

# UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING

February 19, 2004

**Members present:** Julie Newton, Dave Hubin, Tyler Neely, Emily Gilkey, Steve Pology, Hilary Gerdes, Ron Severson, Deborah Baumgold, Colleen Bell, Herb Chereck, Jim Imamura, Martha Pitts, Mark Thoma, Kathy Roberts, Karen Sprague

**Members absent:** Harry Wonham, Laura Vandenburg, John Postlethwait, John Lysaker, Gordon Sayre, Paul Engelking, Deborah Exton

**Guests:** Martha Bayless, Wendy Larson

## **Proposal for Medieval Studies Major**

Martha Bayless, Medieval Studies Program Director, and Wendy Larson, Associate Dean of Humanities in the College of Arts and Sciences, were introduced to the council. Martha summarized the proposal for a Medieval Studies major for the council. The council had these suggestions for revisions to the proposal:

1. Include a list of the required courses for the major.
2. Give examples of recurring courses that are offered.
3. Include the name of the advisor for the major.

Council members would like to see a list of the courses required for the major before voting on this proposal. Martha Bayless will provide a list of required and recurring courses that will be distributed electronically to council members. If possible, there will be an email vote by council members. Otherwise, the council will consider the proposal at the meeting on March 4.

## **Group-satisfying Credit Policy**

Karen Sprague distributed the following draft document:

***Fulfillment of UO Group Requirements by Transfer Students***

**Proposal:** allow transfer students to fulfill a UO group requirement with coursework totaling 15 credits, instead of 16 credits, assuming that their coursework fulfills the UO's breadth and depth requirements within Groups. That is, each group must include the following:

- at least two courses in the same subject,
- at least one course in a different subject,
- no more than three courses from the same subject (necessary?)

**Background:** As part of their General Education, the UO asks students to take 16 total credits of coursework in each of three broad Groups: Arts and Letters, Social Science, and Science. This is equivalent to taking 4 courses in each group, since all of the courses that may be used in this fashion at the UO carry 4 credits apiece.

Transfer student coming from a school where courses typically carry 3, rather than 4, credits can find themselves in a situation that seems bureaucratic and arbitrary. For example, a student who has satisfied his school's Group requirement by taking 5 3-credit courses will be one credit shy of satisfying the UO requirement, and must therefore take a 4-credit course in that area at the UO. While taking more Group-satisfying courses is not necessarily a bad thing, the confusion caused by this credit-per-course inequality, and the staff and faculty time required to untangle the resulting problems, does not seem proportional to the gain. The Academic Requirements Committee (ARC) devotes a substantial fraction of its time each year to considering petitions from transfer students who have 15, but not 16, credits in a Group. Last year (AY 02/03), the ARC dealt with 75 such cases, and during the first half of the current term (Winter, 2004) alone, it has considered 27. An additional concern is that, in the absence of a logical framework within which to consider the petitions, committee decisions are inconsistent.

Therefore, we propose that students transferring courses from another university or college be permitted to satisfy UO Group requirements with 15, rather than 16, total credits. Although this proposal will affect the small number of students who took UO Group-satisfying courses some time ago, when they carried 3 credits, it will not change our expectations of current and future students taking their Group-satisfying course work at the UO.

The council discussed the document and had these suggestions:

1. Remove the word 'transfer' from the first sentence.
2. Remove the words 'instead of 16' from the first sentence.
3. Change the word 'assuming' to 'given' in the first sentence.

Deborah Baumgold will ask if there is time to present this proposal along with the proposal to amend the criteria for group-satisfying courses at the next Senate Executive Committee meeting. Martha Pitts will check with the community college group to ensure they understand that transfer students will be expected to fulfill the UO's breadth and depth requirements within groups. The Undergraduate Council does not want to weaken these requirements by failing to apply them to transfer work. A motion to approve the proposal with the recommended changes was unanimously passed by the council.

### **Removal of Ban on Retroactive AA/OT Degrees**

The UO is the only school in the state of Oregon that requires that the AA/OT be completed before matriculation at the UO. A small number of exceptions have been granted on a case-by-case basis each year since the adoption of the AA/OT policy. Since students are now invited, through the Dual Enrollment Program, to take courses at LCC and UO during the same academic term, the ban has been superseded and is contrary to current university goals. A proposal to remove the ban formally, and bring policy in line with practice, was passed unanimously by the council.

### **Review of 100- and 200-level Course Syllabi**

The council began a review of the survey data for syllabi that were distributed on February 5, 2004. This review will continue at the next meeting.

## **Next Meeting**

The next Undergraduate Council meeting will be on March 4, 2004 from 12:00-1:30 in Johnson Hall Conference Room.