College of Arts and Sciences  
Educational Policy Meeting  

Minutes of the 407th Meeting  
Thursday May 10th, 2007  

MEMBERS.

PRESENT:  Joe Burns, Clare Dunsford, Michael Graf, Charles Landraitis, Cynthia Lyerly, Thomas McGuinness, Michael Martin, James Najarian, William Petri, Joseph Quinn, Harry Rosser, Akua Sarr, Catherine Schneider, Barbara Viechnicki.

ABSENT:  Andrea DeFusco-Sullivan, Omolara Bewaji, Evan Henrich, Pamela Lannuti, Sr. Mary Daniel O'Keeffe, Susan Shell, Kelly Tressler, Christopher Young, Stella Yu.

CALL TO ORDER:  Dean Quinn called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

MINUTES:  Acceptance of the minutes from April 4th, 2007 was deferred.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS:

Islamic Civilizations and Cultures.  Dean Quinn called on Michael Graf to report on the proposal to establish a major in Islamic Civilizations and Cultures.

Noting that this was now the third version of the proposal Graf went on to list the highlights:

- Four departments contributed to the proposed major
  - Political Science
  - History
  - Theology
  - Fine Arts

- Slavic and Eastern Languages would also participate pending funding for additional Arabic language sections.

- The major would require 10 courses including
  - 1 introductory course which would also satisfy the Cultural Diversity core requirement
  - 4 from one of the base disciplines
    - 2 of these being the “introductory courses” for that discipline
- 2 additional courses from that base discipline as approved by the Islamic Civilizations and Cultures Program
  - 3 elective courses selected from at least 2 different participating disciplines
  - 1 Senior Seminar
  - 1 semester Senior Thesis.

- The proposal now listed Ali Benuazizi as the proposed Director and Cathy Bailey as the proposed Associate Director as well as a 12 member board.

- The letters of support from the base discipline departments were represented as “strong” though questions remain. Only Political Science and Fine Arts had fully signed on.

- Student interest, as evidenced by the rapid growth of enrollments in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, is very strong.

- The program budget would have to include support for additional sections of Arabic.

Graf went on to list the subcommittee’s continued concerns:

- How and when would students be admitted to the major?
- Could they take the introductory course during the freshman year?
- How many seats would be available in the introductory course?
- Would the language course be available here? Or could it be taken at other schools?
- Would four semesters of Arabic be enough? Would an increase in demand be met with additional funding?
- Were there sufficient faculty resources?
- Was too much of the administrative and advising load focused on one or two faculty members?

Joe Burns opened discussion asking about current enrollments in Arabic. Graf replied that all Arabic courses were already over-subscribed. Harry Rosser asked if the listed courses were part of a regular rotation. Catherine Schneider stated that this was not clear from the proposal. Joe Burns stated that Theology has one strictly relevant course, Religious Quest. Clare Dunsford stated that Religious Quest was already over-subscribed. Cynthia Lyerly asked if Asian Studies had been consulted. Graf answered that more departmental consultation would be needed.

Dean Quinn stated that if International Studies was taken as the model of an Interdepartmental Major, this proposal was not there yet. Michael Martin asked if this Major could follow the lead of International Studies by becoming a very specific Independent Major first. Graf replied that this had been suggested adding that the
proponents of the new major had resisted the suggestion. Akua Sarr stated that Independent Majors were clearly discouraged. Clare Dunsford stated that time spent as an Independent Major would allow the departments a chance to gage their commitment.

Stating that Islamic Studies was an area the college supported and adding that the college certainly supported interdisciplinary studies in general, Dean Quinn recommended accepting the subcommittee’s report and recommendation that the proposal be sent back with further questions.

**Survey on Interdisciplinary Minors.** Dean Quinn called on Akua Sarr to report on the ongoing review of interdisciplinary minors.

Noting that the number of interdisciplinary minors had grown from 10 to 17 over the past decade with a rise in the number of students from 200 to 500, Sarr stated that the minors had become a considerable resource issue for the departments. She also referred to the 2004 report by Carol Hurd Green recommending that an Associate Dean administer the growing number of interdisciplinary minors as a cluster and that the college consider founding a center or institute for interdisciplinary studies.

Sarr reported that several of the minors will propose that they expand noting that this would become a departmental resource issue. She added that some minors would propose becoming majors on the model of International Studies noting that interdisciplinary studies was clearly supported in the university’s master plan. Sarr recommended that the EPC should consider setting some policy guidelines and procedures to aid the process of proposing that some interdisciplinary minors become majors.

Joe Burns stated that the growth in the number of students taking minors had had a significant impact on the History and English Departments. Michael Martin asked if the number of students declaring double majors was still increasing despite the establishment of the new interdisciplinary minors. The deans answered, “Yes.” Bill Petri noted that many students with minors were actually “co-counting” courses to fulfill different major and minor program requirements. Clare Dunsford responded that only the interdisciplinary majors prohibited co-counting.

Dean Quinn, stating that the review of the interdisciplinary minors was on-going, thanked Sarr for her work.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Thanking Cathy Schneider, Harry Rosser and Michael Graff who would be leaving the EPC at the end of the year and announcing that they would be replaced by Stuart Hecht, Sarah Babb, and Clare O’Connor, Dean Quinn adjourned the meeting at 4:25.

Joe Burns objected noting that the current committee could not adjourn without thanking Joe Quinn for his eight years of guidance and friendship. All present concurred.