

College of Arts and Sciences
Assembly Meeting
Minutes: March 16, 2010
Oakland Room, Oakland Center

Members present: *Khattree, Mabee, Connery, Lombardo, Hawkins, Khain, Williams, Herold, Clason, Lewis, Grossman, Felton, Stoffan, Eis, Schneeweis, Stamps, Halpin, Nielson, Whitehead*
Members absent: *Dvir, Estes, K. Berven, Sanders, Fails, Ostergaard, Wright, Schweitzer, White, Wood*
Ex-Officio present: *Stewart, Moore, Sudol*
Guests: *J. Wiggins, Reger, Meehan, Bertocci, Gilson, Haworth Hoepfner, Cardiff*

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 by Dean Sudol

2. Approval of the Minutes, Meeting of January 19, 2010

The minutes of the meeting of January 19, 2010 were approved.

3. College of Arts and Sciences Exploratory Requirement

Dean Sudol informed the Assembly that the proposal for CASER which had been returned to COI by the Assembly after a second reading at the January 19, 2010 meeting is currently undergoing reconsideration and revision by COI. He expects that a revised proposal will be returned by COI for consideration by the Assembly at its April meeting, and he hopes that, if approved, BANNER will be able to accommodate at that time the adoption of the CASER beginning in the 2010-2011 academic year. At this time, it is not certain whether the revised proposal will be recommended jointly by both COI and the ad-hoc Distribution Committee.

4. Proposal for a Liberal Arts Major in Creative Writing, *first reading*

English Department Chair Susan Hawkins and members of the department's creative-writing faculty (Gladys Cardiff, Annette Gilson, Edward Haworth Hoepfner) presented and answered questions about the first reading of the Department's proposal for a Liberal Arts Major in Creative Writing. The proposal has received a letter of support from Marshall Kitchens, Chair of the Department of Writing and Rhetoric, indicating that there are no significant overlaps between the two programs and that the proposed program seems rigorous and sound.

Queries from members of the Assembly focused upon the appropriateness of offering a B.A. in Creative Writing as opposed to a B.F.A or to a special track within a B.A. in English. Department members explained that offering a B.A. was the best way for the department to use its traditional strengths – a strong literature program and a faculty with Ph.D.s in English as well as M.F.A.s in Creative Writing – and that the proposed major's requirements in literature courses, complementing the creative-writing workshops, offer students a breadth of competencies which open a variety of post-degree opportunities:

students would be eligible, for instance, to apply for M.A. or Ph.D. programs in English, as well as to M.F.A. programs in Creative Writing. Students in the proposed program will take the same number of credits in creative writing as would students in B.A. programs elsewhere. The literature component of the program also helps to distinguish the creative writing program, by its connection to literature, from the professional writing program offered within the Department of Writing and Rhetoric, and it will provide for a smoother transition for current English majors who elect to pursue the degree in creative writing once the program is made available. Andrea Eis, Chair of the Department of Art and Art History, explained that a similar rationale underlies that department's offering a B.A. in Studio Art rather than a B.F.A., and she indicated that a letter of support from her department was imminent. Jackie Wiggins, Chair of the Department of Music, Theatre, and Dance agreed that the program fit the model used in her own department and indicated that she had planned to write a letter of support for the proposal.

Introductory creative-writing classes will remain open to all students; advanced courses may be open to students with permission of the instructor on the basis of a manuscript.

Associate Dean Moore urged the department to add more graduate assistants over time in the proposal budget. A number of superficial corrections (spelling, adjustments from future imperative to simple future tense, de-reversal of budget columns, and assignment of course numbers not used within the last ten years) were offered by members of the Assembly in hopes of expeditious approval by the Assembly at the next reading and subsequently by the University Senate.

5. Discussion: Organizational Structure for Interdisciplinary Programs

Dean Sudol opened the discussion by suggesting that we currently have three organizational structures for interdisciplinary programs – a department (Music, Theatre, and Dance), a Center (International Studies), and several programs and majors without disciplinary homes (e.g., Women and Gender Studies, Religious Studies), none of which is entirely suitable.

