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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday November 30, 2010

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes – November 30, 2010

In Attendance: Barry Levis (Chair), Alex Boguslawski, Gloria Cook, Chris Fuse, Lila Martin, Sebastian Novak, Christian Ricaurte, Dawn Roe, Darren Stoub, Martina Vidovic, Deb Wellman

Guests in Attendance: Nancy Decker

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. after a delicious lunch was provided by Dean Wellman.

Minutes. The minutes of the November 23, 2010 meeting were approved.

Old Business

1. Maymester

Discussion turned back to Maymester. Barry Levis stated that he had talked to Laurie Joyner about two potential issues with the drafted proposal. She was concerned about the motion requiring students to complete all general education requirements at Rollins. She stated that currently the atmosphere around college campuses is to make the process easier, not harder and that the philosophy is portability and an opening up of the system.

Barry Levis stated that part of the problem is the data showing students transferring in courses from institutions that may not maintain the standards of academic rigor that we value as being essential to a Rollins College education. This predicament causes us to question whether we lower standards to try to get more students, or raise standards to be seen as more prestigious and attractive.

Laurie Joyner was also concerned about limiting the 4-week session to general education courses alone. She mentioned that, for example, a department (ex. Economics) because of enrollment pressure on their courses might want to offer a major course in a 4-week session in order to relieve pressure on major requirements. Barry Levis said we could generally restrict to general education courses, but allow departments to petition for other courses. Laurie Joyner also mentioned that there might be some concern about the change from a 3-week to a 4-week session. Barry Levis stated that we are actually only adding 2 days.

During further discussion with members present, Deb Wellman stated that Toni Holbrook said housing could be an issue with the 6-week courses. It was pointed out that six-week classes are Holt classes and that we don't do any housing for Holt, and that this might solve the problem. It was also mentioned that the proposal should state more clearly that the six-week courses would be offered through Holt.

Deb Wellman also stated that the proposal lists a total of 40 contact hours for a 4-week session, whereas the bylaws state that the contact hours are 32.5. Barry Levis will remove that statement from the proposal. Deb Wellman also questioned the phrasing of the first part of the proposal which states that transfer credits have “increased substantially”. The feeling is that the term substantial may be too strong. Members mentioned that the data showed an exponential increase in number of summer transfer credits. Deb Wellman would like to have another look at the data.

Deb Wellman also mentioned the potential issue with increasing residency hours from 64 to 70 due to current campus discussion of reducing total credit hours required from 140 to 132. Barry Levis noted that we can only base policy on the current system. It was agreed that the number can change at a later time if necessary and that the main point is that students must earn $\frac{1}{2}$ of their credits at Rollins in order to earn a Rollins degree.

Deb Wellman also noted that the second line of Motion 2 should emphasize that affiliate programs must be *Rollins* approved affiliated courses. She also mentioned that students who find themselves in financial hardship and would like to appeal this requirement must go through the Academic Appeals Committee and not Academic Affairs.

There was general discussion about the ability of department’s to petition to offer courses that are not designated as general education courses within Maymester. Barry Levis has rewritten a portion of the proposal to reflect this.

Barry Levis asked how we would administer these course options and whether the 6-week courses would be through Holt and the 4-week courses through A&S. Darren Stoub mentioned that it becomes a Dean of Faculty office job to recruit faculty to teach in these 4 and 6-week programs. Deb Wellman agreed.

There was general discussion about whether students would be limited to one course at a time within Maymester and Holt 6-week summer courses. It was decided that students would be limited to one course, but could petition Academic Appeals to register for more than one course. Barry Levis will include new language pertaining to this issue in the newly drafted proposal. There was also discussion with regard to including language that discussed the rationale behind certain courses being offered within the Maymester schedule and others (lab and language courses) having a pedagogical need for the 6-week Holt schedule.

Barry Levis mentioned that he would like to bring this proposal to the next Executive Committee meeting, rather than waiting for January. This was agreed upon.

