

# COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

200 Bricker Hall

February 3, 2010

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

## MINUTES

### ATTENDANCE

#### Faculty:

- Dr. Leslie Alexander (History)
- ✓ Dr. Lawrence A. Baum (Political Science)
- Dr. Neelima M. Bendapudi (Marketing and Logistics)
- Dr. Marilyn J. Blackwell (Germanic Languages and Literatures)
- ✓ Dr. James W. Cogdell (Mathematics)
- ✓ Dr. Jay S. Hobgood (Geography)
- ✓ Dr. Daniel A. Mendelsohn (Mechanical Engineering)
- ✓ Dr. Robert J. Ward (Music)
- ✓ Dr. John W. Wilkins (Physics)
- ✓ Dr. Kay N. Wolf (Allied Medical Professions)

#### Students:

- Ms. Sarah K. Douglas (CGS, History)
- Ms. Olga A. Isenberg (CGS, Business)
- ✓ Mr. Benjamin T. Reinke (USG, Physcs)
- Ms. Meghan Offenberger (IPC, Pharmacy)
- ✓ Mr. John D. Tannous (UGS, Political Science)

#### Administrators:

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

#### Guests:

- Dr. Ann Christy (Faculty Fellow, Academic Affairs)
- Dr. Alexis C. Collier (Associate Provost)
- Mr. John E. Dickhaut (Associate Registrar, Office of the University Registrar)
- Dr. Terry L. Gustafson (Associate Executive Dean, Arts and Sciences)
- Dr. Teresa Johnson (Instructional Consultant, University Center for the Advancement of Teaching)
- Dr. Kate Hallihan (Director, Arts and Sciences Curriculum and Assessment Office)
- Mr. David L. Roy (Assistant Director, Enrollment Services)
- Mr. Alex Kemper (USG, Political Science)
- 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)

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The Council came to order at 3:12 PM

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 6, 2010.**

Hobgood moved approval of the Minutes of the January 6, 2010 meeting; the motion was seconded by Ward and approved unanimously.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR—PROFESSOR JAY S. HOBGOOD**

- Discussion of the proposed General Education Curriculum (GEC) recommendations from the University-level Advisory Committee on the GEC is now with the Arts and Sciences (ASC). Forthcoming meetings of its Committee on Curriculum and Instruction and Senate have been scheduled to discuss the recommendations.
- At the January 20, 2010 meeting, Council approved a proposal from the College of Veterinary Medicine to merge the three existing graduate programs, but asked for the college to follow up with the details of the official faculty vote. This information has now been added to the proposal.

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

- For informational purposes only, Smith indicated that the School of Earth Sciences was changing the names of its four divisions from Earth and Planetary Dynamics, Geological Sciences, Geodesy and Geospatial Science, and Global and Environmental Change to Solid Earth Dynamics, Earth History, Geodetic Science, and Water, Climate, and Environment, respectively.

He noted that given the history of the proposal to establish the School of Earth Sciences, he asked that contacts be made with the School of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Departments of Geography, and Civil and Environmental Engineering and Geodetic Science. No objections were raised.

- A Memorandum of Understanding with an Addendum has been received to effectuate the transfer of the faculty specializing in Rural Sociology from the Department of Human and Community Resource Development to the School of Environmental and Natural Resources. A formal proposal will be forthcoming to the Council.
- Given the recent number of proposals that have come forward seeking the alteration of units and the different approaches taken by the various units, Smith reiterated that a group of Council members needs to begin to work with the Office of Academic Affairs and the Senate Office to revise Faculty Rule 3335-3-37, the Alteration or Abolition of Units.

## **PROPOSALS FROM SUBCOMMITTEE D—PROFESSORS JAY S. HOBGOOD AND W. RANDY SMITH**

- **Reorganization of the Departments of Aerospace Engineering and Mechanical Engineering, College of Engineering**

Hobgood provided an overview of the proposal. Associate Dean Stu Zweben, Mechanical Engineering Chair Cheena Srinivasan, and Professor of Aerospace Engineering Joseph Haritonidis were in attendance.

The proposal seeks to merge the Department of Aerospace Engineering Department (AE) and the Department of Mechanical Engineering (ME) into a new Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering.

The proposed merger is based on the recommendations of the College's Performance Planning Acceleration Task Force issued in January of 2009, as a means to strengthen aerospace engineering research at Ohio State. A study group consisting of membership from both departments was asked to highlight the pros and cons of the proposed merger:

- With the College's limited resources, it would be difficult to continue to invest in Aerospace Engineering which remains a small department. Merging will allow for combining resources.
- There are considerable similarities between Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering and expertise among the faculties; therefore, the merger could significantly enhance the national standing of both areas as well as the College.

The main rationale is to make accessible to all graduate students the hidden values found in the existing departments. The merger will provide a better identity and a richer type of training for all graduate students.

