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

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes – March 15, 2011

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

Guests in attendance: Don Rogers, Sharon Agee, Marc Fetscherin, Alon Ilon, Anna Ilon, Cecilia McInnis-Bowers, Marc Sardy, Toni Holbrook

The meeting was called to order at 12:32 PM.

Minutes. The minutes of the February 22, 2011 meeting were approved.

1. Proposed Changes to INB Major

Barry asked if members had read the materials since they had been uploaded yesterday. There were three affirmative responses. Gloria asked what the changes were and Barry stated that it was essentially the same proposal as before with a longer rationale. He stated he was opposed to it since it removes the interdisciplinary focus. Darren asked if INB is considered to be an interdisciplinary major and Barry indicated it is. Barry asked if the committee wanted to proceed with the item or postpone. Rick stated that the committee is familiar with the basic proposal since there has been a previous full discussion of the issue and because there are minimal proposed changes that the committee could proceed with the discussion. After polling the members, Don was invited to represent the revisions to the proposal. Based on the assessment of learning, student surveys and recommendation from AACSB there are three recommendations to include: 1. The creation of the foundation course, INB 200 Introduction to International Business that will be the first course in the curriculum; 2. the revision of INB 300 International Business Operations course; and 3. Moving a 300 level course from a required to an elective course. Don stated that the second issue is around EC 202. The original idea was to move EC 202 from a required to an elective course and permit students to take EC 203 without the EC 202 prerequisite. The Economics department has objected to this and the INB department believes their objections are appropriate for the Economics major. The INB department is recommending that EC 202 and EC 203 be moved from required to elective courses. If the first five items of the proposal are approved, there will be some implementation items that are necessary. With EC 202 and EC 203 being elective courses, there will be two additional elective courses in the program. Barry summarized by stating that it is an 18 course major with 3 area studies courses plus EC 221 and the foreign language requirement. Don emphasized that there is a difference in logic since the INB has a different definition of the program. The INB department does not view the Economics courses as interdisciplinary but business courses. Barry stated that this is an interdisciplinary major. Cecilia emphasized the interdisciplinary courses in the curriculum. Don pointed out that this was not intended to be an interdisciplinary major. Marc F stated that INB 200 addresses a retention issue and the proposal also addresses AACSB requirements. Darren summarized the issue by stating that he understands that since the Economics department is

viewing this as interdisciplinary way of thinking about economics and less of a business way of thinking about economics, this is not beneficial for the INB department. Marc S pointed out that several years ago ECO 212 (micro) and ECO 213 (macro) were replaced with ECO 202 and EC 203. ECO 202 is now historical perspectives of economics and EC 203 was compressed to include micro and macroeconomics. After operating this way for a couple years, the INB department felt it was problematic for the students because they were not getting the level and depth of coverage. Darren paraphrased his understanding by stating that the ability to use economics in a business sense is diminished. Marc S. indicated that INB students are now at a severe disadvantage. Darren asked, since there are concepts in ECO 212 and 213 that are not being addressed in ECO 202 and 203, where will the students get the skills that INB department wants them to have? Don stated that it will be included in INB 200 and INB 300 as well as upper level courses. Barry asked if this material should be taught by economists. Marc S. stated that several faculty members are trained in economics. He also indicated that the INB 200 and 300 courses integrate more materials together in one place rather than having a silo approach. Macroeconomics would come earlier in the sequence since the focus is International and is also a more innovative approach. He further indicated that the Economics department has been offered the opportunity to teach one of the courses if they choose to do so and they have declined. Barry emphasized that we hear the exact opposite from the Economics department. Sebastian stated he was an Economics minor and several faculty members teach EC 202. When he took ECO 202, he did not learn anything and the emphasis was on pirates and the Crusades. Students who took other sections were better prepared. Cecilia stated that they have survey data from students that substantiates Sebastian's point. She stated that INB students are frustrated with not being equally equipped. She further stated that the Econ curriculum is wonderful for Econ students and the Econ faculty members do a great job in the EC 202 and 203 courses that they teach. She emphasized that the INB department wants a curriculum that speaks to the needs of their students. It is a Liberal Arts Business program. Barry stated that INB was very controversial when it was passed in 1997. Many faculty members were opposed to it. He believes that it passed because it was an interdisciplinary major and it was not connected to Crummer. He re-emphasized that his concern is that the proposal is less interdisciplinary than was before. Cecilia stated the problem is that the interdisciplinary partners changed the curriculum. Darren stated that the fundamental problem is there is a lack of collegiality and lack of compromise. The question is: how do we make this program meet the students' needs, maintain the interdisciplinary nature, and build some sort of collegiality. Deb indicated that INB wanted ECO 212 and 213 in the program as important dimensions in the curriculum and the Economics department changed the program on them by creating ECO 202 and 203. As a compromise, the INB department was fine with the Economics department teaching EC 203 since it included macro and micro economics. The addition of ECO 202 as a precursor added more in their curriculum than they wanted. The INB department requested that the Economics department suspend the requirement for EC 202 and they declined the request. Deb asked that Don survey other schools and he found that there many of them require micro and macroeconomics and none of them require a historical perspective of economics. Don distributed a copy of the data derived from benchmarking schools and the top International Business programs. He noted that most schools that offer economic history do so at that 300-400 level. Martina read a segment from the approved 2004 AAC minutes that stated that the INB department did not record problems with the changes made by the Economics

