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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, November 4, 2008

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes (Nov. 4, 08)

In attendance: Wendy Brandon, Laurie Joyner, Susan Lackman, Jim Small, Eric Zivot, Steve St. John, Jennifer Cavanaugh, Scott Rubarth, Yusheng Yao, Alex Winfree, Tocarra Mallard, Kory Eylmann

1. Minutes for Oct. 14 and 28 were approval with minor revisions.
2. Discussion on AAC's message to A&S faculty regarding upcoming election to choose one representative from each division to staff the subcommittee to review the pilot RP proposals. Due to the urgency of the matter, AAC would ask the Division heads to forward the names of the candidates interested to serve in the subcommittee by Nov. 11. The candidates were encouraged to participate in the first RP meeting on Nov. 13.
3. At the invitation of AAC, Julian Chambliss came to answer queries regarding the proposed African/African-American Transnational Experience (Minor). The major concern was about the flexibility of the courses offered: What if the faculty members leave or are on sabbatical? Will that put the minor out of commission? Was there room for offering elective courses other than the ones listed? AAC stressed the advisability to have a more flexible curriculum and made suggestions on how to revise the current one. For example: 1) the curriculum might identify contents or categories (by regions, disciplines) rather than specific courses; 2) the curriculum might identify introductory and core courses, and a set of other courses. Discussion was also about how to improve the process of proposing a minor including suggestions such as formulating a template or minor map for such a purpose.
4. Sharon Carrier, Director of Holt School, answered the queries posed by AAC regarding 1) how the new courses, majors and programs are approved; 2) how are the adjunct faculty hired and its percentage to full time A&S faculty. Discussion centered on the implications to quality control for topic courses, which do not need AAC approval, and other irrational processes. Due to the complexity of the issues (ownership of Holt, reconceptualization of Holt's mission, and the vision for its future) the committee decided to postpone the discussion till the next meeting.
5. AAC approved the proposed revisions by Dean Joyner regarding commencement policy.
6. Next meeting was set at 3:15 on Nov. 14.