

## **Faculty Senate Minutes November 4, 2002**

**Senate Members Present:** John Hanson, Bill Haltom, Karen Porter, Curt Sanders (ASUPS representative), Barry Anton, Hans Ostrom (Chair), David Tinsley, Juli McGruder, Alexa Tullis, Julian Edgoose, Kris Bartanen (Dean of Students), Kathi Hummel-Berry, Roberta Wilson.

**Visitors:** Nancy Bristow, Ray Preiss, A. Susan Owens, Eric Orlin, J. David Macey, Jr., David M. Hough, Brook Irving, Katy VanVelkinburgh, David Droge, Malissa Robertson, Matt Yarkosky, Douglas Cannon, Terry Beck, Derek Buescher, Bill Barry

Ostrom called the meeting to order around 4 pm.

**MSP** To approve the minutely changed minutes from the October 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Special Orders**

Hanson reported that the Presidential Search Committee met on Nov. 1. The committee did a preliminary culling of candidates, leaving about a dozen. During the month of November the committee will be doing reference checks on these candidates. (Applications are still being received and will be reviewed by the committee as they become available.) Hanson also reported that there was no decision as to whether final candidates will be asked to meet with the larger campus community.

Sanders reported on a number of upcoming campus events.

### **Old Business: How to name and list first-year seminars**

Ostrom noted that he had distributed a summary of the issues with regard to naming and listing first-year seminars.

McGruder withdrew her motion (from the previous meeting) that "Courses will be listed primarily by departmental prefixes."

Haltom stated that there seemed to be general agreement that the first-year seminars should be listed together somewhere in the bulletin to make it easy for students to peruse them. He also suggested that most senators seemed to favor having the courses also listed under departmental listings, without repeating the descriptions. Thus, the major issue for discussion was simply what 2 or 3 letters should be associated with the courses – i.e., should the courses be listed with departmental monikers or alternatively a special core moniker.

Cannon was surprised to see an interpretation that the faculty wanted these courses be listed under non-departmental monikers; he always thought that they should be listed by department. He felt that this was an important question since it determined whether a department or a faculty committee would be responsible for these courses. He opined that academic inquiry is done within disciplines for very defensible reasons, and that we should show students this by listing these courses by department. Cannon also argued that a separate document describing these courses should be sent to students. This is an important curricular initiative and it is worth some money to have it publicized to students.

Macey agreed with Cannon's sentiments and wanted to extend the argument to the Writing and Rhetoric seminars. The grounding of writing in disciplines is one of the roots of Writing Across the Curriculum programs. It is important to show students that writing is integral to disciplines and not something that is apart from the mainstream of the curriculum. He also noted that having

courses listed under a department, but not counting toward a major in the department (e.g. Engl 101), wasn't a source of confusion in the past.

Orlin noted that there will be different seminars offered in the Fall and Spring semesters so it is important that in any documents sent to first-year students there should be descriptions of courses for both semesters so that students can plan appropriately. He favored not having departmental monikers on the first-year seminars since students might not bother reading descriptions of courses listed under departments that are outside of their comfort zone.

Hummel-Berry remarked that the idea of having information on the seminars sent to first-year students before they arrive was discussed at the last meeting and Cooney had commented that this might be confusing for students since some of the seminars would be advising sections and others would not. But she opined that students already grapple with this.

Tinsley also supported the views expressed by Cannon. He doesn't see any conflict between command of a discipline and a good liberal arts education. In his experience the best interdisciplinary learning and teaching takes place when 2 or more faculty come at a problem from their own disciplinary roots. Tinsley was concerned about a number of other issues besides simply what the first-year seminars would be named: how will they be funded, will they be evaluated in the same way as other courses, will there be a hierarchy of seminars, some of which are more equal than others.

Preiss also favored using departmental monikers on the seminars. He doesn't think that this will cause students to simply strike certain courses off of their lists. In any case, he believes in truth in advertising.

At this point in the discussion, Haltom proposed the following:

**MSP: Every first-year seminar approved by the Curriculum Committee**

**a) shall be listed in *The Bulletin* in a manner that presents to every first-year student the complete range of choices available,**

**b) shall be cross-referenced under the department or program in which the instructor of the first-year course offers most of her or his courses, and**

**c) shall be assigned a label and number determined by the department or program in which the instructor of the first-year course offers most of her or his courses.**

In response to a question, Haltom responded that he intended that his motion would not preclude listing a seminar under some non-departmental label, but that he expected that in most cases they would be listed under a departmental label.

Preiss noted that having departmental involvement in these courses would be useful for the people teaching these courses since it is the department that is involved in the important first step of the faculty evaluation process.

In response to a question, Haltom noted that his motion just dealt with how the courses would be listed in the bulletin and didn't specifically address issues such as whether there should be literature sent to students or how these courses would be listed in the Schedule of Classes.