department. Deb pointed out that the INB department tried it for a couple of years and found that it did not suit the program. Barry asked if ECO 202 has been altered and since there was no faculty member present who taught the course the question went unanswered. Toni stated that it is topically taught by the various faculty members who teach it; the framework could be different based on who is teaching the course. Martina emphasized that there are common goals for the course, regardless of who teaches it. Darren asked how many sections of ECO 202 are offered and Toni indicated that it is 5 sections per term. Darren inquired how many students are enrolled in ECO 202 and Toni guessed that it would be half. Martina asked how many students shift from INB to ECO after taking ECO 202. There was no data available. Alon stated that this is not about collegiality it is about one faculty holding another hostage and not allowing the department to make significant changes that need to be made to change with the times. Gloria asked if INB 200 could be turned into an RCC. Deb stated that it could be offered as an RCC; however it has not been taught before. Don indicated that because of the size of the major they have been perpetually short of faculty. Martina stated an economic history course cannot be compared with ECO 202 since it is designed to do much more. Darren asked if the Economics department could take ECO 202 and make it more aligned with the mission of the INB department. Don stated that Harry Kypraios offered a recommendation on adjusting the course content which was unacceptable to the INB department. Rick queried if the proposal is not approved what is the impact to AACSB? Marc S. stated the accreditation team leader visited the College this week and stated that if we are not doing the things necessary it could force the institution into a 6 year review, which is like failing accreditation. Deb confirmed this. Martina asked why the proposal was not shared with the Economics dept. Marc S. stated that there was a meeting with the Economics department attended by himself, Don and Deb to discuss potential options for consideration to take back to the INB department for a vote. The Economics department made no changes and the only concession made was that the prerequisite for ECO 221 would be dropped. The Economics department was going to confirm this with those faculty members who teach the course and confirm with the INB department. This was not done and the INB department unanimously voted to submit the current proposal. Cecilia stated educational quality of the INB department is being killed. Martina pointed out that we agree that something needs to be done.

Barry emphasized that he believes that the Dean should meet with the two departments. Deb confirmed that she has already met with both departments. Toni stated that she and the former Dean met with the Economics department members and they were unwavering. The possibility of the departments working out the differences is not going to happen. Deb stated that the problem is there is a difference of perspective within the two departments. She believes that INB department should have the ability to develop its own curriculum as we do with every other department. Darren asked what constitutes an interdisciplinary major. Barry stated that a departmental major is restricted to 12 courses and an interdisciplinary major is 16 – 18 courses. Don indicated that when the INB department was created there were different issues involved and one of them being the need to recruit students. The concern was that the enrollment in the Economics department be negatively impacted. The logic was that the INB major would create a lot of students that would be shared with other departments. Don also stated that the INB department did not think of themselves as an interdisciplinary major as Barry references it. They saw themselves as a department based major. Barry emphasized that another issue was rigor.

The addition of a foreign language helped with this. Marc F said that is why the program is AACSB accredited. Rick asked if approving this proposal will send it to the full faculty. Barry stated that he would first need to take it to the EC to determine if this is enough of a substantive change that would warrant that it be presented to the faculty. Barry indicated that if this is approved it would increase it from an 18 to a 19 course major. ECO 202 is still a prerequisite to ECO 221 since the Economics department has not formally waived this requirement. Deb asked if it can be accepted as a 19 course major and then be amended if the Economics department does make the change. Darren asked how a new faculty line would not be added. Marc S stated that INB 345 is being removed and the faculty who teach it will be assigned to INB 200. Barry stated the committee would not approve any major changes that would have an impact on increasing the faculty. Darren asked how the AACSB accreditation team responded to covering micro and macroeconomics content in INB 200. Toni stated this was not an issue for them. Rick indicated that the AACSB requirement appears to be the pivotal issue for this proposal. Deb also confirmed this.

Darren called the question to accept the entire proposal (points 1 – 9) with the friendly amendment of a 19 course major.

There was a unanimous vote for calling the question.

Motion passes with a majority vote, 5 to 2.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:44 PM.

Rick Bommelje
Secretary