

COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

200 Bricker Hall

August 25, 2009

2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

DRAFT MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Faculty:

- ✓ Dr. Lawrence A. Baum (Political Science)
- Dr. Neelima M. Bendapudi (Marketing and Logistics)
- ✓ Dr. James W. Cogdell (Mathematics)
- ✓ Dr. Kathryn A. Corl, (Germanic Languages and Literatures)
- ✓ Dr. Marcia E. Farr (Teaching and Learning)
- ✓ Dr. Jay S. Hobgood (Geography)
- ✓ Dr. Michael Ibba (Microbiology)
- ✓ Dr. Daniel A. Mendelsohn (Mechanical Engineering)
- Dr. Robert J. Ward (Music)

Students:

- Mr. Robert D. Calhoun (CGS, History of Art)
- ✓ Ms. Sarah K. Douglas (CGS, History)
- ✓ Mr. Benjamin T. Reinke (USG, Physcs)

Administrators:

- ✓ Dr. W. Randy Smith, (Academic Affairs), Vice Chair

Guests:

- Dr. David Andereck, Associate Dean, Biological Sciences/Mathematical and Physical Sciences)
- Ms. Andrea Bour (Course Coordinator, Office of the University Registrar)
- Dr. Ann Christy (Associate Professor, Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering)
- Dr. Alexis C. Collier (Associate Provost)
- Dr. Terry L. Gustafson (Associate Dean, Arts and Sciences)
- Dr. Kate Hallihan (Director, ASC Curriculum and Assessment Office)
- Dr. Christopher Highley (Professor, English)
- Mr. Jay Johnson (Assistant Provost)
- Dr. Teresa Johnson (Instructional Consultant, University Center for the Advancement of Teaching)
- Dr. Stephen Mangum (Associate Dean, Fisher College of Business)
- Mr. Jack Miner (Associate Registrar, Office of the University Registrar)
- Mr. Brad Myers (University Registrar, Office of the University Registrar)
- Dr. Gene Mumy, Associate Dean, Social and Behavioral Sciences)
- Mr. John Tannous (USG-Elect)
- Ms. Sarah Tokar-Lang (Academic Planning Specialist, College of Education and Human Ecology)
- Dr. John Wanzer (Senior Assistant Vice Provost, Enrollment Services and Undergraduate Education)
- Dr. John Wilkins (Professor, Physics)
- Professor Valarie Williams (Associate Curricular Dean, Arts and Humanities)

The Council came to order at 2:40 PM

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF JULY 22, 2009

Mendelsohn moved the approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of July 22, 2009. The motion was seconded by Hobgood, and carried by voice vote.

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR—PROFESSOR DANIEL A. MENDELSON

Mendelsohn noted this would be his last meeting as Chair of the Council. He will continue to serve as a member for one more year.

COMMENTS FROM THE VICE CHAIR — PROFESSOR W. RANDY SMITH

- A special committee is being organized that will review the proposal to restructure the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences. The review of this special committee will then come back to Council. The committee will be comprised of two faculty from this Council, two individuals from the Executive Committee for the Arts and Sciences, and two others, plus two students and two staff.
- Smith provided an update on the move to electronic use of the Student Evaluation on Instruction (SEI): The SEI oversight committee has met and a University Senate presentation is scheduled for October 15, 2009. There will also be open forums held in the Autumn on this issue so that everyone understands the reasons for implementation.

Council will review the new electronic process after the first year. A Council member will be asked to join the faculty, staff, and students serving on the SEI Oversight Committee.

SEMESTER CONVERSION UPDATE AND DISCUSSION LED BY W. RANDY SMITH, VICE PROVOST; BRAD MYERS, REGISTRAR; AND JACK MINER, ASSOCIATE REGISTRAR

Council continued the discussion that began at the August 18, 2009 meeting on items related to the semester conversion. The discussion centered around the drafted definition of a credit hour prepared and distributed by the Ohio Board of Regents (BOR). Smith noted that the draft definition thus far appears to be accepted across the Ohio State campus and by others around the state. This led to a discussion of the impact of the proposed changes to class times and the distribution of classes across the week:

- Although the BOR's proposal appears to offer some flexibility in terms of in-class time and out-of-class time experience, currently the University's 48-minute framework does not meet the definition of the proposed 750-minute credit hour. In response, the

Registrar's Office has modelled 53-, 55-, and 60-minute classes and how they will structure the day. The Registrar has asked that Council reflect on these scenarios in terms of how they translate into the utilization of the classroom pool and utilization of the classroom day.

