

# **COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

**1039 DERBY HALL**

**March 28, 2007**

**3:00 – 5:00 pm**

**MINUTES**

## **Present:**

**Professors:** James J. Beatty, Daniel E. Collins, Lora Gingerich Dobos, Richard P. Gunther, W. Randy Smith (Vice-Chair), George J. Valco, and Brian L. Winer (Chair)

**Student Members:** Elaine Yeh (Undergraduate Student Government), Jane Evans (Council of Graduate Students)

**Guests:** Professor Edward H. Adelson, Associate Executive Dean and Jessica Mercerhill, Director of Curriculum, Colleges of the Arts and Sciences; Jed Dickhaut, Associate Registrar, Office of University Registrar; David Roy, Senior Assistant Director, Enrollment Services, Undergraduate Admissions; Professor Harald E. Vaessin, Department of Molecular Genetics, Chair, Senate Steering Committee; and Professor Allan J. Silverman, Department of Philosophy, Chair, Faculty Council.

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF FEBRUARY 27, 2007, AND MARCH 7, 2007.**

- Given the lack of a quorum at this Meeting, the Minutes of the meetings of February 27 and March 7, 2007 will need to be reviewed and acted upon at the April 4, 2007 Council meeting.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR – PROFESSOR BRIAN L. WINER**

- Winer informed the Council that the proposal for 181 hours to graduate with a B.A. and B.S. degree had been approved by the Arts and Sciences (ASC) Faculty Senate, that proposal will be discussed at the March 29, 2007 Faculty Council meeting. He and Smith will attend and report back on the outcome. The Arts and Sciences' B.A. and B.S. templates will be discussed at today's meeting.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE VICE-CHAIR – PROFESSOR W. RANDY SMITH**

- The proposal to establish a Center for the Study of Religion and the proposals from the Department of Human and Community Resource Development to change the name of its undergraduate major (B.S.) from Agricultural Education to Agricultural and Extension Education and the name of its graduate major (M.Ed.’ M.S.; and Ph.D.) from Human and Community Resource Development to Agricultural and Extension Education will be on the agenda of the University Senate for action on April 12, 2007.
- Smith attended the inaugural meeting of the Redesign Alliance in Orlando, March 18-20, 2007. The University is a founding member and he is on the Board of Directors. The Office of Academic Affairs will provide cash funding to redesign some introductory-level courses, notably in the science fields. The approach will follow the highly successful example set in Statistics 135 where the course was successfully redesigned taking into consideration the student learn styles, new formats for instruction, and increased use of technology. It has resulted in dramatic improvements in retention and improved learning outcomes.
- The leadership of the Faculty Council has indicated that it would like to see the complete set of B.S. proposals from all colleges before they are sent to the University Senate for action.
- There will be four consecutive Council meetings: March 28, April 4, 11, and 18 so that the Council is able to vote on B.A. and B.S. templates of the Arts and Sciences and other colleges. The goal is to finish evaluation and approval of all the templates so that all the proposals could be presented to the Senate on May 10, 2007 and then placed on June 1, 2007 Board of Trustees’ meeting agenda.

