

## COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

200 Bricker Hall  
October 17, 2012  
3:00 - 5:00 PM

### MINUTES

#### Attendance

#### Faculty:

- ✓ Dr. Heather Allen (Chemistry)
- ✓ Dr. Mollie Blackburn (School of Teaching and Learning)
- ✓ Dr. Ken Goings (African American and African Studies)
- ✓ Dr. Ashok Krishnamurthy (Engineering)
- ✓ Dr. Eric MacGilvray (Political Science)
- ✓ Dr. James Rathman (Engineering)
- ✓ Dr. Ferando Unzueta (Spanish and Portuguese)
- ✓ Dr. Wolf Kay (Health and Rehabilitation Sciences)

#### Students:

- ✓ Niraj Antani (USG, Political Science)
- ✓ Emily Chorey (Inter-Professional Council, Veterinary Medicine)
- Sarah Lang (CGS, Education and Human Ecology)
- Ann Morrison (Optometry)
- ✓ Akshay Paropkari (Engineering)

#### Administrator:

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

#### Guests:

- Dr. Michael Bisesi (College of Public Health)
- Dr. Steve Fink (Arts and Sciences)
- Dr. Scott Herness (Graduate School)
- Dr. Alan Kalish (University Center for the Advancement of Teaching)
- Dr. Maryanna Klatt (College of Medicine)
- Mr. Bradley Myers (Office of the University Registrar)
- Dr. Linda Martin (College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences)
- Ms. Sarah Odum (College of Education and Human Ecology)
- Dr. Jill Pfister (College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences)
- Ms. Melissa Soave (Office of Academic Affairs)
- Dr. Rao Unnava (Fisher College of Business)
- Dr. Bernadette Vankeerbergen (College of Arts and Sciences)
- Dr. John Wanzer (Assistant Provost, Undergraduate Education)
- Mr. Andy Zircher (College of Education and Human Ecology)

**The meeting came to order at 3:00 PM.**

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2012**

The Minutes of the meeting of September 5, 2012 meeting were edited with comments from Committee members. Lang moved approval: the motion was seconded by Krishnamurthy and carried with all in favor.

## **REPORT FROM THE CO-CHAIR – KAY N. WOLF**

The proposal for the realignment of the College of Education and Human Ecology was endorsed by the Senate Steering Committee on September 27, 2012 and the Faculty Council at its meeting on October 4, 2012. The proposal is on the agenda for action at the University Senate on October 18, 2013.

The Faculty Council is reviewing the status of clinical faculty in each of the non-professional academic units.

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

During this academic year, various topics will be presented to the Council:

- Dr. Wayne Carlson, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education will provide updates on the online Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) and the status of distance education.
- Dr. Melinda Wright will present the status of dual enrollment. The discussion will focus on issues regarding college level classes being taught in high-school and how these credits are recognized by OSU.
- During January 2013 meetings, colleges will provide updates on the status of their clinical faculty: College of Law, College of Engineering, College of Business, College of Arts and Sciences (social sciences).

The Office of Academic Affairs oversees the process of Academic Program Reviews. Yearly there are about twelve to fifteen departments/schools being reviewed. This year Mathematics, Linguistics, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Teaching and Learning, Optometry,

Law, and Nursing are among those being reviewed. The process is functioning well and has the support of the colleges. External review teams add substantially to these reviews.

## **BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN UPDATE: HENRY ZHENG, OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

Zheng, following up on a meeting with the Council last academic year, presented the updates to the Business Continuity Plan. The Plan address the issue of how the academic calendar can be adjusted to accommodate changes in the event of a major disruption. The evaluation committee that developed the original document believed that; in case of a major disruption, a full academic term would be completed if at least 80% of the instruction had taken place. The issue becomes more complicated during the Summer Term which includes the May session of four weeks and the seven weeks instructional period.

In case of prolonged disruption, the Office of Sponsored Research will be the mediator between those faculty working on research granted by various agencies. If an entire semester is lost due to a disaster that spans more than two months, it is recommended that the semester be declared the “off-duty period” for faculty on nine month appointments, and that a full range of courses be offered during the next summer Term.

Council members discussed various scenarios and issues related to Spring breaks, the seven week instructional period, study abroad, student fees and Summer salaries. The Council believes that it is more beneficial to keep the process simple and use the 80% rule in determining the completion of the academic times of instruction: semesters, sessions and Summer term.

