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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, August 24, 2010

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes – August 24, 2010

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

Guests in attendance: Sharon Lusk, Assistant Dean of the Holt School

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

Minutes. The minutes of the April 24, 2010 meeting were approved.

Announcements. Steve St John will be taking care of the faculty governance website this year and the AAC secretary will email the approved minutes to him for posting. Approved minutes will also be uploaded on Blackboard.

New Business.

The New Course subcommittee will be dealing with new courses. Chris Fuse, Gloria Cook, and Martina Vidovi will serve on this subcommittee.

The Academic Appeals subcommittee will consist of Dawn Roe and one other member.

Sharon Lusk brought forth a request on behalf of Interim Dean Deb Wellman asking for the possibility of Holt School academic appeals going through one committee, AAC. Barry agreed with this and confirmed that this was an example of where the college was moving to stream line things between A&S and Holt. He also indicated that there would be a Holt School student member on AAC along with 3 A&S students.

Darren Stoub will serve as the AAC representative on the RP Steering Committee.

Barry set the primary focus of this meeting of giving thought to upcoming agenda items. He noted that last year, on a number of occasions, deliberation was delayed because the people representing the items on the agenda were not present. Consequently, items were dealt with 2 or 3 times before conclusion. He proposed that if an item is on the agenda, the people who are engaged in it will be invited to the meeting to be present when the discussion is begun. A department must have a representative available if they are submitting a curriculum proposal. After discussion, this procedure change was adopted.

This procedure would not apply to new course approvals. The New Course sub committee will meet with Toni Holbrook for A&S courses and Sharon Lusk for Holt courses.

Barry identified that there was business from last year that needed attention. One of the items involves the Music Department and a revision to the major that was passed last year.

Gloria Cook confirmed that the issue involves the Senior Seminar course and reducing the number of credit hours from 5 to 4 hours. At the AAC meeting on April 12, 2010, the Music curriculum was approved and at that time it was requested that a new course proposal be created for the Senior Seminar. This is currently in process and when it clears the New Course sub committee, it will be brought forward to the Committee.

Rick asked if a curricular reform proposal from department can be brought to the committee by one of the committee's members. After discussion it was agreed that the Committee member could represent the department's proposal and after deliberation would abstain from voting.

Barry raised the issue of the two pre-matriculation courses that occurred during the Summer. Through electronic communication, one was approved by the Committee and the second was disapproved, which was affirmed by Assoc. Dean Don Davidson.

An additional item on the agenda this year is re-visiting the Asian Studies Major. This proposal was voted down by the faculty in the last faculty meeting. Barry has met with Ilon Alon and suggested that he meet with those faculty members who had objections about the proposal and to also call a colloquium for re-discussion before bringing it back to the Committee.

Barry indicated that another item on this year's agenda is the on-line registration process. He stated that approximately ten years ago, the faculty mandated that there would be a rolling registration process. Darren raised the concern that the present software does not have the capability of performing the function in the correct way. Chris confirmed this. Darren indicated that 30-40% of his advisees are coming without their first course choices. He suggested that a fact-finding process be initiated on best practices for registering students, including exploring how the Banner system can be better utilized. Darren also raised the issue about faculty having ready access to the advisees' course information. After additional discussion on the current system, Barry stated that he will invite Toni Holbrook to a future meeting to discuss the current on-line registration system. He will also research the faculty adopted on-line registration process.

Barry underscored that if a change is made to the on-line registration process, it must go through the faculty rather than by administrative decision.

Barry also brought forth the issue of the Maymester and the question of academic rigor during this compressed time frame. He has heard anecdotal evidence that some courses are not the same as those delivered in a regular semester format. He has asked the Dean to review comparison syllabi and was refused. Following additional discussion on this item, including the requirement for faculty to complete the Gen Ed matrix, it was agreed that Barry will develop a survey for faculty who teach in Maymester to include requesting a copy of their syllabus.

Sebastian asked about the status of the subcommittee that was created last year to review the courses in the catalogue that fulfill the Gen Ed requirements. Besides Sebastian, since

no current Committee members were part of this subcommittee last year, there was discussion about whether this was an ad hoc committee.

Barry is hoping that there will be time allocated this year for the Committee to converse philosophically on important academic issues topics relating to the College. Among the initial items suggested are transfer credits, attendance policies, and grade scales.

The meeting was adjourned at 1: 49 PM.

Rick Bommelje
Secretary