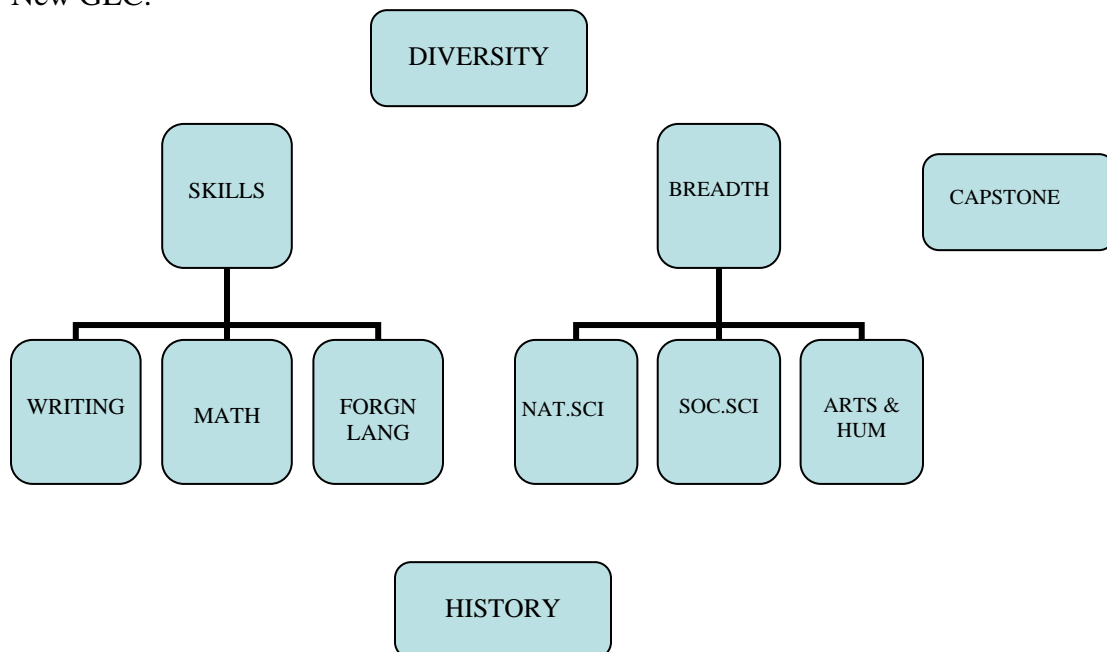
## **DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE UNIVERSITY-WIDE REVIEW OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION – PROFESSORS BRIAN L. WINER AND W. RANDY SMITH – SUBCOMMITTEE D**

- **Update on 181 Hours to Graduation –**

Winer noted that others had questioned whether this Council has approval authority over general education curriculum (GEC) templates. Smith indicated that it did and gave the history of the development of the current GEC.

Smith outlined the current 8-category GEC: Writing; Quantitative and Logical Analysis; Foreign Languages; Diversity; Natural Sciences; Social Sciences; Arts and Humanities; and Issues of Contemporary World. He then provided a diagram to show how the Arts and Sciences’ template had re-conceptualized the GEC and discussed the GEC for the colleges outside the arts and sciences

New GEC:



Winer and Smith then outlined how the ASC template that led to a reduction in hours to graduation from 191 to 181, had been developed. Five hours had been reduced from the GEC through the “breadth area”. First, 5 hours were reduced in “each” category of breadth area (natural sciences; social sciences; arts and humanities), and then two courses (10 hours) were added back under through “student selection” resulting in a net reduction of 5 hours. The other 5 hours could come from either electives or major hours.

Council members questioned why we are doing this. Smith noted that the GEC has not been evaluated thoroughly in a decade. Winer noted that the reduction is related to a changing student population and to align with peer institutions across the country. In general, Ohio institutions stand out from other states by exceeding 180 hours in our graduation requirement.

Although the final report of the University-wide committee suggested dramatic changes, the ASC faculty fully supported the proposal for 181 hours, but through a much more modest reduction within the GEC. Council members expressed concern that students might use these two “student selection” courses to take courses in their own college. This might facilitate the proposal for 181 hours but does not support the concept of breadth. Other council members noted that we do not know now if the current GEC is really providing breadth. Approval of the template does not necessarily lead to sacrificing breadth. It was suggested that students' schedules be monitored to see what courses are taken by them under breadth category.

In response to questions, Smith said that: the GEC has never been evaluated to see if it meets the goals and objectives of each category developed in 1988; the new B.A. and B.S. templates will be applied to the incoming class of Autumn 2007, but petitions for GEC substitutions will be accepted for review following established procedures; and the 181 hour requirement to graduate may not occur for selected tagged degrees.

Gunther and Collins expressed particular concern about what might happen to enrollments in selected GEC categories notably the arts and humanities. Gunther suggested that the new GEC advisory committee should monitor very closely what actual new patterns of enrollment occur as a result of these changes – track a set of students through the full academic program. Council members and guests also suggested that eventually upper division courses should be allowed to count toward the breadth area.

Smith added that the Office of Academic Affairs will provide transition funding to units experiencing loss of enrollment. It is also possible that overall the loss of revenue based on credit hour reduction may be offset by an increase in the size of incoming freshman class. And there is a proposal being reviewed to increase costs for students who enroll in more than 18 credit hours per Quarter.

Smith indicated that if these and related proposals are approved, Council should be vigilant about any proposed increases in the hours in major programs.

Winer suggested that if Council were to approve these templates, such approval should be accompanied by a set of resolutions aimed at addressing some of the issues that were emerging in campus discussions of the proposals.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

W. Randy Smith  
Lakshmi Dutta