

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES ASSEMBLY

Minutes

Meeting of 22 October 2002
Oakland Room, Oakland Center

Attendance

Members Present: *Wallis Andersen, Peter Bertocci, Dikka Berven, Ronald Butzlaff, Arthur Bull, Mary Eberly, Jane Eberwein, Jerrold Grossman, Elysa Koppelman, Emmett Lombard, Barbara Mabee, Tamara Machmut-Jhashi, Karen Miller, Michael Mitchell, Sean Moran, Ingrid Rieger, Sam Rosenthal, Susan Wood, Jill Zeilstra-Ryalls, Xiangqun Zeng*

Ex Officio Present: *David Downing, Mary Papazian*

Members Not Present: *Robert Anderson, David Garfinkle, Fay Hansen, Paul Kubicek, Abdi Kusow, Mark Metzler, Darrell Schmidt, Irwin Schochetman, Jack Tsui*

Ex Officio Not Present: *William Macauley*

Guests Present: *Julie Lichtenberg, Paul Graves, Michelle Piskulich, Robby Stewart*

Dean Downing convened the meeting at 3:35

1. Minutes from September 24, 2002

Moved to approve the minutes from September 24, 2002 (Jane E.). Supported.

Approved unanimously.

The order of the agenda was modified slightly.

2. Approval of Proposal for a Graduate Certificate on Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL).

Moved to approve the proposal for a Graduate Certificate on Teaching English as a Second Lanugage (TESL) (Emmett Lombard). Supported. *First reading, not eligible for final vote.*

Concerns raised:

••what is the relationship between this certificate and SEHS? does this proposal impact any SEHS programs? A letter from Dean Otto included in the proposal indicates the SEHS Office of Professional Development and Education Outreach will market the program and consult with the Michigan Department of Education about obtaining ESL endorsement. Could both Peter Binkert and someone from SEHS attend the next Assembly meeting to clarify the connection/collaboration between this Linguistics certificate and SEHS work? (response from Dean Downing: Peter Binkert says this certificate targets the “middle tier,” not those who want an ESL teaching endorsement but rather teachers who want to enhance their skills in the classroom, faculty in community colleges, and businesses needing to deal with ESL issues. Marketing will be done largely through Continuing Education, and SEHS is “comfortable” with the proposal. Dean Downing’s sense is that Dean Otto’s reference to ESL endorsement refers to the M.A. program and other things in process, not to this “certificate.” Sam Rosenthal added that official certification is for teaching in the public schools, K-12; this proposed “certificate” is for teaching anywhere outside of the public school system.)

••any clarifications that can be made now will be helpful; in the past issues have arisen with SEHS over preconceived notions for programs; it would be wise to be clear “up front,” in writing.

••is there any possible negative impact on the M.A.? (response from Mary Papazian: Linguistics faculty think the certificate will enhance the M.A., ring in students who might later pursue the M.A. The program is designed so, after achieving the certificate, students can add on to complete the M.A. In a recent conversation, Peter Binkert told Dean Downing the department sees the certificate as a recruiting tool.)

••costs/staffing are concerns (response from Dean Downing: his understanding is that everything in the proposal is already “on the books,” that this is simply repackaging current courses and will improve enrollments in current courses; no need to add sections is anticipated.)

••current staff (response from Dean Downing: Kathy Malin has resigned). Will she be replaced, and does everything still work without her? (response from Dean Downing: the current search in Linguistics, rolled over from last year, is for a specialist in ESL/2nd language acquisition; he is not optimistic about replacing Kathy given current budget conditions.)

3. Meeting of the Minds

Meeting of the Minds 2003, the student research conference, will be held May 9 at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Please begin now to encourage students to participate.

CAS Website has all the information, with appropriate links to registration, etc.

OU has been a major supporter/participant; the University of Michigan-Flint has a new coordinator who is likely to emphasize MOM. Dean Downing is particularly proud of the variety and spectrum of participation across the College. Last year 13 of the 15 departments had participants, and all 15 departments over the years have been involved. This breadth at OU is in marked contrast to participation from the other institutions, where the laboratory sciences dominate, with some representation from psychology and a few humanities programs.

