

COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

156 University Hall

October 5, 2011

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Faculty:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ✓Dr. Leslie Alexander (History) | ✓Dr. Gene Mumy (Economics) |
| ✓Dr. Marilyn J. Blackwell (Germanic Languages and Literatures) | ✓Dr. Barbara Polivka (Nursing) |
| ✓Dr. Kathryn Corl (Germanic Languages and Literatures) | ✓Dr. Fernando Unzueta (Spanish and Portuguese) |
| ✓Dr. John Fellingham (Business) | ✓Dr. John W. Wilkins (Physics) |
| Dr. Ashok Krishnamurthy (Engineering) | ✓Dr. Kay N. Wolf (Allied Medical Professions) |

Students:

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| ✓Mr. Niraj Antani (USG, Political Science) | Mr. Sean Fitzpatrick (USG, Political Science and Economics) |
| ✓Ms. Sarah K. Douglas (CGS, History) | ✓Ms. Sarah Lang (CGS, Education and Human Ecology) |

Administrators:

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

Guests:

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| Dr. James Cogdell (Mathematics) | Dr. Peter March (Natural and Mathematical Sciences) |
| Dr. Wayne Carlson (Undergraduate Education) | Dr. Daniel Schoenberg (Molecular and Cellular Biology) |
| Dr. Alexis Collier (Associate Provost) | Mr. Andy Zircher (Education and Human Ecology) |
| Mr. Michael Gable (Registrar) | |

The Council came to order at 3:00 PM.

INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS 2011-2012 / SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

The new members of Council were introduced and welcomed. Subcommittee Chairs for 2011-12 are:

- Ashok Krishnamurthy, Subcommittee A
- Barbara Polivka, Subcommittee B
- John Fellingham, Subcommittee C

Wolf and Smith will serve as Subcommittee D.

Autumn Quarter Council meeting dates are:

- October 19, 2011
- November 2, 2011
- November 16, 2011
- December 7, 2011

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 7, 2011

Wolf moved approval of the minutes of the Meeting of September 7, 2011 with changes as proposed by Wilkins. The motion was seconded by Alexander and carried with all in favor.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR – PROFESSOR KAY WOLF

Elliot Slotnik, Associate Dean, Graduate school, presented the proposed for the Graduate Interdisciplinary Specializations (GIS) changes, already approved by this Council, to the Semester Conversion Coordinating Committee on October 4, 2011 where it was endorsed. The initial proposal for all GIS was to require 9 credit hours in 3 courses taken outside the home unit. The updated proposal requires for all GIS to complete at least 10 credit hours in 3 courses taken outside of the home unit. The Coordinating Committee for Semesters endorsed the changed proposal.

REPORT FROM THE VICE CHAIR – PROFESSOR W. RANDY SMITH

a) Semester Conversion Process - Updates:

- There remain about 50 proposals from graduate programs, mainly within the College of Arts and Sciences, that still need to be reviewed before the semester conversion. Some of them have already been reviewed by the Graduate School. They will be reviewed at forthcoming Council meetings.
- Graduate proposals from the College of Education and Human Ecology (EHE) will also be reviewed later this Quarter. They are being redeveloped following issues raised by the Graduate School. Council should have them by its December 7 meeting.
- Virtually all other semester proposals have been reviewed, and undergraduate advisors should be able to provide students detailed explanations of every approved semester program.

- In the semester course approval process, there are few units left to be reviewed: the Agricultural Technical Institute (ATI); School of Music; and the Department of History. With regard to the latter, there were a few concerns relating to:
 - o The general education courses and the levels of which they should be taught (1000- versus 2000-level courses).
 - o The credit hours allocated for each course transferred in and counted as AP credit.

- The goal is to finish the review process for all courses by mid-November. The Office of the University Registrar has been staffed to introduce all new courses in the electronic system.
- In the event any courses will need to be changed, based on the pre-requisite courses required for example, a simplified change form will be developed and shared with all units.

