

## **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING**

**January 23, 2006**

**Rowe Conference Room, the Knight Library**

### **Present:**

Andrew Bonamici, Herb Chereck, Kelsea Feola, Hilary Gerdes, Peter Gilkey, Dave Hubin, Anne Laskaya, Martha Pitts, Julie Newton, Dorothee Ostmeier, Steven Pologe, Kathy Roberts, Ron Severson, Margarita Smith, Karen Sprague, Mark Thoma, Mary Ann Beecher, Kate Wagle, Wendy Mitchell, and Glenda Utsey

### **Absent:**

Deborah Exton

### **Guest:**

Jo Anna Gray, Co-chair, University Self-study Accreditation Committee

### **Minutes:**

The Chair distributed the meeting agenda (HO 1) and asked for a motion to tentatively accept the minutes of the November 21, 2005 and the November 28, 2005 meetings.

**Mark Thoma moved that the minutes be accepted.**

**Ron Severson seconded the motion.**

**The Undergraduate Council passed the motion unanimously.**

### **Updates:**

- **Announcement to Senate**

Peter Gilkey reported that he attended the UO Senate meeting on Jan 11, 2005 and announced that the Undergraduate Council will be presenting a report to the Senate later in the year, perhaps with some action items.

- **Data from Resource Management**

Peter distributed a memo from Marian Friestad, Associate Dean, Graduate School, in which she indicated the sort of data that would be provided to departments by the Office of Resource Management for program reviews (HO 2).

## **Agenda**

### **Lorraine Davis Memo**

A memo from Lorraine Davis, Vice President, Academic Affairs re. the Independent Study Program for students in terminated degree programs was distributed (HO 3). Herb Chereck explained that, in 1997, the Undergraduate Council had approved students to complete degrees in terminated programs, but that a moratorium had been placed on this procedure when the need for it appeared to have ended. From time to time, however, there are still requests for degree completion, and this memo is a request from Lorraine Davis to reinstate a continuation of the procedure. It would apply only to students whose completion of the requirements in a terminated major or program is documented in the Registrar's office.

- **Discussion**

Herb said that there are still students applying for degrees in terminated areas. He emphasized that only those who have documentation in the Office of the Registrar that they have completed the major requirements for a degree in the terminated area are considered.

(See [Continuance of Degree Completion in Terminated Programs](#))

**Steve Pologe moved that the Undergraduate endorse continuance of the procedure.**

**Julie Newton seconded the motion.**

**The Undergraduate Council passed the motion unanimously.**

### **CAS European Studies certificate proposal**

A memo from Stephen Durrant, CAS Interim Associate Dean for Humanities, requesting a revision of language of requirements for the European Studies certificate was distributed to the Council members (HO 4).

- **Discussion**

Council members were puzzled that there was no department representative present to present and explain the proposal to the Council, as is the general procedure. It was also pointed out that submission of this item to the Council is probably not necessary since the proposed change is an alteration in the description of a certificate program for the catalog, not a substantive change in the program itself. This review and approval would be more appropriately handled at the department level and within the CAS Curriculum Committee.

The Chair said he would seek more clarification on the submission from Stephen Durrant and Lexy Wellman.

### **State General Education Project report**

Karen Sprague updated the Undergraduate Council on her appointment by OUS to head a project to develop state level guidelines for General Education. She explained that the project is in response to SB342 wherein OUS and community colleges are mandated to “Develop an outcome-based framework for articulation and transfer that is derived from a common understanding of the criteria for general education curricula” (SB342) (1) (c). Work on the project will begin on February 9<sup>th</sup> when committees composed of faculty representatives from OUS schools, community colleges, and independent colleges and universities will meet to draft outcomes statements for the 6 disciplinary areas of the AA/OT. At further meetings, the committees will develop criteria for courses that are likely to be effective in producing those outcomes for students. The real significance of the project, she pointed out, is that it will establish a procedure for faculty to have direct input into curricular decisions at the state level.

## **Grade Inflation Report**

Mark Thoma announced that there are no major changes in the draft report redistributed to the Council. He noted that the Council now needs to decide whether to recommend actions to curb grade inflation.

Peter Gilkey recommended that a motion be made to accept the report, first. No motion was made.

- **Discussion**
  - Council members asked why Education (and some other schools/colleges) had been omitted from the data in this version of the report. Mark explained that for some units, the number of courses that met the sample criteria was too small for statistical significance. Therefore, these units were removed from the individual analyses, but are included in the aggregate data.
  - Does the Council want a very detailed report or an observation of general trends? A more detailed analysis of department-level grading practice is possible, but may not be worthwhile at this stage.
  - The Council may want to recommend that departments follow “best practices” in grading. Each department could develop guidelines appropriate to its disciplinary area.

To help the Council consider possible recommendations, Karen had prepared a Summary of the Undergraduate Council’s discussion of grade inflation last year (04-05) (HO 5).

- **Discussion**
  - Perhaps departments could regularly receive grade distribution data and make them available to faculty.
  - The Registrar’s Office could create a report accessible through the data warehouse. In the interest of confidentiality, classes of fewer than 10 students would be excluded from public reports. Modest financial support may be needed to develop such reports.
  - It was proposed that the Administration distribute grading data *via* deans to department heads, who would then distribute them within their departments.

Department reports would be distributed each term; compilations of grading pattern of all departments would be distributed each year.

The Chair asked Mark Thoma and Herb Chereck to draft potential legislation of a grading report to be prepared by the Administration to go to the Deans.

Mark Thoma suggested that the Deans and Associate Deans ask for these reports and develop Best Practices by collecting grading guidelines from each department.

The Chair tabled further discussion on grade inflation until the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.

**The next UGC meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 30, 2006 at Rowe Conference Room, the Knight Library.**