Faculty willing to serve on OU’s Meeting of the Minds committee should e-mail Mary Papazian (papazian@oakland.edu). In two years, OU will host again.

4. Update on the Capital Campaign

Oakland is in the midst of the “silent phase” of its capital campaign.

Julie Lichtenberg, the College’s development officer, distributed a “CAS Campaign Priorities” handout, which Dean Downing described as a “very generic” document completed for the President a couple of years ago; each dean was limited to four items. These capital campaign proposals are aligned with the 2010 Vision.

The “silent phase” is that time before any major public announcement; the institution goes to close donors and prospective donors for “lead gifts.” Fundraising strategists like to get 40-50% of the campaign pledged before announcing a campaign. The overall goal for the capital campaign will be determined during silent phase; the range Julie has heard is \$50 m-100 m. A fundraising firm has been hired to work with the President, the deans, and an internal campaign committee. Julie, as the CAS development officer, is in charge of implementing the plans. She is working with departments and coordinating with development officers in the Schools to help get the largest possible gifts to the campus.

Probably the biggest area for the College is the Performing Arts Center. At the October Board of Trustees meeting the President announced the Center would be one of the highest priorities for the capital campaign, probably its top priority. He is trying to put it on a “fast track.” The Trustees were supportive.

Dean Downing noted he is very positive and encouraged: given the state’s financial condition, the likelihood of state appropriations for capital outlays for buildings is slim, with any groundbreaking 3-5 years down the road. Having the Performing Arts Center as a priority for the capital campaign increases the likelihood the Center can be built sooner rather than later.

Structurally, the CAS advisory board has 5-6 strong members who will be very helpful in the campaign; there will be a committee structure in the College also for the campaign. In addition, the College is developing new support people to approach for fundraising. Julie is getting to know those people and has asked department chairs for names, especially for “development” purposes, for major gifts. Assembly members should also forward names of alumnae/i who love OU and have the potential for major gifts to Julie.

The College is starting a series called the Dean’s Breakfast Briefings, inviting people to tell them about the 2010 Vision and “distinguishing characteristics” of the College. These are “meaningful moves.” Large gifts come after a series of activities to excite the donor, bring the donor closer to the university.

Ann Duffield from the consulting firm is working on the case statement for OU; she is committed to using “lots of great stories.” Please forward any such stories to Julie so Dean Downing can incorporate them in the CAS case.

The AUFD will take place this fall; President Russi will match donations (with some restrictions); donations can be designated.

Concerns raised:

••Visiting Scholar/Practitioner Endowment: interest off the endowment at 5%--possibly less in this economy--is \$60,000 enough? (response: implementation may involve modifications, such as one-semester appointment or use of additional gift moneys.)

5. Conversation on general education with Michelle Piskulich, Robby Stewart, and Paul Graves

Dean Downing did disseminate the resolution from the last Assembly meeting immediately. With the unanimous support of the Executive Committee, Dean Downing invited the College’s representatives to Task Force 2 to attend this Assembly meeting for continued dialog/discussion. He noted that despite the concerns about the process, many valid curricular and pedagogical concerns have been expressed; the entire point of the dialog is to raise issues.

Point of Order: Under Robert’s Rules, a body cannot rescind a previous decision/resolution unless a member so moves; support is necessary also. What is the point of further discussion? (response: this “open discussion” is not for the purpose of rescinding the resolution but rather to benefit our students, and to hear responses from members of Task Force 2 to the Assembly’s concerns.)

Moved to continue discussion/dialog on general education; all in the College are affected by it (Barbara Mabee). Supported. (responses: there is no intent to rescind the motion; there is nothing in that resolution that precludes continued dialog on general education; the College has a great responsibility to the University, and we need to think

very seriously about its role. We can talk much more comfortably in the Assembly environment than in the Senate, much more candidly, in helpful ways for the Task Force 2 members and for those who represent the College in the Senate. Parliamentarian Jerrold Grossman noted that the College Constitution allows the executive committee to prepare the agenda, and the “conversation” is on the agenda.) Approved, with one negative vote.

