance would not be met. Barry expressed concern about suggested staffing to teach INB 200. Don responded that Ilan Alon and Richard Lewing will both teach once section per year. Don will also teach one section. Barry emphasized that in these financial times that this committee would not approve a proposal that requires new staffing. Don stated that the proposal does not require new hires. Barry asked if Don had discussed this proposal with the Economics department and the impact it will have on enrollments in EC 202 and 203. Don stated that since INB 200 would be the first course and if students opted to move to different majors, it could cause lower enrollment in EC 202 and 203. Gloria asked Don how many INB majors are enrolled. Don indicated that there are approximately 300 students. Approximately 180 students stay with the major to graduation. The expectation is to graduate 45 to 50 students a year which has been steady during the past 4 years. Barry asked Kenna to express the concerns from Economics Department. Kenna stated that he was in the INB department for ten years. He emphasized that he is only partially speaking on behalf of the department. He believes that INB has the right and the obligation to evolve the curriculum for the benefit of the students' education. Kenna expressed that he is concerned about the curricular drift toward training versus education. There needs to be more critical thinking and he believes that there are no core concepts in international business. Kenna points out that the INB 200 and revised INB 300 syllabi present teaching ideas that cannot be understood at an interest level. Kenna pointed out that it will important for supply and demand to be taught in INB 200. He also stated that if INB 200 is successful in attracting more students, more faculty members will have to be hired. In terms of professional ease, if the proposal is passed it will ease the burden on the Economics department which currently has large enrollments in EC 202. The only staffing impact will be eliminating a Visiting Professor position. Don stated that he is unsure of how to get around the issue of 'training' as a negative word. He did state that there are a number of practical items in the program (i.e. quantitative analysis, public speaking, professional writing, etc.) He emphasized that there are theoretical foundations of INB and that they come from economics, psychology, sociology, political economy, political science and anthropology. Additionally, theories are developed and tested in business. He pointed out that economics is not the only discipline that contributes theoretical concepts to international business. Don emphasized that one of the reasons the old business major was eliminated was that the academic rigor was too low. He

stated that the proposed courses are designed to have academic rigor. Gloria asked if the writing reinforcement is in the INB major. Don stated that it has been incorporated since the infusion of the R and the T; however, many students are functioning at the minimal level of standards. Currently, the oral communication infusion includes an introduction at the 200 level and then an assessment at the 400 level. It is anticipated that the same type of process would be implemented for writing. Gloria queried as to why it needs to be separated as an individual course. Kenna stated there are a number of group presentations in the program that require a writing experience. However, it is not substantial enough. Barry stated that he is opposed to dropping EC 202 and EC 203 as a requirement. However, he does understand the need for an introductory international business course. He asked if there is a way to restructure the INB requirements and maintain the economics courses. Don emphasized that there is no way to increase the number of 200 level courses without increasing the number of 300 level courses, without adding a faculty number. If one economics course was required, the preference is EC203 and not EC202. Rick asked Don how he responds to Kenna's question that if INB 200 is successful another faculty member will have to be added. Don stated that if there is an introductory course in any discipline that is successful beyond reasonable numbers, the discipline would have to add a faculty member. Barry noted that the problem is that INB faculty are at a premium and a \$3-4 million deficit, he does not believe the college can afford it and reallocate resources at this extent at this time. Don stated that the assumption about INB 200 is that this will be a rigorous enough course to discourage people who don't want a rigorous course. Martina asked how this would improve retention. Don stated that we don't have enough hard data to make any reasonable argument about retention and that the proposal is not staked on the issue of improving retention. Don pointed out that the research does show that getting students attached early to a major can impact retention. Martina queried why a student has to be locked into the major from day one. Don stated that the data on retention suggests that if students are locked into a major early they are less likely to leave. Deb confirmed this. Kenna commented that if a poll was taken of the economics department faculty that we would not necessarily be opposed to reducing the size of the Economics department. His personal concern is that INB 200 is not a credible course. He suggests that the INB department should re-work the course that has more substance. Eric stated that INB department is substituting INB 200 for EC 202 and EC 203. This constitutes a major change relative to what the faculty decided when the INB major was created. At that time EC 211 and EC 212 were going to be the gatekeeping courses for the major. Barry emphasized that if AAC approves this proposal, it will have to go to the faculty because it is a major, substantive change. Don stated that when the major was originally approved by the faculty, the first two courses approved were Microeconomics and Macroeconomics. There has been no objection from the INB department about micro and macroeconomics. Kenna stated that INB 200 has not been carefully thought through about what needs to be included. Harry queried about where the staffing for the additional elective will come from. Don responded that this would be done as students are pushed across the electives. If INB 345 is dropped as a required course and make an elective, it will increase the enrollment in some of the lesser enrolled electives. Harry commented that, as a principal instructor of EC202, he observes that students who take EC 202 and who have declared INB as a major, sometimes discover something in the course and go on to other majors. Don stated that there is nothing in the proposal that states that EC202 is not a good class. He asked how do we build into the proposal the idea of having an introductory course

in INB, a gatekeeping course that is not taught by another department. Don emphasized that the important constraints include AACSB requirements and that INB major is an 18 course major. He also stated that the logic of INB 200 is to give students a multi-factor perspective. Barry stated that he understands the predicament for the need for an introductory course but there is a serious problem because the interdisciplinary aspect is being de-emphasized by dropping the two economics courses plus he has a severe concern about staffing. Harry suggested that Don offers the INB 200 level course and drop one of the 300 level courses. Don stated that we could do that if we got support from the economics department. As we look at the whole curriculum, the least valuable course is the EC 202 course. If we are going to add a course in international business at the 200 level, something has to give and it has to be at the 200 level. Deb queried if the INB Department asked for modifications from the Economics department. Kenna stated that the INB department was asking us to reverse EC 203 and EC 202. Kenna stated that reason why the shift was made to macro and micro economics was because they did not think students were getting the right education. When Kenna was in the department for ten years, he stated that he continually asked about what should be added in 202 and got minimal response. Deb asked if there was any truth to the fact that there was a level of non-cooperation between the two departments that made it hard for INB to schedule courses. Kenna stated that he knew nothing about this. Harry indicated the first time they heard about this proposal was in December. Barry asked if Don met with the economics department and Don responded that there was one meeting. Charlie stated that he is in favor of getting rid of INB. The students' issues have to be taken into consideration. Charlie stated that the AACSB issue on proportionality can be challenged because their document is very flexible. Charlie asked to see the comparative data on full pay tuition for the different departments and also the data on retention. He also commented that the staff question is really a transfer (i.e. from economics to INB). Charlie would also like to hear more about what will be done to give writing feedback. He also commented that EC 202 does not fit with the ideology of INB and he can see why they wouldn't want it. Barry stated that the committee will discuss the proposal at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 PM.

Rick Bommelje
Secretary