

# UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of October 4, 2001

## Members present:

John Nicols (Chair), John Postlewaite, Amanda Stocker, Kate Kranzush, Bob Zimmerman, Wendy Mitchell, Herb Chereck, Gail Unruh, Karen Sprague, Steve Ponder, Scott Pratt, Anne Leavitt, Kathy Roberts, K.J. Park, and Hilary Gerdes

## Members absent:

Faye Chadwell, Paul Engelking, Wayne Gottshall, Craig Hickman, and Marian Smith

## Guests:

Colleen Bell (substituting for Faye Chadwell), Dave Hubin and Jack Rice

## Meeting began at 8:35 am

### 1. Time Change

It has been approved to change the start time of all future meetings to 8:00 a.m. The next meeting will be in Friendly 109 at 8:00 a.m. on October 18, 2001.

### 2. Classroom Renovation

Jack Rice reported on the summer renovation of classrooms. The biggest improvement was made to Chapman 207. The old wooden chairs have been removed and replaced. There has been a loss of seating capacity (from 189 to 117) due to two factors: 1) city code regulations, and 2) improving the learning environment by having desks farther apart. Fenton 110 has received new acoustics and air conditioning. The maximum capacity for this classroom has dropped from 198 to 160. The Condon 204 project transformed one large classroom into one smaller classroom for 30 students and one larger room for 60 students. The larger room has 60 computer tables that can be used for computer-based instruction. The computers will recharge when not in use. This room has been fitted with a Crestron control panel for electrical controls. This type of classroom control panel hopefully will be installed in all future classrooms so that there will be a unified educational technology infrastructure. Gilbert Hall construction will begin winter term and will continue for 18 months.

### 3. Early Response Forms

The process of evaluating the Early Response Forms persistence rate is beginning. The persistence rate is the number of students that stayed in the FIG or general education classes in which they initially registered on their Early Response Form. Kate worked during the Week of Welcome and added that the students that were unhappy with their FIG or classes were students whose parents had filled out their Early Response Forms for them.

Karen reports that Math 111 placement was based on SAT scores this year instead of the math placement test as used in previous years. During the first week of classes, the Math 111 professors gave a quiz to determine accurate placement and the scores were better than in many years. Thus, most students were accurately placed.

#### 4. **American Sign Language**

Kathy Roberts will chair a smaller committee with three other language department members to complete the committee. Kate will also participate. Their findings will be brought before the council at a later date.

#### 5. **Fourth Credit in General Education classes**

The Undergraduate Council and University Senate agreed that general education lower division courses could go through a conversion process from three units to four units about four years ago. The idea was to have one credit equal one teacher/student contact hour and would include two hours of outside work. This would mean that a four-unit class would have four hours of teacher/student contact time each week. The problem has surfaced that some of the courses that applied for conversion did not add an additional hour of seat time but still retain a four-credit status. How can this be monitored? Are students getting less academic contact for their money? Should we go back to three unit classes? Several solutions were offered:

- A. The departments can offer professors the flexibility between four credits equal four hours of class time **or** the possibility that the fourth hour could be a significant and equivalent hour of outside work. These decisions would be left to the departments and also monitored by the departments. The University would also have a stake in the monitoring if the departments were found lacking.
- B. The University could offer the departments an opportunity to apply for funds to hire GTFs to staff the additional hour in the classroom.
- C. Would it be possible to have three **and** four unit courses satisfy the general education lower division courses? That is, have the requirement satisfied by the number of courses (3 or 4 credit), not the unit count.
- D. Use upper division 400 level undergraduate students to staff the additional hour of class time discussions and/or labs.

### **Summary**

Bob and K.J. will bring models of their outside class work in Physics and Astronomy courses that satisfy the fourth credit hour. John has suggested that some structure is

needed to identify the options. Herb, Wendy, John and Donna will put together some concrete structures. Anne suggests that we tap the Teaching Effectiveness Program for ideas. Dave thinks we should look to other institutions and the ways they handle the quarter system.

*Minutes by Donna Schimmer*