Michelle Piskulich, speaking for Task Force 2, noted that the three representatives are “here to listen.”

In an attempt to capture the complexity of the discussion, comments made by Assembly members are categorized as “Concerns raised,” an immediate response or clarification by Task Force 2 members or Dean Downing appears parenthetically after some concerns, and more extended responses by the Task Force 2 guests and/or Dean Downing are grouped as “Responses/comments from Task Force 2 members.”

Concerns raised:

- a concern raised at the September Assembly meeting was that the proposal is *fait accompli* (response: the “approaches” were put up on the Web site to begin to engage people in dialog; there were too many outcomes last year to produce effective discussion. The four approaches were attempts to “whittle down” the outcomes to a manageable size, to something that people could respond to. The approaches are not final documents.)

- over the years several discussions of general education have occurred; always the College has had a major role, but not always a positive one. Last time (mid-80s) a pattern of departmental defensiveness and turf issues seemed to dominate in a way that neglected some of the broader intellectual benefits of undergraduate education. In this discussion, faculty should try to think beyond immediate self-interest, to see this as an opportunity to look at the bigger picture, and to defend/shore up some programs that don’t have departments (International Studies, ethnic diversity, interdisciplinary study).

- categorizing the concerns raised in the September Assembly meeting might be helpful. Three major areas of concern were: how complicated the proposals seem, what students should already know from HS (some outcomes seem simplistic), and what ideology the language pushes on students and faculty (e.g., “to show literature as an expression of culture” takes a post-modernist approach; culture is not the only way to view/analyze literature. Rather, students should know how to think critically and to recognize different ways of viewing things so they can be prepared to adopt their own viewpoints.)

- every single description has problems as there are multiple interpretations of what objectives as stated mean.

- the system has strong emphasis on writing, but appears to result in substantially less training in writing for students. The description of the one course that would be required looks more like RHT 150 than 160. It leaves out analytic and research writing. In this system, people in subject areas are supposed to be teaching analytic and research writing, replacing people who are trained to teach rhetoric/composition and further asking departments to take content out of their courses and replace it with instruction in rhetoric. History’s research seminar, for example, is predicated on students’ having RHT 160 knowledge; without RHT 160, the seminar will have to be modified to provide “remedial education in writing.” Not having the skills disseminated in the early years causes huge curricular problems in the majors.

- changes to the writing program also create a staffing problem, distributing Rhetoric faculty into other departments; will there be funds for teaching people to teach writing?

- transfer students will have major difficulties in the area of writing coursework especially: what courses in majors at other schools will be certified for writing? the task will be enormously complex.

- for research, also, the current proposal emphasizes only electronic data searches, ignoring other research methods such as paper-based and oral research.

- the system will be next to impossible to implement at Oakland University. It is very difficult to understand, and petitions of exception will multiply greatly. Staffing is a concern as well: CAS would need all new positions for many years just to staff the capstone courses.

Responses/comments from Task Force 2 members:

- right now, the proposals don't "look nice on paper, and agreement among Task Force 2 members about which approach is "on top" is unlikely.

- any significant change will mean a lot of petitions during the transition period—necessary for "meaningful reform."

- Petition of Exception decisions are based on faculty applying "our objectives"; this is our opportunity to define/refine those objectives. It's time to identify our curricular goals and commit to them. If a capstone or a one-year foreign language requirement is important, now is the time to build the case.

- one of the reasons the approaches were put up was to get feedback on how the proposals are "not yet in contact with reality." Note that they are moving that way: one year ago there were 294 goals; now there are some 50. Discussions like this help us move toward reality.

- the transfer student has not been ignored--Jenny Gilroy is on the committee, as is an OCC advisor. A subcommittee will work on transfer issues once we get an agreement on general education learning outcomes.

