

Academic Affairs Committee, 3 December 2007

In attendance: Patricia Renn-Scanlan, Jorge Nobo, Karen Camarda, Dave Pownell, Frank Chorba, Caren Dick Robin Bowen, Bill Roach (acting as secretary until), Tom Prasch (arriving late).

The minutes of 19 November 2007 were amended (to include Caren Dick as being in attendance) and approved.

The issue of university policy regarding course numbering was taken up. Nobo pointed out that some of the normative rules in the College of Arts and Sciences, such as the one that restricts upper-level courses from being introductory, might not apply to other schools. After a wide-ranging discussion of the practices of various programs and other colleges, and a general agreement that developing more broadly standardized numbering systems was probably a good idea, it was decided that Robin Bowen, with assistance from Jorge Nobo, would bring in proposal for action at the next meeting.

Discussion then turned to goals and strategies for dealing with changes in general education. Discussion focused on methods to bring issues before the broader constituencies involved. Nobo, underlining the two-way street he'd mentioned at the past meeting, suggested the development of smaller groups to generate proposals for each of the three types of general-education program (smorgasbord, developmental, and core). It was noted that it would be helpful to have more information and examples for each type; noted as well that skills could be expected to be part of any proposal. Roach raised the problem of turf wars in any reform process. Nobo returned to his idea of three core courses (cosmological, social scientific, humanistic). Bowen raised the question of whether other schools could be involved with general education; Nobo defended the special status of the College of Arts and Sciences by alluding to its traditional role and mission, and Prasch added that the history of the development of humanistic studies in universities supported the approach. Nobo added that proposals could be accepted now from outside the college, if approved by the college, and Roach noted the example (albeit a somewhat anomalous one) of Econ 100. Prasch noted the need to develop a set of criteria for upper-level general education. Bowen suggested that the best colleges mentioned in Pope's *Colleges That Change Lives* tended to have general education woven through the curriculum and connected with some capstone experience. Chorba wondered why it was necessary to change the existing system at all.

Meeting was adjourned without further action of the matter.