

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
Minutes of April 5, 2001

Members present: Herb Chereck, Mark Daniel, Hilary Gerdes, Craig Hickman, Serene Khader, Dick Koch, Kate Kranzush, Anne Leavitt, Wendy Mitchell, John Nicols, K. J. Park, Stephen Ponder, Scott Pratt, Kathy Roberts, Karen Sprague, Glenda Utsey, Bob Zimmerman

Members absent: Faye Chadwell, Paul Engelking, Wayne Gottshall, Marian Smith

Meeting began at 8:30 a.m.

Definitions of Major, Minor, and Certificate

This topic has been thoroughly discussed previously and approved, but we need to know where the definitions should go from here.

Herb recommends forwarding them to Paul Engelking in order to get them in the curricular report that goes to the senate. He also suggests copying Jack Rice.

John confirms approval of council members and affirms that he will send a letter, containing the definitions, to Paul and Jack

Timely Completion of Writing Requirement

Karen invites the thoughts of members on her proposed solution for ensuring timely completion of the writing requirement. She suggests instituting a time limit for completing the writing requirement. At present, there is a significant pattern of Writing 121 being taken by junior and senior students. The proposal is to ask students to complete the writing requirement (WR 121 plus WR 122 or 123) by the end of the sophomore year (or when 90 credits had been accumulated). A means of enforcement would be to have Herb put a hold on the student's registration. Possible exceptions might include international students who must take additional writing or English courses before enrolling in Writing 121. Another exception might include others who need

developmental writing courses. In other words, exemptions will be made on individual cases.

The sections of WR 121 would be spread evenly over the whole freshman year to help the English department use its resources most effectively. The alphabet would be broken into thirds, based on last name, and registration would not be permitted out of turn. People would be encouraged to take WR 122 the following term, but registration for WR 122 in a particular term would not be required.

KJ Park questions whether there are enough writing sections available.

Karen explains that the English department assures her that given the projected enrollment data, they will provide an adequate number of sections.

Bob maintains that there are two groups of students, 1) those who delay and 2) those who prefer earlier. This plan forces some to wait.

Karen responds that it is a compromise. The English department cannot economically meet the ebb and flow of the enrollment demands

Bob believes that we're pushing the students who want to complete it because of those who prefer to delay.

Herb explains that we're trying to address the staffing issues of the English department.

Bob inquires as to whether, within the current system, the English department is complaining that sections are not being filled.

Herb responds that they are not.

Herb explains that efforts are being made to develop a better process to guarantee staffing for WR 121 to be taken in the first year.

Wendy inquires as to why WR 121 was taken out of the FIG.

Karen explains that the writing sections linked to FIGs were not open to any student, and if the FIG did not fill, potential WR 121 spaces were lost.

Wendy inquires as to whether there will be priority registration for particular students.

Herb explains that priority will be based on where a student's name falls within the alphabet.

Bob inquires about why the change from taking WR 121 over 2 quarters to 3.

Karen provides a historical perspective in hopes of clarification. Last fall there were not enough writing sections, students were frustrated, and it sounded as though the department was not prepared for the demand and couldn't get the necessary instructors. The entire situation was an organizational nightmare. The current plan is to estimate the number of sections needed ahead of time, and supply them to students at a rate that is both effective for students and efficient for the English Department.

Bob questions why those who want to take WR 121 in fall or winter should be delayed.

Herb indicates that it is a budgetary problem.

John offers the explanation that due to the nature of faculty contracts, there are limits to the number of sections that can be taught.

Dick Koch explains that the problem is with the English department being able to find instructors who will accept heavy loads in the fall and potentially nothing in the spring.

Hilary expresses encouragement over the English department's willingness to explore the issue and insure adequate instruction.

John believes that this solution won't eliminate the difficulty of getting into writing classes and questions whether or not we are solving the real problem.

Stephen explains that the school of journalism has instituted a provision wherein students must fulfill the writing requirement before they can take the writing for journalism course. Therefore, he supports the idea of an early deadline for completing WR 121 and WR 122.

Bob believes it is possible to project exactly how many seats are needed.

John asks whether or not enough fiscal resources exist for this plan.

Scott suggests that before enforcing the deadline for completion, we must make sure that the English Department can accommodate the students. He doubts there are enough seats available.

Herb suggests reporting back to council members after a meeting with the English Department to determine the total number of WR 121 sections needed to accommodate new students entering Fall 2001 plus current students who haven't met the requirement.

Language placement will be discussed at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.