- faculty should be taking a stand on what we feel is important now and look for ways to phase that in; it may mean we "move toward" a one-year language requirement, for example.

Concerns raised:

- one frustration underscoring last month's discussion was OU's history of unfunded mandates where things are not phased in over time and suddenly we "just have to do it."

- last time (meaning the September Assembly meeting), the discussion was about process and outcomes so far, not about turf.

- the language betrays the professional schools' trying to reduce the amount of work students will do in what CAS faculty will agree are the "core things in a student's educational experience."

- the process was fundamentally flawed from the beginning; what we could do, more simply, would be to work on our current system, aligning it with what our accrediting body wants.

- this is "discouraging"; students seem totally disconnected from what faculty are talking about here. To students, general education is "something to get out of the way." Are students being involved in the process? Can we come up with a system they're going to buy into?

Responses/comments from Task Force 2 members:

- the learning outcomes were presented to Student Congress last year. A student did come to a Task Force 2 meeting, but did not continue to attend. Students may not ever “get it,” but they will certainly be a part of it. At the Student Congress presentation, they liked being involved.

- the College has a real opportunity to take control, to shape the documents, to work with Task Force 2 in refining proposals, to make the College stronger and benefit our students.

- to the extent that College faculty participate, Task Force 2 can create a document that reflects what the College thinks important for liberal arts education.

- “fixing what we have” might simply provide small fixes for small problems; sometimes a clean sweep is wiser. We have the potential to lead the university: “this is general education as the College defines it.”

Concerns raised:

- the learning outcomes have been problematic from start: how to select from way too many, and how to articulate them appropriately. Outcomes that are less specific and more philosophical would be preferable. Confusion still exists about whether the general education student is expected to know what the major should know.

- assessability is crucial; could this be done philosophically instead of so concretely/narrowly? The outcomes are too grand and too specific at the same time.

- could the approach be more “self-reflective?”

- we seem to be asking the program to “do too much.” It is “unwieldy” and “inefficient.” Fundamentally, implementation is a Herculean task. (response: there are still too many learning outcomes, and some need to be rewritten; that’s why we’re having the discussions.)

- the process has reified a superstructure but the infrastructure--the values and essential things for students to know--is getting lost. Some of the results are not tied to any values we would really recognize (response: bear in mind our mission and our students: who they are, where they are likely to end up.)

- a lot of the procedure has been driven by learning outcomes that emerged from the dinners; the summaries of those conversations show complex and contradictory ideas. At the dinners, people often talked about what we want undergraduate education to accomplish, and then pinned it on general education. General education is really not “everything but the major”—this might be a useful discussion.

- we have to continue discussions about distribution requirements, also.

- what we have is a committee product; such documents are often unrealistic/unsatisfactory.

- one message still being sent by some is that something very like the approaches we have seen is what will be taken to the Senate for approval.

- the money is fundamental; the history of OU is to not fund. Increased funding for changes to general education is highly unlikely. (response: money will not be disregarded; a budget subcommittee will convene once a plan is designed. Approach 4 really is a discussion document. Its value is in prompting a real dialog about general education, which was very difficult to achieve before there was a document to react to.

- perhaps, as suggested in the chairs’ meeting, Task Force 2 needs to have conversations with groups, such as the Social Sciences group, the Humanities group.

- we could “explain the current system”: didn’t NCA say that OU should clarify its objectives, demonstrate how to assess the outcomes, and articulate the underlying philosophy.

- is there a broad definition of what a liberal education is? (responses: 1. we lack one articulation of what a liberal education is, as opposed to 237 articulations; 2. we lack a definition.)

Michelle Piskulich expressed appreciation to Assembly members for their feedback and encouraged individuals to e-mail her (piskulich@oakland.edu), Paul Graves (graves@oakland.edu), or Robby Stewart (stewart@oakland.edu) with further comments.

Dean Downing will consult with the Executive Committee about continuing the discussion.

6. Good and Welfare

Given the lateness of the hour, no Good and Welfare matters were brought forward.

Dean Downing adjourned the meeting at 5:10.