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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, September 12, 2006

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes September 12, 2006

In Attendance: Sharon Carnahan (Chair), Carolyn Carpan, Dana Hargrove, Hoyt Edge, Thom Moore, Ben Balak, Ed Cohen, Steve Miller (Student Government Representative), Jill Hakemian (Student Government Representative)

1. The minutes from the August 29, 2006 meeting were approved.

2. New Business

- a) We welcomed new committee members Ed Cohen and Ben Balak, along with student government representatives Steve Miller and Jill Hakemian.
- b) We reviewed the Honors Program proposal submitted by Dr. Barry Levis. The proposal addresses several problems, including a high drop-out rate, lack of choice in course offerings, and tag-team teaching. The proposal would lower the number of students admitted each year from forty-five to thirty. The AAC expressed a number of concerns about the proposal.
 - It was suggested students could avoid whole divisions (eg. Sciences) in choosing their courses.
 - Jill Hakemian wondered how the new proposal addresses the General Education Requirements, which are currently given to the core courses in the Honors program. She asks, “Will students have to take more courses in order to get their GER?” This will make more work for students and might limit study abroad options for Honors students.
 - The program already requires students who want to study abroad to do so in their junior year. Students would like to see more flexibility with the timing of study abroad.
 - Ed Cohen suggested that we need to define what we mean by the term “interdisciplinary”, since team teaching does not necessarily guarantee interdisciplinary. Hoyt Edge wonders about the staffing implications of the proposal.
 - Ed Cohen asks, “Why not raise the numbers of students in the program and raise the profile of the Honors program?” He questions the wisdom of reducing the number of students admitted to the program.
 - Steve Miller suggests we need to review the admissions process for the Honors program to help increase retention.

The committee agreed that Sharon Carnahan would convey our concerns to Barry Levis and ask him to take these concerns to the Honors Committee. He is also welcome to meet with the committee to address these concerns.

Continuing Business

3. The 4C curricular review committee plans to meet with departments to pose the following questions:
 - What does your department need from the General Education Program?
 - What can your department offer the General Education Program and undergraduate program?
 - What is unique about your department that needs to be considered in a curriculum redesign?

The 4C will produce a white paper with their results by the end of the academic year 2006-2007.

4. We will continue to discuss the CLEP credit issue. We will compare CLEP and General Education Requirements at the next meeting. Steve Miller suggests we find out what are the policies regarding CLEP credit at other ACS schools.
5. Committee Reports
 - Ed Cohen agreed to be an alternate on the Academic Appeals committee.
 - Ben Balak agreed to serve on the New Course committee.

The next AAC meeting will be on Tuesday, September 26 at 8:15 am in the Warden Dining Room.

Carolyn Carpan,
Secretary