Jackie Wiggins, Chair of the Department of Music, Theatre, and Dance, explained that her department was too integrated to be split into three departments but too disciplinarily diverse to function effectively as a single department. Currently, MTD is constituted as a department with three programs, each of which has a director. The Chair's role is the equivalent of a dean's, and the directors' roles are the equivalents of department chairs'. The department has a total staff of 152, has 430 majors, and offers 17 degree programs.

Wiggins proposed that the department become a School of Music, Theatre, and Dance within the College, with each of the disciplines becoming a department. The increased visibility as a School would put the program on a par with Schools of Music or Schools of Performing Arts elsewhere and would increase enrollment. At a rate of ten new students per year, after five years the School could support its own development officer and secretary.

Peter Bertocci, Director of the Center for International Studies, rehearsed the history of International Studies at Oakland, noting the ways in which responsibility for "international" education has dispersed: the Global Perspectives general education requirement may now be fulfilled with courses exploring

Western cultures offered outside the Center, not infrequently outside the College itself; an International Education (Study Abroad) office has been established, along with an office for International Students and Scholars. He also noted that faculty recruitment will be more difficult in the future, because doctoral students no longer get degrees or go on the job market in Area Studies. Currently, the program has a Director who reports to the Dean, shares a secretary with Women and Gender Studies, and offers courses taught by faculty with homes in other disciplinary departments or by part-time faculty. Full-time faculty are decreasingly available to International Studies because of demands from their home departments; consequently, the program has been increasingly staffed by part-time faculty.

Because some components of “international” education (e.g., Study Abroad, some Global Perspectives offerings) are located outside the College, it is not possible for the Center, within the College, to coordinate or collaborate with all of the other programs. Because it is not a Department, the director feels “out of the loop”: there are no regular occasions for meetings, joint planning sessions, or information-sharing with department chairs in the College. The role of the director is analogous to that of a department chair, but the program does not receive representation and does not participate in decision-making.

Bertocci noted that although becoming a department without any home faculty would provide greater access to opportunities to work with other departments, it would not solve the problem of faculty recruitment.*

Jo Reger, Director of the Women and Gender Studies Program, noted that each of the inter-disciplinary program seems to have different structural problems. Her program currently has a director, whose disciplinary home is the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, who reports to the dean; the program shares a secretary with International Studies. Her program is unlikely to recruit full-time faculty exclusively within the program; current full-time faculty have other disciplinary home departments; Ph.D. programs in Women and Gender Studies are interdisciplinary, and consequently new recruits are likely to be able to find homes in other disciplines. Reger agreed with Bertocci that program directors, by virtue of their position within the College structure, are less able than they should be to negotiate and advocate for their programs.

Jay Meehan, Chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and Director of the Concentration in Criminal Justice, noted the number of program directors present at the meeting whose disciplinary home is the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. He indicated that although this situation has not had negative impact on his department, interdisciplinary programs may present unique challenges for academic units that support them.

Dean Sudol floated the idea that since some interdisciplinary programs do not have a comfortable home that an umbrella Department of Interdisciplinary Studies might serve for all of them (while MTD moved on from an already similar structure to a School within the College). He noted that during the upcoming capital campaign such a unit would enable him to raise money, for example, for an Endowed Professor of Judaic Studies within the Religious Studies program within the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, an endowment not currently possible because Religious Studies does not have a permanent home. A

Department of Interdisciplinary Studies would facilitate the business of all of the programs and would give them representation at the level of a Department Chair.

Meehan pointed out that programs already have budgets, control their own scheduling, and have release time and compensation for directors. Reger observed that individual programs could lose visibility if merged within such a department. Pointing to the current problems within MTD, Eis suggested the importance of programs being able to represent themselves in decision-making processes.

The hour growing late, Dean Sudol suspended discussion until another meeting.

6. Associate Dean Moore alerted the Assembly to the ongoing planning for the first commencement ceremony exclusively for the awarding of graduate degrees. Our tradition of hooding doctoral students and reading their dissertation titles will be maintained. Representatives from the College are hopeful that the ceremony will maintain a distinction between such students who have completed a dissertation and those who have completed a research “project.”

The meeting adjourned at 5:23 PM.

*Subsequent to the meeting, Bertocci emailed to members of the Assembly a concise history and overview of the Center for International Studies, which is attached to these minutes.