College of Arts and Sciences
Educational Policy Committee meeting

Minutes of the 409th Meeting
Thursday, February 8, 2008

Members present: Dean Patrick Maney, Akua Sarr, Bill Petri, Clare Dunsford, Barbara Viechnicki, Clare O'Connor, Sarah Babb, James Najarian, David Quigley, Michael Martin, Charles Landraitis, Stuart Hecht.

The meeting was called to order at 4:06 pm.

I. Minutes from the November 2007 meeting were distributed and approved.

II. Academic Affairs Subcommittee Report was presented by Clare O'Connor.
   a. Proposed interdisciplinary major: Islamic Civilization and Societies (ICS): noted that the proposed major has been refined according to earlier requests, all of which was described in detail. It was noted that the title of the major was changed to reflect the diversity of Muslim cultures. The report noted the advantages of the major over the minor and also noted committee concerns, which included issues of administration, support and funding.
      i. EPC then discussed the proposal in greater detail; it was explained that the program’s funding would come from a Title 6 grant, and that BC will have to cover shortfalls as well as assume total expense one that grant expires. There were also concerns expressed about shared departmental governance of the program, about when students could enroll, its potential to undermine other departments because of its staffing needs, as well as the possible impact this major might have on the International Studies major. It was also made clear that this major would serve at total of 60 majors, 15 admitted per year. Those majoring in ICS would also be discouraged from pursuing a second major.
      ii. Based on EPC concerns, O’Connor moved to approve the ICS major with three conditions:
         1. applicants must have sophomore standing;
         2. participating departments be encouraged to rotate governance to insure shared responsibility;
         3. a reevaluation of the major would be made after three years, performed by the EPC and based upon an assessment of the major’s relative effectiveness.

   Sarr seconded the motion; it was approved unanimously.

b. proposed Community Service Research Seminar: O’Connor explained that Dr Sendoya of AHANA requested UN course designation with 3 hours course credit for this course. It would be offered in alternating years, initially targeted toward Latino community work, with the goal to change its focus in future years to enable work in other minority communities.
    i. EPC discussion followed about where the course would fit into the larger A & S, if not a Lynch School course, about who would govern and hence supervise the course.
    ii. Quigley moved EPC follow the subcommittee’s recommendation and approve the course. Martin seconded the motion; it was approved unanimously.

c. proposed Inclusive Education Minor for A & S Students: O’Connor described this request from Associate Professor David Scanlon of LSOE for such a minor, noting that the subcommittee thought it needed to be refined.
i. EPC agreed and moved that the proposal should be sent back and that questions pertaining both course selection and student selection need to be addressed.

III. Honors Subcommittee Report was presented by David Quigley
   a. Independent Study courses in A & S departments: Quigley turned the table over to Petrie who explained problems caused by broad range of such courses across the university with conflicting range of criteria, expectations and standards. Petrie suggested introducing a set contract that would be required for all independent studies, to be completed and signed jointly by the advising professor and the student. This would serve as a syllabus, would strengthen accountability of both parties, and reduces grievances. Hecht then distributed the Readings and Research guidelines and contract he devised in 1994 and used by the Theatre Department. This included conditions including senior standing, that it not replicate other departmental course offerings, that it be advanced work built upon the preexisting curriculum. Petrie also suggested that students be limited to no more than one independent study per semester, unless granted special approval, that this be kept by the department chair, that the resulting syllabus be posted online along with other course offerings. Quigley thought it important to collect data on independent studies of recent years to evaluate their substance as well as grading patterns.
   i. EPC thought such a system would elevate undergraduate scholarship, that the public posting of syllabi would prove valuable to the faculty member professionally, that it would expand the departmental curriculum if so posted. They supported Quigley’s suggestion to allow the Honors subcommittee to explore this further and make a future presentation to the full EPC.
   b. Independent major proposals report: Quigley reported on the subcommittee’s recommendations for each of the four independent major proposals:
      i. Maggie Sullivan: the committee thought it fine as is, with no need for any revision;
      ii. Kirsten Rood: the committee thought it a strong proposal, but wanted to wait until the full EPC decided upon the ICS major. Since that is now approved, the subcommittee recommends grandfathering her into the new major, rather than approve the independent major;
      iii. Emily Neumeier: the committee acknowledges her as a particularly strong student, but think the there is too much overlap in her proposal to warrant a second major. It therefore recommends she either pursue the independent major or her current Fine Arts major, but not both.
      iv. Kate Griwert: Quigley wondered if the Honors subcommittee had the authority to make a decision on such a case as this. The subcommittee had her rework her proposal and believe it now acceptable in its revised form.
         1. EPC asked that we “stick to our guns” with regard to the Neumeier case, that the recommendation of the Honors subcommittee be upheld and supported. This led to a question of how to include independent majors, as well as interdisciplinary majors, amongst sophomore and junior scholars, who, lacking a governing department, often get overlooked.
         2. Petrie moved that the Honors subcommittee’s recommendation be approved; Sarr seconded. It was approved unanimously.

The next EPC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 27th at 4 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm