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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, December 2, 2008

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes (Dec. 2, 08)

In attendance: Wendy Brandon, Laurie Joyner, Jim Small, Steve St. John, Jennifer Cavanaugh, Scott Rubarth, Eric Zivot, Susan Lackman, Yusheng Yao, Alex Grammenos, Kory Eylmann, Alex Winfree. Don Davidson, president of faculty also present.

AAC invited Provost Roger Casey to discuss his vision of reconfiguring Holt, its repercussions on curriculum, issues of internationalization and diversity. The discussion focused mostly on Holt School.

Wendy started by expressing the concern that Holt's courses and programs have not always been approved by AAC, although within its purview according the bylaw. She also expressed AAC's desire to link Holt reconfiguration to the phase two curriculum renewal. Jim asked Roger to give his overview of where the Holt School should go for next decade.

Roger, in response Jim's question first, admitted that he could not lay out a clear vision for Holt's future. He was now trying to understand the basic questions about Holt. He would hold two colloquies during the intercession: one about Holt, the other about student affairs.

Roger, in response to Wendy's question, stated that, based on his memory of nine years at Rollins, Holt and A&S had two curricula. Different departments had different relationship with Holt (Psychology Department had two thriving programs in both A&S and Holt; Biology Department was not much present at Holt. Theater Department offered a couple of courses and Education Department had an integrated program). In a nutshell, there was no uniformed [departmental] Holt approach. No consensus about the role of Holt from faculty members, whose perceptions were dramatically different. In contrast, Holt students probably felt more cohesive with the curriculum.

When asked if departments had a sense of ownership of Holt curriculum, Roger felt that they did. The decisions about the curriculum were made by the steering committee led by A&S faculty coordinators. Even though the steering committee had no governance standing, it served historically as the governing body. He believed that Holt's curriculum and its adjustment over the years had been subject to a different degree of oversight from AAC. It was unclear in the bylaws, however, about what Holt's governance and faculty were.

Wendy commented that the real problem for Holt curriculum was that it should be interfaced with that of A&S but got muddled over years. One of the reasons, Scott suggested, might be the ambiguous language in the bylaws that failed to deal with the fact that Holt had evolved from a program of continuing education to one independent of the A&S. Because of this, this part of the bylaws should be modified and clarified.

Laurie pointed out the existing problems with Holt's curriculum such as different courses were offered under the same course number and leadership program. She added that over

the years the change of members in AAC as well as administrators' use or non use of governance at will contributed to the complexity of the problem. Members mentioned the current curriculum reform on general education requirement (RP) would continue the problem of lack of alignment between A&S and Holt. In time Holt had developed a different set of the course numbers, requirements for foreign language, Humanities and lab, and government structure.

Laurie raised what she thought was the basic question about Holt reconfiguration: What was the mission of Holt with reference to A&S? She pointed out that administrators and the faculty had to decide on Holt's mission and then to decide whether Holt should align with A&S. They must first decide on the structural relations between the two and then the governing system of the Holt.

Roger suggested three possible models: 1) integration—to make Holt part of A&S; 2) modification [of the current structure]; 3) separate division—Holt geared more towards professional education such as pharmacy and journalism. We must think through all the implications, pros and cons, of these models. Currently we were mixed and had figured out what was the best model. Roger went on to say that his team had spent past year to collect data nationally for institutions like us, to see how they did and what kind of structure they had. The study found that they were all over the place. But most didn't have a separate program and 65% said they didn't have the right model. Roger asked the question about the institutional identity of Rollins: "Are we residential liberal arts college or are we Master comprehensive university? Holt is caught in between. Should Holt be integrated into A&S? My guts say it shouldn't [because it serves a different student body—older working adults of the local community—from that of A&S]. We want to resolve this. But there is no easy way. Demographics of college students are changing. Not addressing this issue will have economic consequences."

Wendy made a suggestion for Sharon to provide AAC the Holt mission statement. She reiterated that AAC should be responsible for Holt curriculum.

Discussion then shifted to the issue of internationalization. This issue also related to the structural problem of the college: how to coordinate campus wide internationalization including Holt, Crummer and A&S. Roger thought we needed a parallel oversight group and asked Hoyt to lead a task force to make recommendations. Laurie pointed out the current problems in evaluation, quality control and compensation for study abroad programs. Susan and Jim recalled that historically review teams across the institutional boundaries did evaluations of the London and Australian programs.

There was no time to discuss the diversity issue.

Scott's motion that AAC requested all the courses in Holt curriculum would be reviewed in the spring and fall semesters was passed.

Wendy made known AAC's role to facilitate discussion on reducing the graduation hours proposed by the Curriculum Review and Renew Committee on Dec. 10. AAC would not take a stand on this issue until all the arguments were presented and issues fully discussed.

Steve reported he had looked into the last year's AAC record regarding changes made by the Physics major. AAC passed Thom's revised version of the major.