- Smith and Professor Steve Fink, Co-Chairs of the Semester Conversion Coordinating Committee have recently given status reports to the Board of Trustees and the Council of Deans. They will lead a presentation during Parent and Family Weekend (October 15, 2011).

- All individual academic units plan to maintain their previous pattern of activities for the Summer of 2012. A few dates will be changed to accommodate the transition process, but most activities will be maintained.

- The Undergraduate Student Government and the Office of Student Life are conducting conversations, meetings, and various presentations on the topic of semester conversion.

b) Other Council Business:

- At the state level, the process of standardizing the CLEP scores has been put on hold until further study can be done this academic year. Smith and others from the University will be involved in the continuing discussion. In addition, there is continued state-wide discussion of dual enrollment (high school courses that count for college credit).

- Within the College of Arts and Sciences, Professor Steve Fink is now the Associate Executive Dean for curriculum and will be attending Council meetings regularly.

REPORT OF THE AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON THE CENTER FOR RNA BIOLOGY – PROFESSOR JAMES COGDELL, ANN GRIFFEN, MARK WEWERS, AND JOHN WILKINS

- **Establishment of the OSU Center for RNA Biology**
(Guests: Professor Peter March, Dean, Division of Natural and Mathematical Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, and Professor Daniel Schoenberg, Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology)

Cogdell reviewed the proposal. The proposal was sent to the Office of Academic Affairs by the RNA Steering Committee. This Council created an ad-hoc subcommittee to review this proposal and provide the results and recommendations.

The RNA biologists have been organized in an RNA Group since the 1990s. Over the years, the faculty involved in various RNA research labs on campus have attracted others interested in RNA Biology on campus. The ultimate decision to apply for the Center status came with the international recognition of the University as a leading institution in RNA research and the awarding of the National Academy of Science medal for molecular biology to Dr. Tina Henik, and the recruitment of Dr. Anita Hopper as Chair of the Department of Molecular Genetics, and Dr. Karin Musier-Forsyth as Eminent Scholar in the Department of Chemistry. The RNA group is composed of members from five different colleges: Arts and Sciences; Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Education and Human Ecology, and Food Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

The RNA Group conducts a monthly seminar, and sponsors a Mid-West RNA Biology meeting. In 1994 there were 4 labs associated with this group, currently there are 32. These labs bring roughly about \$13.5 million in direct and indirect funds to the University. The Center has already demonstrated an ability to secure training grant funding with acquisition of the Howard Hughes Med-into-Grad grant in 2010, and an NIH T32 training grant in 2011. Any long-term funding model should involve some form of support based on indirect costs that should be established through memoranda of understanding between the stakeholder Deans and the Office of Research.

The budget presented in the initial proposal included some high costs due to the possible acquisition of centralized laboratory space (preferably on 12th Avenue). This issue represented a concern for the Ad-hoc Committee. The current budget for the RNA Center consists of \$40,000 in annual operating expenses, split evenly between the College of the Arts and Sciences (ASC), the College of Medicine (CoM), and the Office of Research (OR), plus \$10,000 from the CoM as an administrative supplement. There is also support for three RNA Graduate Fellowships, funded at the level of \$40,000 each, with two funded by the ASC and one by the CoM. The continuing funds are used to support the RNA Biology Seminar (ongoing since the mid-1990s) and to help support the Midwest (Rustbelt) RNA Meeting (which was founded in 1998 by Dan Schoenberg, Director, Center for RNA Biology). This funding is provided for the next three years. In the meantime, ASC is working on a funding mechanism for this research center and for other similar ones affiliated with ASC. The support for the RNA center is also included in the ASC strategic planning.

In the short term, the Center for RNA Biology should be able to arrange a space for the Center in Aronoff Laboratory through negotiations with Molecular Genetics and Microbiology. In the long term, there could be plans for more contiguous lab space once the Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering and Chemistry Building (CBEC) will be finalized.

The Ad-hoc Subcommittee recommends approval of this proposal for the establishment of the Center for RNA Biology.

