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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Thursday, March 22, 2007

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes March 22nd, 2007

In Attendance: Sharon Carnahan (Chair), Jay Yellen, Hoyt Edge, Dana Hargrove, Thomas Moore. Ben Balak, Ed Cohen, students: Brett Heiney and Greg Handrahan.

1. The minutes from the March 8th 2007 meeting were approved.
2. Old Business:
 - a. Internships- Sharon met with Donna Lee and her staff to follow up on the questions we had regarding probation, she said that the social probation system is under intensive review and changes will probably be made this semester and definitely in the fall. One of the good things that came from this meeting was an understanding from Student Affairs that they now understand how the probation system effects the internship process.

b. Political Science-
Jay had a question about the sentence-

“Students who satisfy the College’s requirements for Honors in the Major Field (see “Curriculum and Curricular Requirements,” *Rollins College Catalogue*) may graduate with Honors in Political Science through one of the following methods. First, a student must successfully complete and defend an Honors Research project under the supervision of a faculty member in the Department. Alternatively, students may complete a second senior-year seminar as a 13th course in Political Science.”

-and asked is it too easy for honors in the major, since it is just one extra course i.e, one extra seminar course and not a full semesters worth of work. Thom agrees and said he thought for honors in the major you had to complete a thesis not just a term paper, you can’t have a course substitute a thesis.

Ed looked up online the current requirements for honors in the major as stated on the student records website “**HONORS IN THE MAJOR FIELD** □ Honors in the Major Field provides for independent research or special study during the senior year under the supervision of a three-member committee in the student’s major...Satisfactory performance on an approved thesis or individual project, an oral examination, and maintenance of the above averages qualifies a student for Honors in the Major Field, which is shown on the student’s official academic transcript.”.

Ed agreed that the guidelines as written in the proposal aren’t so clear but his question related to the proposal and whether there would be any conflict with the student records demand for a certain GPA, this could be clarified.

Sharon wants to know if by the end of the second seminar course, does the student have to have a three person committee and defend the paper. This does not seem to be clearly stated in the proposal. The guidelines need to be more clear here since one semester does not seem long enough and we are not sure if this is what they actually mean.

Hoyt brought up another question for clarification “**Research in Political Science**

Students also will have the opportunity to conduct research in political science. This can be accomplished through a senior year research thesis for Honors in Political Science or as their final research project in their concentration. Students should have strong research and writing skills in order to complete a research project in Political Science. “

Looking at “students also will have the opportunity” rather than all students will conduct research... This needs further clarification

Jay brought up another issue with page 3, 2nd paragraph... “Normally, students should declare their concentration when they declare Political Science as their major but NO LATER THAN registration for classes for their first semester of their junior year.”

It seems like there is a lot of overlap on the concentrations and students could decide later than this. The wording doesn’t seem very clear here, is it too restrictive? If it isn’t such a major concern then perhaps remove the caps. Ed suggests it be stated positively rather than as it stands, perhaps, “students are encouraged to declare their concentration at the time they declare their major to insure timely....”

The committee agreed that this go back to the department for further clarification on these points.

c. Curriculum Reform-

Sharon put together a document for planning the next steps and asked for some input.

Jay asked if its good or bad that there are overlaps in the 5 different work groups of focus. It would require interaction between the groups, and perhaps they could be organized another way. Hoyt suggest in some ways this is a good thing since the job of the work groups would be to continue research in these areas and so differing opinions would be a positive thing since you are more likely to get different views that the next committee would have to put together.

Thom had some serious concerns that the liberal arts curriculum is not addressed specifically in these 5 groups.

Perhaps there could be another group that addresses the canon.

Hoyt suggests that these 5 groups work over the summer to research, however, what group brings everything together? We need another group, a Curriculum Committee, to be appointed for the Fall. This has to be discussed if we want to complete this in 3 years. We need to appoint a curriculum committee for next year, a committee that has all the information from the prior committees and can shape the new curriculum.

Sharon agrees and suggests that the five groups produce newsletters that prepare for the new curriculum committee and provide a reader for the faculty during that time.

Hoyt states again that we have to start working now on the new curriculum.

Ed agrees with Thom and wants to see some acknowledgement that reconfirms our dedication to the liberal arts education in writing in some of the documents produced.

Ed thinks that every dept should have a representative as part of the committee and have every one involved.

Hoyt points out that we do have more majors now and that a good working committee has 8-10 members.

The discussion will continue next meeting

The next AAC meeting will be on March 29th 8:15am in the Warden Dining Room

Dana Hargrove, Secretary