The following concerns were shared and clarifications given during the meeting:

- The disciplines will be able to retain their individual identities – there will be Associate Chairs for both disciplines and both will retain their External Advisory Committees, Because there will be separate undergraduate and graduate programs, there will be separate Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Committees.
- Current students were initially upset with the merger. In response, a meeting was held and students' fears were allayed. Some graduate students as well as faculty will be moving; however, a space for graduate students which includes a lounge and lockers has been provided.
- Undergraduate student advising will be done by different staff members for each program, but the staff for the two programs will report to the same senior advisor.
- After the merger, the staff from AE will be combined with those from ME. Because both departments are currently understaffed, it is anticipated that no reduction in staff will result as part of the merger.
- Both models, merged and separate ME and AE program, exist among our peer institutions.

Smith noted that goal is to have this proposal through the full approval process this academic year. It will be taken to a Faculty Council meeting soon in preparation for a full Senate review. The final approval will be at the Board of Trustees.

A straw vote was taken with 9 in favor and one abstention. A formal Council vote will be taken after input is received from a discussion with Faculty Council.

- **Creation of a Pre-Major for the Undergraduate International Studies Major, Arts and Sciences**

Hobgood provided an overview of the proposal. The pre-major for International Studies (IS) majors would consist of “104” language proficiency with a C- or better grade. A recent external review of the IS major recommended the establishment of a pre-major.

The enforcement of the pre-major is complicated because there is not a common gateway course in which the pre-major requirements can be stated as pre-requisites for entry into the program. Students will be allowed to do other IS coursework concurrently with the language sequences so that they may complete the degree in a timely manner.

In order to graduate, IS majors must complete 10 hours of a foreign language above the basic GEC requirement. Historically, students put this requirement off until the end of their undergraduate career and try to have it waived. The recourse for this has prolonged their undergraduate careers. The institution of the pre-major should add structure and help students move through the major in a more timely and efficient manner.

Based on some outstanding questions as to how students will declare, how the pre-major will be enforced, and concerns with the number of advisors, this proposal was tabled until the Director of International Studies, Professor Anthony Mughan, could attend the meeting.

- **Creation of an Interdisciplinary Minor in South Asia Studies**

Hobgood provided an overview of the proposal.

The South Asia Studies Minor requires 25 credit hours, including a new foundational course, ASC 265, Introduction to South Asia, and 20 additional credits from a list of approved electives. The approved electives include courses from Comparative Studies, History, History of Art, Linguistics, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Philosophy, and Political Science.

A concern was raised about the actual interdisciplinary nature of this minor when the majority of the courses is in the Humanities. The courses do fall across multiple departments and the elective coursework must be taken from at least two different academic units. As the minor grows, other units outside of Arts and Humanities are welcome to develop courses that could be considered.

Hobgood moved approval, it was seconded by Ward and the motion carried with all in favor.

## **UNDERGRADUATE MINORS—PROFESSOR LAWRENCE A. BAUM**

A discussion that began last year on minors was continued in response to renewed interest by the associate deans serving on the Curriculum Subcommittee for Semester Conversion. Baum served as the chair of last year's Subcommittee A which was charged with looking at the entire issue of minors. For the remainder of the meeting, Baum presented an overview of the review of minors.

- Data gathered by the Office of Academic Affairs suggests that the biggest issue is uniformity. There are many variations.
- Are the variations problematic? Variations include:
  - Some requirements apply to the minors in the college and some apply to the students enrolled in the college.
  - Some allow for ungraded courses, some allow overlap with the major or GEC, some have minimum numbers of upper division hours, and the number of prerequisites varies.
  - The College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences requires all students to have a minor which is outside of the college. They also differ in that they will accept a grade of "D."
  - Special requirements exist for Honors Students in Mathematics and Spanish, but no where else.
  - Guidelines for pre-requisites and 100-level courses differ.
- Among the variations, a minimum of 20-credit hours appears to be the most common.
- For ASC students, not only does this Council approve the minor, but ASC needs to do so as well – is this cumbersome? Should it be changed?
- Overall, Subcommittee A felt that the issue should be revisited. One suggestion from Council was that all requirements be established by the minor department and they apply to students from everywhere.
- There is a general sense that the Council on Academic Affairs should develop broad guidelines for minors across the university.
- The most immediate decision to be made is the minimum number of hours for minors under semesters.

Smith noted that it is important that Council send a signal very soon (in terms of minimum hours) to all the colleges that are preparing to submit proposals for semester conversion. It is generally thought that the correct range is 4-5 courses, 12-15 hours. Committee members were charged with continuing to think about this issue and to be prepared for further discussion at the next Council meeting, February 17, 2010.

**The meeting adjourned at 4:45 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

W. Randy Smith  
Melissa Soave