Members of the Council raised concerns about the reporting line. The proposal does not specify exactly how the director of the center is appointed and by whom. It is understood that the Dean of Natural and Mathematics Sciences will appoint the director. It is also understood that once a faculty member is elected as full member of the Center, he/she will remain a full member, even if the funded grant or the individual projects for which they are principal investigators will not generate any funding.

March provided an overview of the proposal and the current activities associated with the RNA Group. He explained that rationalization of procedures is taking place within ASC and it is envisioned that the center directors will be appointed by the deans, and their positions will be reviewed every 2 or 3 years.

The current proposal will be updated to include clear specifications about:

- The appointment of the director;
- Maintaining the status of full-member once appointed, even if the funding grants or projects for which they are principal investigators will stop generating funding.

The ad-hoc Committee moves approval of this proposal with the above caveats; the motion was seconded by Antani and carried with all in favor.

The proposal will be updated with the recommendations provided by the Council and will be presented to the University Senate for approval at its meeting on October 13, 2011.

COUNCIL BUSINESS MOVING FORWARD

Smith presented an overview of the regular Council activities to the new members and also to the members who joined during 2010-2011 academic year but who have been heavily involved in the semester proposal review process.

The Council on Academic Affairs (CAA):

- is composed of 10 faculty (6 from the Faculty Council and 4 Presidential appointments); 5 students (2 undergraduate, 2 graduate, and 1 from professional studies).
- makes recommendations to the University Senate concerning educational and academic policies,
- makes recommendations to the University Senate concerning all degrees and certificates conferred by the university, and of all colleges, departments, and schools.
- reviews all proposals for the establishment, alteration or abolition of courses and curricula, of departments, schools, and divisions within a college, and of academic degrees
- among its other duties, fosters interdisciplinary programs involving two or more academic areas and periodically reviews the academic organization of the university.
- consists of 4 Subcommittees, A, B, C and D.
- the Chair is elected, and Subcommittee Chairs are appointed, annually.
- working Subcommittees meet regularly and review proposals; then present them to the full Council with recommendations for action.
- Subcommittee D was formed, and is made up of the Chair and Vice Chair to review proposals and act promptly on items that need/warrant more rapid responses.
- This year the Council will, among other activities, review a proposal to establish Clinical Track Faculty in the College of Education and Human Ecology, and assess the status of the current reporting line for the John Glenn School of Public Affairs.

Smith added that at the end of Autumn Quarter a dinner with the Provost will be scheduled at the Faculty Club.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTION (SEI) ANNUAL UPDATE –

Wayne Carlson, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Dean of Undergraduate Education

Carlson provided an update. The SEI Oversight Subcommittee is an appointed committee of this Council charged with overseeing the policies and procedures related to the SEI process and the instrument developed to be used centrally in the SEI process. Members of the Office of Undergraduate Education convene the SEI Subcommittee and provide administrative support. The SEI Subcommittee includes representation from the undergraduate and graduate student body, and is currently seeking representation from the Inter-Professional Council. Various faculty members and principal offices (Registrar) have representations in the SEI Subcommittee.

University Rules require that students be given the opportunity to evaluate the quality of instruction provided in each of their courses (University Rule 3335-3-35). The purpose of the SEI is to provide a standardized survey instrument for the collection of student feedback on the quality of instruction. This feedback is used as one of several methods of assessing teaching effectiveness when making personnel decisions regarding promotion, tenure, and merit pay. The SEI has several characteristics that make it particularly useful for such assessment:

- it is applicable to a wide variety of instructional settings and focuses on dimensions of teaching performance that are generally acknowledged as being important.
- the content of the questionnaire and certain aspects of its administration are standardized.
- an instructor's scores on a global question can be compared with those of others teaching similar courses.

Carlson cautioned that it is important to keep in mind that:

- the SEI is not a precise instrument.
- although student evaluation of teaching is required, departments are not required to use the SEI. Instead, each department may design and use its own instrument for collecting student feedback, provided that the department uses it in a consistent manner.
- student feedback is only one source of data for assessing teaching effectiveness.
- SEI results should be interpreted in conjunction with data from other assessment methods, in particular peer evaluation of teaching and self-assessments.

