

College of Arts and Sciences
Assembly Meeting
Minutes: April 14, 2010
Oakland Room, Oakland Center

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

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 by Dean Sudol.

2. Approval of the Minutes, Meeting of March 16, 2010

The minutes of the meeting of March 16, 2010 were approved. Stamps moved, Estes seconded.

3. Proposal for a College of Arts and Sciences Exploratory Requirement (General Policy), *second reading*

Discussion was re-opened for the second reading of the motion to approve the College of Arts and Sciences Exploratory Requirement, which had been postponed at the 1/19/2010 meeting of the Assembly.

Associate Dean Stewart explained since the January meeting the requirement has been reviewed and revised by a joint committee of members of COI and the ad hoc committee originally charged with developing the new requirement. The revised version was then reviewed and approved by the original ad hoc committee and accepted by COI, which is returning it to the assembly.

Motion to put the revised proposal back on the floor was made by Ostergaard, seconded by Stamps, and unanimously approved.

Motion to remove the asterisked statement of exceptions to the policy was made by Grossman, seconded by Stamps, and unanimously approved.

Eis asked what was meant by the revised document's new subtitle, "General Policy." Associate Dean Stewart explained that this general policy statement would serve as a guideline for departments as they generated pre-defined exploratory sets. Although the addition of such sets will generate more elaboration within the Catalogue over time, the "General Policy" statement will remain unchanged in the Catalogue unless, as Dean Sudol added, changes have been reviewed and approved by the Assembly.

Esselink (Director, CAS Advising) reported that advisors were concerned that the requirement for two courses to be taken at Oakland University could penalize transfer students, particularly those with already heavy credit requirements for their majors, e.g. Biology.

A motion was approved to amend the document, striking the statement in the third paragraph that "A student must complete at least 11 total credits toward this requirement, and at least two courses for the requirement must be taken at Oakland University" and revising the first sentence of the second paragraph

to read “. . . all students with majors in the College of Arts and Sciences are required to complete at least three courses outside of their major rubric, for a total of 12 credits.” Seconded by Mabee.

The requirement for two courses at OU was justified by the ad hoc committee on the grounds that unlike other requirements in *subject* areas, this is a requirement to take courses *in the College*. However, because students regularly fulfill distribution requirements through macro agreements with two-year colleges and this will become even more frequent with the recent M2O and O2O agreements, as Associate Dean Moore pointed out, the requirement to take courses at OU could be perceived as creating a barrier to transfer students.

The amendment to the motion and document was unanimously approved, and the amended motion and document were unanimously approved. Dean Sudol thanked the Assembly, promising to make the new requirement work and to “make it wonderful.”

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

Dean Sudol began the discussion by saying that in a conversation earlier in the day with English Department Chair Hawkins, he had suggested that action on the proposal be deferred until Fall 2010 and that the principals could work during the interim to improve the proposal. Asked to comment, Hawkins replied that she was unclear on what objections there might be to the current proposal. In the first reading of the proposal, the Assembly’s response was positive; the very few superficial issues noted by the Assembly regarding the earlier version of the proposal had been corrected in the current version. Hawkins noted that record-breaking attendance at the previous weekend’s Association of Writers and Writing Programs indicates that Creative Writing is an educational growth industry, and that Oakland should move as quickly as possible to provide such a program for our students. Mabee concurred, noting the prevalence of creative writers at last weekend’s meeting of the Northeastern Modern Language Association.

Dean Sudol agreed that Oakland should and will offer a creative writing program, and he agreed that the proposal is a good one, but he said he wants to see it made better. Eis pointed out that *all* proposals have matters that can be refined, but that it’s not appropriate to call for such refinements at a second reading: COI has accepted the proposal as it is, and the Assembly Executive Committee has passed it to the Assembly; the Assembly has given the proposal a first reading, has received full cooperation in the changes it suggested, and is now ready to vote to approve it. Dean Sudol cautioned the Assembly that even if it approved the program, he would not support it.

Grossman noted that the CAS Constitution authorizes the Assembly to transmit material to the University Senate, and that the Senate can approve it and transmit it to the Board of Trustees; Sudol noted that the Senate has set a precedent of requiring the signature of a dean.

Dvir and Wood asked about the consequences of a delay until September. Dean Sudol responded that if the proposal was revised and approved in early Fall 2010, the program would commence as scheduled in Fall 2011. Grossman asked what guarantee the Assembly has that if it defers a vote, the Dean will eventually support a revised proposal.

Dean Sudol said that he has been mulling the proposal a while and that he will provide ideas to the Department for improving the proposal. He wondered how this program was a liberal arts degree, preparing generalists.

Hawkins said that the major is clearly a liberal arts major, not a professional degree: it is and has a discipline. Gilson pointed to the way in which the program includes and is aligned with literary studies and critical thinking. Woods agreed, pointing to the Studio Arts program as a liberal arts program, with a

symbiotic relationship with Art History. Dean Sudol urged that this explanation should be in the proposal. Hawkins pointed out that it already is.

Dean Sudol expressed concern about presenting the program to the Board of Trustees. The proposal is limited in its view of the genres of writing. A more comprehensive capstone experience might be advantageous. The number of credits required might be increased. Associate Dean Moore asked about the possibility of a minor in Creative Writing and wondered if more should be available “for students who are passionate about writing.”

Hawkins replied that the program is flexible and can add new specializations over time as the program and the faculty grow. Associate Dean Moore wondered about hiring local writers as adjunct instructors.

Whitehead and Eis pointed out that the Studio Arts program, which is comparable, changes and expands regularly, and that after the approval and start-up of the major, they worked with COI to develop a Graphic Design minor.

Associate Dean Stewart wondered about offering a course focusing on the professional aspects of creative writing, the process of establishing oneself as a professional writer. Gilson explained that attention to the processes and protocols of publishing is already included in all the courses, but that these processes and protocols vary from genre to genre; they’re different for screen writing than they are for poetry writing. Consequently, an omnibus course would not be practical. Associate Dean Moore suggested that there would be value in documenting this preparation.

Haworth Hoepfner reminded the Assembly that the Department has reviewed, as explained in the proposal, dozens and dozens of other programs and has consulted the AWP guidelines regularly. As is now the case at OU *a priori*, with the creation of the Department of Writing and Rhetoric, the vast majority of programs distinguish and separate creative writing from other forms professional writing, and creative writing programs focus on fiction, poetry, drama, screen-writing, and literary non-fiction, usually in partnership with literature programs.

Wood urged the Assembly to respect the professional academic expertise of the Department bringing the proposal forward.

Estes remarked that as a former chair of COI, he could not recall having seen a better proposal and indicated that he thought the Assembly was ready to vote.

The proposal was unanimously approved.

5. Information item: Undergraduate Paralegal Certification Program

Sandy Dykstra explained the proposal to create an Undergraduate Paralegal Certification Program, which will eliminate the anomalies currently created by offering paralegal courses both as credit and as non-credit courses. The new program eliminates the possibility of students having to pay twice for the program in order to receive credit towards their undergraduate degrees and thus makes the cost of the program to students comparable to those offered at two-year colleges.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.