Educational Policy Committee  

MINUTES  

May 5, 2014  9:00AM  

Dean David Quigley called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM.


1.) Dean Quigley indicated that decisions have been made on various grade appeal cases.

- Prof. Kathy Dunn spoke for the committee and indicated that in all cases the professors had followed the syllabi and there was nothing out of the ordinary in terms of professional policies and procedures. The student suggested that there may have been hostility on the part of one professor, but also admitted that any perceived hostility did not seem to impact the grading. The conclusion was that there was no reason to overturn the grade in this case.

2.) Prof. Bill Petri spoke on modification of “co-counting.”

- Prof. Petri explained that the proposed modification sheet distributed to the committee. Indication is that co-counting is biased against departments with a higher number of requirements for the major. SUGGESTION: was made that if the student enrolled in two majors, the student should do 2 x 30 credits of what is usually done in the major. But the second major should be 30 [-3] or, 27 credits. These credits for the second major cannot be co-counted, or “double-dipped,” but must be stand-alone credits. In other words, these credits would be uniquely attributed to the major (or minor).

Prof. Kathy Dunn commented on co-counting: Indicated that some minors are built-in to the major due to the fact that you have to complete most of the requirements of a chemistry minor in order to complete the B.S. in biology. Ease of a chemistry major to get a minor in biology. Much the curriculum for the minor seems redundant.

Dean David Quigley then asked for clarification on the number of credits for both the chemistry and the biology minors.

Prof. Bill Petri indicated that there would be 15 credits of the 18 credits of for the chemistry minor [granted to students who pursue a biology major.]

Prof. Amy Boesky offered that there would be 30 unique credits to the Major → where only 3 credits would “co-count.” The minor would entail 18 unique credits. Prof. Boesky indicated that this scheme should be be implemented sooner rather than later so that students receive the proper clarity on this issue.

Prof. C-K Cheung said that he liked the proposal because it encourages more students to become double majors.
Prof. Rory Browne: indicated that this rule puts in **positive terms** what students must do. But that there were questions remaining:

1.) How does this affect the minor?
2.) How does this affect AP credits?
3.) Core is absent from this discussion

Prof. Tim Duket asked if we would be “crowding out the core” with this scheme. In other words, would it put more pressure on the core, or constrict the core.

There was a brief discussion on idea of “capping” the number of courses in a major.

Prof. Tim Duket stated that any caps on majors should be taken up with the department chairs first.

**Motion to Change the Co-Count Rules**

- **Motion was passed.**
- Dean Quigley expressed that the new co-count rules would start in September, 2014
- The rules would be made effective with the class of 2015

3.) Report/Discussion: **Academic Affairs Subcommittee on the Language Requirement**

Tim Duket thanked the members of the committee for their hard work.

Main Question: What kind of change would the faculty be open to?: The committee can only offer the results of its consultations. There was no one true answer, but there was a strong consensus on a two points:

a.) We should talk about language “mastery” rather than language proficiency. This means that language mastery would have a “value” without making it a requirement.

b.) BC should build-in an “incentive” to encourage the student to meet a level of mastery.

c.) Prof. Amy Boesky added that a certificate in a language would be a real incentive even more than an “honor” because it would be something verifiable. She noted that both Duke and Northwestern use this system.

**FEEDBACK:**

- Dean Quigley mentioned that we should be aware not to compound the idea that the professors in the language department were “language teachers.”
- Rory Browne referenced a previous program run by Adrian Nussbaum which bestowed a Certificate in Globalization.
- Tim Duket mentioned Yale’s new Language Center which allows every student to acquire many languages. As a final thought Tim added that the move toward a credential would “put languages on display” at graduation, and there could be discussion about a sash or some other marker for language mastery.

Dean Quigley wanted to look at this in the context of:

a.) What is good now about the program.
b.) What is the justification for such a move to the new credential-based system.

c.) Selection of entering students and languages.

Prof. Rudi Hon – indicated that students go into elementary courses rather than the more demanding intermediate ones. His idea is to try to make the elementary courses more burdensome so that students cannot ‘game the system.”

Prof. Luke Jorgensen asked about “new” languages being used to fulfill the requirement.

Rory Brown indicated that language placement exams are not mandatory now, so the question is, should we make them mandatory?

Prof. Katie Lavallee offered that the undergraduate experience is that most students have four years to of a language from high school. And that scoring higher on the language placement test does not necessarily mandate that a student moves to intermediate level at BC.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 AM.