Preiss wondered how passionately the Curriculum Committee had felt about listing these courses by core monikers rather than departmental ones. Barry replied that the Curriculum Committee had favored having core monikers, but it hadn't been a particularly passionate issue.

## **100-level courses and registration of juniors and seniors**

Ostrom noted that there was concern about the new policy whereby juniors and seniors are not allowed to enroll in 100 level courses until after freshman registration is complete. The Academic Standards committee had been working to ameliorate some of these problems, but there still might be unintended consequences from the policy.

Ostrom also noted that the wording of the motion passed by the full faculty (see the 3/8/2000 faculty meeting minutes) did not include a timetable for implementation of the policy and was vague enough to permit the faculty senate to temporarily postpone implementation if necessary, especially since the full faculty would not be meeting before registration.

Malissa Robertson, a Senior student, then described 5 issues of concern about the implementation of the new policy.

1. There are Senior students who still need core courses to graduate. Even though they can petition to register for these courses before the Freshman, this is a hassle.
2. Some Juniors need to enroll in Natural World Core courses now so that they will be able to enroll in Science in Context courses next year.
3. Many Seniors have spent their first 3 years fulfilling major and core requirements. They finally have room for an elective or two in their schedule but are not able to take advantage of the opportunity to explore new disciplines. A liberal arts college should be encouraging students to expand their horizons, not limiting them. It is unrealistic to expect most students to jump into a new discipline at the 200 or 300 level.
4. Many students were not aware of this change in policy until last Friday when they received an email from the registrar informing them that they would not be able to enroll in 100 level (and certain 200-level) courses. Senior students have often been waiting for years to have enough seniority to enroll in some popular classes, but are now being locked out.
5. Many students voiced concern that it is another example of the administration and faculty making a decision that affects students without getting input from the students. As the current Seniors become alums this might cause them to have poor feelings about their Alma Mater.

Matt Yarkosky, another student, described his situation. He needs a Humanistic Core course and was interested in a couple courses (e.g, Greek Mythologies) but after 3.5 years at UPS he is not being allowed to explore new areas and enroll in the courses he wants. He thinks that there are probably many Senior students who need to complete one more core course.

Hummel-Berry opined that this new policy may have been made in haste without full realization of the implications. We should be encouraging breadth, not restricting it. We should also be encouraging students, especially upper-level ones, to be responsible and independent in making decisions about their education, not making the decisions for them. She also noted that many students in pre-professional programs (e.g., pre-PT) have many prerequisites, many of which are at the 100-level, and this policy might restrict their ability to complete those required courses.

Edgoose felt that there might be similar problems for students in the Education program who are trying to get a second certification.

Katy VanVelkinburgh, another senior student, said that she had heard some rumors about the new policy, but was taken aback when she recently received the official announcement. She feels that after 3.5 years at UPS she has earned some seniority. She has two elective credits and was excited to finally be able to enroll in Photography, a passion of hers. But in order to enroll in Photography, she must enroll in Art 101. The new enrollment policy makes it almost

certain that she will be unable to enroll in Art 101, and hence she will not be able to take Photography. She noted that she will not be able to petition this since she doesn't need the course for a Core or for her Major. She thinks that it is ridiculous that after 3.5 years of waiting she is being locked out of a course that she is passionate about.

McGruder expressed concern that there were many 100-level courses needed for degree completion and many others where the inability of Seniors to enroll in them would cause problems.

Tinsley opined that this was an example of a bad policy with many unintended consequences.

Haltom then proposed the following "Sense of the Senate" resolution:

**MSP Given that the faculty directed that the registrar look into the policy about to be implemented, and given that the implementation of the policy poses major problems for seniors and others, be it resolved that the implementation of the policy be postponed until the faculty may reconsider the policy.**

Bartanen reminded the senate that there were pedagogical reasons for not having Juniors and Seniors in introductory level courses. Buescher supported this notion saying that in Presentational Communication, a 100-level course, the presence of upper-level students can be intimidating for first-year students.

Hummel-Berry opined that it might not be a bad policy, but the way it is being implemented might be the problem.

Barry noted that there had been an effort to get the word out about the new policy. He noted that it will probably be a rocky transition no matter when it happens.

Sanders expressed concern about how this policy was being implemented, and that students were not involved in the decision. He had heard a lot of concern from other students. He was also concerned that if the implementation is going to be delayed, it needs to happen soon.

Haltom replied that the presumption is that the Chair of the Faculty Senate will notify the appropriate officials (John Finney and Brad Tomhave) to see if it is possible to delay implementation. He also opined that the senate's motion is advisory only since the original directive was from the full faculty.

The meeting was adjourned around 5:20 pm.

Submitted by John Hanson