Within the past five years the SEI survey was administered in paper and online formats. Based on the completion results, starting with 2010, the SEI was administered online only. Data related to response rates to the SEI surveys have been studied in order to create various ways to improve the response rates.

In the past year:

- Changes have been made to the survey instrument and the options available for viewing certain responses. Currently responses to question 10 of the survey instrument can be viewed on the Buckeye link, under the section “Register for Classes”. Anyone with a Buckeye access can see these posts.
- A link has been included in the Carmen system to provide easy access to the SEI system. A future plan is linking the SEI instrument in the Student Information System (SIS).
- The activation window has been modified to 90% instead of 80% of the course completion, and before the final exam (generally, depending on the department). Research was conducted at benchmark universities regarding changing the activation window frame. Changing the activation window should increase the response rates and will help accommodate the semester calendar. The activation windows can be managed individually at the class level.
- Because of the nature of clinically-based instruction, the SEI survey was not useful for Health Sciences units. They developed a different evaluation system in collaboration with the SEI Subcommittee. The new survey has not been implemented yet in the College of Nursing or the undergraduate programs within the School of Allied Medical Professions.
- The faculty have been encouraged to promote the survey and advise students to complete it. In a few departments, responses to the SEI survey are used in yearly evaluations, and sometimes in the tenure review process. Therefore, faculty should encourage students to complete the survey.
- Syllabi can be updated to include verbiage about the importance of completing the SEI survey.
- The electronic format of the survey also includes a comment box. The content of these comments is not shared electronically, but the instructor has the option to view and download it. These comments can also be used for annual review.

Carlson presented to the Committee the results of the analysis of the response rates to the SEI survey for the past academic year. Comparing the response rates, for the academic year of 2009-10 and 2010-11 (first year when the SEI survey was distributed only online):

- All responses are recorded, and no paper responses are missing.
- The rating itself had no significant changes from the paper to the online version.
- The response rates fluctuated depending on the class size.

Research has been done at benchmark institutions to improve the response rates to similar surveys. Various methods used (incentivizing, or holding the grades) are not applicable here. Results of the research also showed that, typically, response rates will drop after the paper survey is no longer distributed and the online survey is the sole distribution method. But after no more than two years, the response rates return to normal levels. This has not been seen yet here.

Overall the SEI Subcommittee is pleased that many more courses are now represented and the instructors of those courses are being evaluated; and that the results did not change considerably; but the subcommittee is not happy with the low response rate.

During the conversations, members of Council noted:

- The reminder messages sent to students to take complete the SEI survey were not clear and instructive. Some of them contained no explanation of what the SEI survey is about, and the importance of completing it.
- Increasing on-campus events, like World Café, are good methods to promote and encourage students to respond to this type of survey, due to its implication in the tenure process for instructors.
- The survey instrument does not accommodate the needs for all departments; therefore some of them have created separate discursive surveys. The request to complete multiple surveys discourages some students and makes them respond to only one or the other instrument.
- Depending on each department's policies, the responses for GTAs are not made publicly available online, but are shared internally.
- Different methods are being developed in order to facilitate an easy method of accessing the SEI survey for students and for faculty to find the results.

In the upcoming year the SEI Subcommittee plans:

- To create an instrument that is appropriate for evaluating the online courses, labs and other instruction methods.
- Collaborative work will be done with the OSU Mobile App developers, to create and implement such an application for the SEI instrument.
- Increasing response rates for this survey will be an ongoing process. The data will be analyzed quarterly and results will be reported to Council.
- the SEI instrument will be improved to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.
- Enhancements to the instrument are consistently done (e.g. the option to review the answers before submitting).

Carlson and Krishnamurthy (Council's representative on the Committee) are prepared to receive any concerns or ideas regarding the SEI survey.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

W. Randy Smith
Liana Crisan-Vandeborne