Most students feel that the current 12-minute break between classes is not adequate time to traverse the campus. Research has shown that breaks appear to vary by institution, mostly due to layout and size of campus. The Registrar's Office offered that it can easily provide information from benchmark institutions (CIC, AAU) on specific issues.

The Registrar's Office recommended a 15-minute break to better accommodate students, especially lower-division students going from one GEC class to another, having to move across campus in a short period of time.

An informal poll revealed that Council members support the 15-minute break, agreeing that the 12-minute break is too short and that a 20-minute break might be too long.

The Registrar's Office noted that from a utilization stand point, one advantage of a 55-minute course over a 60-minute course to consider is that at the end of the day, a 55-minute course gives you one more full structural hour (that includes a 15-minute break).

Responses/reactions from Council members and others in attendance included:

- 55-60 minutes for Engineering/Physics classes seem to be adequate.
 - Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences courses seem to need more time to fully explore their subjects
 - Studio Art classes would more than likely benefit from the increase from 48 minutes to 55 or 60.
- Other factors to consider:
 - Traditionally, there is poor utilization of Fridays at Ohio State.
 - The addition of 7:30 a.m. classes has not shown much benefit and is not popular among the student body.
- The course numbering structure will mostly likely go to a 4-digit model – it gives more flexibility. The change will also allow students who start on quarters and finish on semesters to distinguish among the courses. Discussions will need to take place on what different levels (1000-level, 2000-level) will mean in terms of expectations, depth, and difficulty.

Suffixes and prefixes (i.e., H for honors) currently in use, will need to be part of the discussion. Decimalization for topics and subdivisions also needs to be discussed.

- Myers also noted that many institutions have migrated to an environment, in terms of maximizing space, that looks at new/different teaching instructional models, and how that then gets translated into use of the classroom pool. They have found that it is fairly typical to look at a set MWF-model (say, 55-minute classes) combined with a T-R model

(80-minute classes) as the pattern, (rather than all 5 days following the same meeting schedule) and then make exceptions to those patterns as needed. The Registrar's Office has modelled these scenarios, and Myers and Miner shared schematics with Council.

Key issues that then were discussed included:

- Appropriate class time for T-R classes.
- Does Ohio State have enough space?
- A standard scheduling pattern for GEC courses may be helpful.
- Some classes, from a pedagogical standpoint, are best taught five days per week.
- Reducing the overall amount of change may help implementation.
- The curricular contacts in the professional and health sciences colleges are concerned about how courses will be handled in colleges where prerequisites for their students are taught.
- How to handle increasingly larger classes and identifying additional spaces for larger classes.

By an informal show of hands, Council members and others in attendance, overwhelmingly supported the MWF with a separate T-R model, rather than a model with all 5 days on the same schedule. Smith noted that this preferred option can be packaged in different ways to accommodate the local needs of departments/schools.

CLOSING REMARKS

Smith reminded the group that this conversion is an opportunity to look at the structure of the General Education Curriculum. Following recent discussions with the faculty leadership of the University Senate, and the Arts and Sciences Senate and its Committee on Curriculum and Instruction, it has been decided to use the existing University Level Advisory Committee on the General Education Curriculum (ULAC-GEC), embellished with a few other members, to examine this topic and charge it with reviewing the "shell" of the GEC, and reporting back to Council later this calendar year, if possible.

He also noted that there will be a Semester Summit held at Wright State University on October 14, 2009 with representatives from all 17 institutions in Ohio that are converting to semesters invited to attend.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted

W. Randy Smith
Melissa Soave

