

Undergraduate Council

October 3, 2000

Minutes of Meeting

Attending: F. Chadwell, H. Chereck, H. Gerdes, W. Gottshall, C. Hickman, D. Koch, A. Leavitt, W. Mitchell, J. Nicols, K.J. Park, S. Ponder, S. Pratt, K. Roberts,

M. Smith, K. Sprague, R. Zimmerman

Absent: P. Engelking, M. Fishlen, G. Utsey

Introductions were made, and J. Nicols indicated that he is Chair of the UC this year and W. Gottshall is co-chair. His goal is to bring closure to some issues, and to move forward on some procedural issues. The UC does not have much on the agenda for fall term, but these items need to get to the Senate by December so that they can be passed in January for publication in the summer 2001 bulletin.

## Program Reviews

One of the tasks of the UC is to be represented at the decennial program reviews of the departments. For this year, the following reviews will be done, with the UC representative indicated:

Educational Leadership, Technology, and Administration – **Wendy Mitchell**

Environmental Studies – **Kathy Roberts**

Germanic Languages and Literature – **John Nicols**

Theater Arts – **Faye Chadwell**

Psychology – **Hilary Gerdes**

Carol will provide the names to the Graduate School and the UC members will be contacted directly by the Graduate School.

## General Education Requirements

Nicols gave a brief background of his work on the UC and the CAS Course Committee regarding general education requirements. He noted that much could be done to have departments reduce the number of courses offered that satisfy the requirement, and have those that satisfy the requirement be taught more often. His goal for the UC for this term

is to move from a general discussion focus to procedural means to bring coherence to these courses and to simplify the structure to assure breadth and coherence. He noted that much of the work has to be done at the department level. He also noted that some members on the UC during other years indicated that students take a good range of courses if left on their own.

The motions Nicols prepared for last academic year's UC were distributed. Motion #1 was passed by the UC in May 2000. Before discussing Motion #2, H.Chereck explained the purpose of undertaking the task of general education requirements was due, in part, to the accreditation report of the University indicating that there was a lack of coherence in the group requirements. This has been an ongoing discussion and it needs to be addressed now. He indicated that the University purchased a program called "Degree Audit Reporting System" (DARS). The intent of the program is to provide the academic departments with a means to monitor their majors. DARS will have a three-year phased-in period, and eventually be put on the web. There are a few departments that are piloting the program now, and the concerns and problems are being worked on. One of the concerns is which degree plan is in place at which particular time. The plans are in effect for 7 years for students, so if we change it now, the former plan will not expire for 7 years. Another concern is the transfer students and those from community colleges, but this will be worked out with Admissions. Nicols indicated that we should come up with a set of requirements and not change them every year. These items are posed in Motion #3, which will be discussed at a later date.

A major problem with the number of courses that satisfy the requirement is that they are not offered every year, or the instructor who teaches it is on sabbatical and it is not taught. But the main problem is courses that are not taught for a longer period of time. Suggestion is that courses be taught three times in two years, at the least. Regarding revocation of a course as group satisfying, this can only occur after long discussions with the department in question, and courses may get reinstated after the five-year period. This procedure is meant to put the burden on the departments. On transfer credits, if the course is not the same as we offer, the course must be very close to our existing course and meet the spirit of the course, or the student may petition. If the course is not group satisfying, it may be used for the major or as an elective.

The council reviewed the wording of Motion #1 and expressed the following views:

- Removal of courses for a period of five years may be too harsh.
- There should be good justification for reinstating the course.
- More than one faculty member should be identified to teach the course.
- If a department has not yet hired the person to teach the course, they may appeal.
- Advantage is the assurance that we are offering the course.

- Advantage is it improves students' academic planning.
- Disadvantage is removing courses students want to take, and restoring them
- Academic planning is complicated when courses are listed, removed, then restored.
- Courses not offered on a regular basis should not be group satisfying.

The motion, as worded, was put to a vote for acceptance.

In favor:           all

Opposed:           none

The motion, as worded, passed.

Nicols asked the members to review Motion #2 for discussion at the next meeting (October 17).

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 am

Minutes submitted by Carol White

Next meeting: October 17, 9:00 – 10:30 am, Rogue Room