Based on the input received from this Council, the document will be updated. The document is being updated continuously.

## **DISCUSSION OF UNDERGRADUATE MINORS**

In 2009, Subcommittee A completed a review of process issues related to undergraduate minors at the University. No action was taken. The Council will revisit the issue this year and guests from all of the Colleges that have undergraduate minors were invited to this meeting.

Currently there are no University-wide guidelines for colleges to follow in the process of creating, approving, and implementing minors. Historically, Arts and Sciences (A&S) offered the most minors. As other colleges developed their programs they, most used slight variations of the A&S template. Some students are disadvantaged by this approach when they try to move

between colleges. The Council needs to confront just what an undergraduate minor is meant to be.

During conversations the following concerns were raised and discussed:

- Students like taking minors to broaden their academic experiences. Some students use minor courses as a marketing tool for employment and advancement in the workforce. Minors are viewed as the sum of complimentary courses that have a theme associated with them. Students in pre-professional schools use the minors as a way of keeping track of their advancement through academic curriculum.
- The current state of minors makes it difficult for some students to move from one college to another college within the university. Some students might want to take minors offered by colleges different than their own and those minors might not be available to them.
- Historically A&S developed its own rules and guidelines regarding minors. Minors offered by other colleges need to be approved by the A&S Curriculum Committee before A&S students can take them. Some such minors are not approved by A&S for its students.
- Depending on the college, some courses can overlap with the major and be counted for the minor. Also, different students in different colleges are held to different set of rules for the same minors.
- Even within the same college, there are differences for students who can take certain courses needed for minors. For example, in the College of Engineering, a minor represents an area of expertise. Courses in the business minor can be counted for students in Industrial Engineering, but not by students in Mechanical Engineering, and students in Nuclear Engineering can count them as technical electives. The College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Science is allowing 5 credits of overlap for courses from general education courses to be counted for minors; and no overlap between courses from minors to majors.
- For some colleges, minors are viewed as a vertical academic experience; showing growth in the level of courses, from 2000 level to higher levels in a specific area. For others, there are questions about whether the courses for the minors should be in the same area of study, or in a different one.
- During the semester proposal review the Council had a chance to see all the minors. It may be difficult to normalize the number of credit hours needed for a minor at the university level.
- The overlap for minors allowed by some colleges is not necessarily in prerequisite courses.

- The College of Engineering accepts all minors approved by this Council, while A&S accepts minors only if they are approved by its own Curriculum Committee. There are few minors (about 6 to 10) not accepted by ASC for all its students. Due to the nature of the degrees offered by A&S, its Curriculum Committee feels that some guidance regarding minors needs to be in place to clearly differentiate the minors from double majors.
- Some guests at the meeting proposed having a set of centralized guidelines that can be easily adopted by colleges and customized to fit their educational curriculum; like minimum grade; a minimum number of credit hours needed for a minor; maximum number for credits used for a minor, before it can turn into a specialization or track. Having centralized parameters and specifications, along with clear definitions of what constitutes a minor would benefit many students. A little flexibility is needed for colleges to customize beyond the University rule regarding minors.
- The Council discussed how local academic integrity can be maintained while developing university wide guidelines regarding minors. Some students might want to claim certain minors just by completing courses needed for their majors. Specific requirements should be needed to differentiate the minor from certificates and majors.
- Some units try to incorporate STEM components in courses and in minors. Therefore some parameters are important at the university level, but also some flexibility is needed. There is potential for compromised academic experience, and the Council needs to be aware of this issue when creating guidelines.
- The rules regarding general education programs explaining the curriculum experience differentiate clearly but not specifically between the general education program and specialized education programs (which includes majors, minors and specializations). The general education program enables students to acquire and develop a breadth of knowledge, skills and perspectives that cross disciplinary boundaries and extend the areas outside of specialized studies courses. Majors, minors and other specialized study programs enable students to master, to various degrees, bodies of knowledge, skills, and perspectives related to a specific study. It is not enough to have a sum of classes, but the experiences needed to hold together a minor.

A Council Subcommittee will be charged to review this issue and present a report to the Council before the end of the academic year.

**The Meeting Adjourned at 4:45 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

W. Randy Smith

Liana Crisan-Vandeborne