College of Arts and Sciences
Educational Policy Meeting

Minutes of the 406th Meeting
Thursday March 15, 2007

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MEMBERS.


ABSENT: Andrea DeFusco-Sullivan, Evan Henrich, Mary Daniel O'Keeffe, Kelly Tressler, Christopher Young.

CALL TO ORDER: Dean Quinn called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

MINUTES: The minutes from September 28, 2006 were approved with corrections from Clare Dunsford, Cathy Schneider and James Najarian.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS: Joe Quinn introduced the proposal for an interdisciplinary major in Islamic Cultures. Noting that the college has very few such majors, Quinn noted that this proposal could be viewed as a template for future program proposals.

ISLAMIC CULTURES: Michael Graf outlined the proposal noting that the major would require twelve courses and have four possible disciplinary bases.

- Political Science
- Fine Arts
- Theology, and
- History.

The major would also include a language requirement, which could be met in several languages besides Arabic.
Graf stated that the strengths of the proposal lay in the outstanding faculty and demonstrated student interest. He noted that the proposal needed more specifics concerning

- the degree of departmental support,
- faculty commitments to teach the courses
- the shape of the proposed program compared to those at other schools,
- total number of courses required.

Graf closed by noting that the proposal had been sent back for revisions along with these questions and the suggestion that the number of associated electives be pared down.

James Najarian asked which languages would be used and whether the language departments had the staff to teach them. Joe Quinn stated that the college now offers three years of Arabic and that students could take appropriate languages at other area colleges and perhaps abroad. Quinn also noted that study abroad was not mandatory. Michael Martin noted that this represented a heavy course load for the students and faculty.

Michael Graf responded that the committee had asked that the list of languages actually be expanded. Harry Rosser stated that Old Spanish could be included. Joe Burns commented that because the languages were heavily dependent on the part time budget the proposal needed to include specific staffing requests and costs.

Joe Quinn asked about the consequences for the faculty of a senior thesis requirement. Graf responded stated that admissions to the Islamic Studies Program would be limited (by application) and that thesis could be done as a capstone course.

Cathy Schneider asked what the administrative structure of this program would be. Joe Quinn responded that there would be a Director and a faculty advisory committee. Cynthia Lyerly, noting that the departments were already stretched by course reductions and interdisciplinary minor requirements, asked if course in Islamic Studies would be staffed by regular course reductions, as overloads, or by part time faculty.

Joe Quinn stated that Islamic Studies would be a new major program and noted that the College did not yet have a mechanisms for establishing, supporting and measuring the performance of interdisciplinary programs. He added that the very successful International Studies Program was begun as a three year pilot and provided an excellent model for new interdisciplinary programs.
REVIEW OF INTERDISCIPLINARY MINORS: Akua Sarr reported on the ongoing reviews of interdisciplinary minors stating that they faced an increasing challenge of visibility especially with the founding of new interdisciplinary majors. She outlined the review process stating that the deans received a report from the various directors detailing

- faculty involvement,
- course offerings,
- curricular structure and initiatives,
- budget, and
- co-curricular activities.

She added that she was currently writing profiles for each program.

James Najarian asked if any of these programs were failing. Michael Graf noted that while some interdisciplinary minors wanted to become majors, most were stable as minors and only a few seemed to be shrinking.

Joe Quinn asked if there were any consistent needs of these interdisciplinary minors and stated that each program should provide enrollment figures over time to measure student interest. He also noted that the office of interdisciplinary programs would be hiring a staff person to help with this.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Dean Quinn adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.