

4-5-2011

## Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, April 5, 2011

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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*Minutes approved at the AAC meeting of 4/19/11*

AAC Minutes – April 5, 2011

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

Guests in attendance:

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

**Minutes.** The minutes of the March 29, 2011 meeting were approved with one correction.

## **Old Business**

### **1. Honors Council**

Barry indicated that Don Davidson was concerned about the committee's rejection of the recommended proposal of expanding the eligibility of a student to serve from two to three year on the Honor Council. Chris asked how students apply for the Council. Deb indicated that students are encouraged to apply and faculty members also submit names of viable candidates. Candidates must complete an application form along with an essay on why they want to serve. The Dean's office screens candidates for GPA requirements and previous honor code violations. The SGA then reads all essays and votes yes or no. This information is forwarded back to the Dean's office. Rick asked why this issue has returned. Barry stated that we might not have had the right amount of information and whether or not there is a move to reconsider. Chris shared a case situation of a student who was caught cheating on the examination. The faculty member requested that the student fail the course and the honor council gave the student a zero on the exam. Chris asked if a freshman can receive an Honors failure. Deb confirmed and stated this usually happens when there is a flagrant violation rather than a student making a bad judgment. The typical case has involved a student who copies an entire paper verbatim. Chris expressed concern that in courses that don't have a writing focus that a student can cheat by using the text during an examination. Deb stated that a student would receive a 0 on the exam. Barry emphasized that his biggest concern is that if faculty lose respect for the system it will fail. He is wondering about the faculty perception of the honor code. Deb stated that the key is consistency. She indicated that there currently are 25-30 faculty members that state that they will go around the honor code. Deb pointed out that for a first offense of cheating on an exam, there is rarely the grade of HF given. However, she indicated that for a second offense, the only two options are 'not guilty' or the grade of HF. Barry questioned if the Honor Council is carrying out the significant function of fostering a culture that does not tolerate academic dishonesty. Deb stated that there has been an increase in cases over the past few years. She distributed information on the summary of Academic Honor Code cases and dispositions from 2006-2011. Deb emphasized that faculty must come together to determine what plagiarism is since there currently is inconsistency on the issue. Barry asked about anonymity of the accuser and Deb stated that the accused does not know the identity of the accuser. Rick queried if the Holt Honor

Code is the same as A&S and Deb confirmed that they are identical. Barry asked what happens when a student receives two HF's and Deb indicated that the student is suspended. Deb stated that there are some faculty members who do not require the students to sign the honor code statement on examinations. Deb emphasized that she would bring the Honor Code issues to Laurie so that she can put this on the agenda for the Fall Faculty conference. Deb stated that the plagiarism issue needs to be addressed. Susie Robertshaw has organized a panel on student plagiarism and is offering it every three weeks. Barry commented that he has heard from faculty that it is an excellent presentation.

## **2. Designed Abandonment Discussion**

Barry re-engaged the committee members in a discussion on the multiple initiatives that are stretching the faculty resources. A number of topics were discussed including: the 3/2 faculty load, RCC, RP, coverage of General Education requirements, the number of governance committee meetings, the number of courses offered in a term, and course cap sizes. Deb stated that she would love to hold a colloquium on designed abandonment but there is no time for it this term. She indicated that she will suggest to Laurie that the issue be part of the Fall Faculty conference.

## **New Business**

### **1. INB Revised Proposal**

Barry stated that a new proposal from INB will be on next week's agenda. The proposal removes EC221 and replaces it with an INB statistics course. Barry indicated that he reviewed the minutes from the faculty meeting when the INB major was passed in 1997. He also talked to the former Provost, Charlie Edmondson, who confirmed that it was proposed as an interdisciplinary program. Barry expressed concern that INB is now proposing that they move away from an interdisciplinary program to one that is almost exclusively within a department. For next week's homework, he invited committee members to examine the curriculum of the other interdisciplinary majors (i.e. International Relations and Asian Studies). Rick stated that the AACSB accreditation compounds the issue. Deb stated that AACSB accredits institutions and not programs. Barry emphasized that when the major was passed it was with the understanding there would not be any increase in faculty. If there was an increase it would be by attrition only. Deb stated that INB is a very popular major. Darren indicated that this is an admissions issue and not a faculty issue. If the students are coming to the program, you can't limit the number of faculty. Deb concurred. Barry stated that in the new proposal there is no plan for staffing the courses. One of the key questions for the committee to consider is: Can we afford to approve a major that will probably require staffing, especially at the INB faculty compensation level? Deb indicated that several INB faculty members are qualified to teach economics courses and it is not out of their field. Barry asked members to review the submitted materials in preparation for next week's meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:42 PM.

Rick Bommelje  
Secretary