General discussion of issues surrounding the logistics of Maymester continued. The issue of housing was brought up again and Deb Wellman mentioned that it was really the food and cafeteria situation that was a greater issue last year. Deb Wellman also pointed out that there could be some resistance to changing Maymester to 4-week period instead of a 3-week period. The time divides up to be 8.125 hours per week, which is not a significant difference in contact hours per week. Gloria Cook mentioned that the committee felt this

change was necessary in order to allow students time to reflect and not so much about contact hours.

Barry Levis also mentioned that the forms for approval to study in the summer would need to be modified to take out the Gen-Ed requirement section. He also mentioned that this change would affect students entering in the fall of 2011.

Barry Levis will send out a new Maymester document including changes discussed.

**Barry Levis makes a motion to go forward with Maymester proposal.
Motion carries.**

New Business

2. Chinese Minor

Nancy Decker speaks in support of the proposal for a new Chinese Minor.

Barry Levis referred to Toni Holbrook's question from the previous week as to how many students are projected to pursue this minor?

Nancy Decker indicated that an initiative for this minor came about because demand already exists. Students want to document their advanced level skill in Chinese, and language skills in particular. Students and faculty believe such documentation will be valuable upon graduating. Given that this is 3rd year of students being sent to Shanghai – these students in particular are coming back from a full semester abroad and the thought from many students is that their Rollins degree should allow for a minor not only in Asian Studies but in the language in particular. One student has already come forward requesting this. The department wanted to support this through a self-designed minor, for instance, to allow this student to document these skills on their resume.

Students currently in Shanghai – in contrast to earlier group who had minimal or no background in Chinese – now often have 2 or 3 semesters of Chinese even before they get there. They ask whether there will be a minor? The availability of such a minor can serve as incentive for students to take part in the Shanghai program. She also pointed out that the major in Asian Studies requires no more language study than the minor in Asian Studies and felt this may be a problem, and that the only place that the advanced study of the Chinese language would fit into the curriculum would be a minor in Chinese language.

There was discussion with regard to the amount of credit hours required for the minor, and that there were some hidden requirements as students had to take two introductory courses before they could register for the required courses for the major. Nancy Decker pointed out that this is the case with the French and German minors as well.

She also made mention of certain courses that are offered for four credit hours to students who don't have enough experience with the target language, but have a supplementary component for an additional credit hour which is available to a subset of the class with advanced knowledge of the target language, allowing them to read additional texts.

This would encourage further study of the language, but would also encourage students to continue in courses that are offered in English.

Nancy Decker continued on to emphasize that there is a desire for students who do not go to Shanghai to be able to minor in Chinese. She mentioned that it was difficult to offer enough advanced level classes, but by continuing the language across the curriculum courses (these additional credit hours above and beyond English courses) it would be possible for students to be able to garner the 24 hours necessary without having to go to Shanghai. She emphasized that many students cannot take part in a semester overseas and that we should make it possible for them to certify their language capability.

There was further discussion on the number of credit hours required for the minor and a discussion of reconfiguring the Minor Map and/or amount of credit hours earned for particular courses to address some potential issues.

Nancy Decker also called attention to the fact that certain course credits ought to count toward minor in Chinese, but if we do that, there may be a danger of cannibalizing the Asian Studies minor, as students know how important the demand for language skill is and that there may be a greater demand for the Chinese language minor.

Alex mentioned that the simple answer is the distinction between the minor in Chinese and Asian Studies is that the Chinese minor is a *language* minor as opposed to area studies. The emphasis is on language in the Chinese minor.

There was general discussion again of the amount of credit hours required and also discussion of pre-matriculation courses and where they fit in (or did not fit in) the Minor Map.

Barry Levis asked whether Nancy Decker could take the proposal back, think about our discussion, and resubmit with changes.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:51 p.m.

Dawn Roe
(Fill-in Secretary)