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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Thursday, March 2, 2006

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes
March 2nd, 2006

In attendance: [Mark Anderson](#), Richard Lima, Dana Hargrove, Jay Yellen, Roger Casey, Marie, Shafe, Erik Zivot, and SGA representatives Eddie Mehnert, Carly Rothman and Nick Tanturri. Also in attendance from Honors Degree Supervisory Board: Dexter Boniface, Ryan Musgrave, Barry Levis, and student representatives Angela Gonzalez, David Bagby, and Sarah Dunlap.

1. Old Business

2. New Business.

Honors Program Proposal

Barry Levis introduced the proposal first explaining current structure with its various problems: unevenness, common syllabi difficult for all to teach and particular problems with the science courses (it is too easy for science majors and too hard for others). They propose to revamp the program, introducing team taught seminars that come about naturally through faculty partnerships. There would be no common syllabi and hopefully staffing problems would be solved. It would also be interdisciplinary by nature. One negative however is it is expensive since twice as many faculty would be needed to teach the proposed Honors Program.

The AAC then asked questions and there was extended discussion

Richard asked about the number of faculty needed to teach and if this would be a problem.

Barry said it would be easier to staff since it would be a natural partnership of team teaching rather than a forced one, there is also a financial reward for teaching the Honors Program

Marie asked if the faculty decide the topics covered in the class.

Barry said yes, though there is discussion on course titles and sequencing but it would be very broad for faculty.

Mark asked if the general education requirements would be taken care of within the honor program.

Barry said it is a separate degree so we don't have to follow the general education program.

Mark asked if that means that students who are not comfortable with the sciences won't take them. Are we just avoiding the problem rather than fixing it?

Dean Casey stated he is supportive but there is the issue of sustainability, faculty will not always be able propose course because they are locked into the existing department courses and don't have the flexibility. We would need another faculty member to be hired

that has the Honors Program as part of their contractual commitment perhaps an interdisciplinarian. Is team-teaching the only way? This may not suit all faculty. There was discussion about the titles of the sections, do they pull science faculty in? Barry Levis proposed a colloquium to discuss titles etc.

Dean Casey asked whether taking fewer Honors students could be an option, this would mean less faculty would be needed since this new program would be very costly.

Marie asked whether a study abroad requirement could be added to the Honors Program.

The AAC liked the proposal but asked that the board consider the following issues/ideas: sustainability of the program, getting more science faculty involved, reducing the number of students in the program, requiring an international experience, funding, specifying goals for student outcomes.

Richard made a motion to organize colloquia to explore these issues in the spring. The motion was passed.

Future Meetings of AAC

It was decided that the committee should start meeting weekly, but that on Tuesday March 21 and Tuesday April 4, the committee should meet at 12:30 rather than on Thursday of those weeks.

Dana Hargrove