

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING

November 28, 2005

Rowe Conference Room, the Knight Library

Present:

Andrew Bonamici, Herb Chereck, Deborah Exton, Kelsea Feola, Hilary Gerdes, Peter Gilkey, Dave Hubin, , Martha Pitts, Julie Newton, Dorothee Ostmeier, Steven Pologe, Kathy Roberts, Ron Severson, Margarita Smith, Karen Sprague, Mark Thoma, Mary Ann Beecher, Paul Engelking, and Glenda Utsey

Absent:

Anne Laskaya, Kate Wagle, Malcolm Wilson, Heiner Linke, Wendy Mitchell

Guest:

Jo Anna Gray, Co-Chair Accreditation Self-Study Committee

Announcements:

The Chair reminded members of the Council that written evaluations of the Provost candidates were due in to Johnson Hall Administration before the end of the day.

Minutes:

Due to the very short time span between Nov. 21 and Nov. 28, no minutes for the November 21st meeting were presented. The minutes will be presented for approval at the January 23, 2006 meeting.

Agenda

Course Descriptions

Herb Chereck presented a brief overview of the Undergraduate Council's analysis of Group-Satisfying Courses in 2003-2004. One recommendation that emerged and was approved by the University Senate was the provision of more informative descriptions for these courses. The idea is to post those on-line, accessible from the class schedule (HO #1). Students and academic advisors would thus have ready access to the information necessary for making informed course selections.

To date, descriptions for only 60%-70% of the ~500 Group-Satisfying Courses have been submitted to the Registrar's Office. Members of the Council were asked to encourage their colleagues to submit descriptions. Herb suggested that descriptions be coordinated through one person in each department so there would be an inherent coherence and consistency within programs.

Karen Sprague presented slides depicting samples of course descriptions currently on line at the University, course descriptions posted on-line at Duke University, and samples of how course descriptions at UO could be enhanced with graphics that would attract the interest of prospective and current students (HO #2).

- **Discussion**

Members of the Council supported the development of the on-line course descriptions.

- Can course descriptions be developed for all courses, not just those with Group-Satisfying status? Herb explained that the ultimate goal is to have descriptions for all courses, lower and upper division, but staffing logistics in the Registrar's Office limits the effort to Group-Satisfying courses at this time.
- There should be one information sheet for faculty to complete for their course offerings which incorporates program requirements, course requirements and course descriptions.

- The development of a graphic presentation of course descriptions should keep a “Print Version” option available to accommodate lower band widths on modems.
- While graphics could help market a course, care should be taken to avoid creating unrealistic expectations on the part of students.
- Course descriptions for on-line display should run only about 100-125 words.

It was observed that the Inter College General Education Requirements Committee will be requiring all new courses to have an effective course description. The Course Review Committee will request that all Group-Satisfying Course descriptions be completed by the end of this academic year. The importance of having the descriptions placed on-line and available when the Accreditation Team visits cannot be overemphasized.

Karen and Herb were directed to work with the Library and Media Services to design and develop a format for the course descriptions to be placed on-line for public access.

Grade- Inflation Report

Mark Thoma presented the results of his study of grade-inflation at the University. Members of the Council raised questions about some confusing aspects of the statistical data and some of the conclusions presented in the text. Mark was asked to write an “Executive Statement” for the report. Council members suggested that the submission to the University Senate be restricted to conclusions that follow directly from the most reliable data.

There was general discussion as to the best timetable for presenting the report to the Senate and making recommendations for Senate action. Members of the Undergraduate Council will review a revised report over the holiday break. The report will be discussed again at the January meeting, recommendations will be formulated, and

a schedule for presentation to the University Senate will be established. At the Senate's January meeting, the Chair will announce that a report will be forthcoming from the Undergraduate Council with recommendations for action.

The meeting adjourned.

The next Undergraduate Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 23, 2006, at 1:00pm in the Rowe Conference Room, Knight Library