

# College of Arts and Sciences

## Educational Policy Meeting

*Minutes of the 405<sup>th</sup> Meeting*  
*Thursday September 28th, 2006*

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### **MEMBERS**

**PRESENT:** Omolara Bewaji, Joe Burns, Clare Dunsford, Michael Graf, Pamela Lannuti, Charles Landraitis, Cynthia Lyerly, Lynn Lyerly, Thomas McGuinness, Ourida Mostefai, James Najarian, William Petri, Joseph Quinn, Harry Rosser, Akua Sarr, Catherine Schneider, Susan Shell, Kelly Tressler, Barbara Viechnicki, Christopher Young, Stella Yu.

**ABSENT:** Andrea DeFusco-Sullivan, Evan Henrich, Michael Martin, Sr. Mary Daniel O'Keeffe.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Dean Quinn called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** The members introduced themselves.

**MINUTES:** The minutes from May 2006 were approved.

**NEW BUSINESS AND COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS:** Dean Quinn described the NEASC re-accreditation visit (with handout).

J. Burns stated that the EPC approves curricular majors and minors. It makes recommendations about current curricular issues; recently, for example, about grade compression and undergraduate teaching assistants.

This year's work was described as follows:

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS:** follow up on undergraduate Teaching Assistants report.

- Payment in money rather than course credit;
- Course credit should be pass/fail grades and only once.
- Re-checking the use of reading and research courses

**HONORS:** consider implications of and responses to

- The implications of changes in grades distribution: privileges and honors, Dean's List, study abroad.
- GPA in the major: may be flawed.
- Courses with very high grade distributions.

**QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:**

J. Burns noted questions about how to judge advanced courses that might have high grade distributions.

O. Bewaji asked about possible re-evaluation of interdisciplinary minors as there is a disconnect particularly in area studies between what the students want and what the university can do. J. Burns noted that minors may become majors. BC has been "tight" about interdisciplinary majors in our cohort of schools. O. Bewaji asked about the extent to which the EPC has oversight over the courses offered here noting that the minors depend on the departments to staff and hire the courses. J Burns responded that it was an appropriate question.

C. Schneider asked if we have shelved recognition on transcripts for those who do "honors" work in their departments. J. Burns argued against this kind of recognition noting that the phrase "departmental honors" means different things in different departments. He also noted that the registrar would not want to include it on the transcripts. (J. Quinn agreed.) It was stated that the registrar is concerned that the information get to its office by graduation.

C. Schneider asked how an employer confirms "honors" on a resumé, and argued that there should be some official recognition. C. Dunsford noted that the registrar likes to hold the line on what is on the transcripts. J. Burns added that graduation prizes and the Dean's List are not on the transcripts while Latin Honors, Phi Beta Kappa, and Cross and Crown are.

J. Quinn offered the Honors Subcommittee report on Departmental Honors from 2000-01.

J. Najarian asked about the relationship between faculty members and grade distributions in courses with many sections (and teaching assistants). J. Burns noted that the idea is to check up and see if something is seriously awry.

Dean Quinn suggested the following issues for this year's subcommittees:

- Academic Affairs issues: readings and research Courses, undergraduate teaching assistants, interdisciplinary majors.
- Honors: GPA cutoffs. GPA within major. Perhaps courses with a very high grade distribution could have other ways of recognizing the best students.

Subcommittee requests are passed out.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Dean Quinn adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

James Najarian  
Acting Secretary