

Academic Affairs Committee, 9 February 2009

In attendance: Frank Chorba, Tom Prasch, Sue Unruh, Karen Camarda, Phyllis Berry, Cal Melick, Robert Kerchner, Robin Bowen

1) Transfer of International Baccalaureate Coursework

Discussion focused on the need to implement such a program to maintain competitiveness and the necessity to ensure that transfer credits were coordinated with individual departments. It was moved and passed unanimously that the committee approved of the transfer arrangement.

2) Course numbering system

Robin Bowen introduced for discussion the plans put forward by the Kansas Senior Student Officers for the implementation of something like the Oklahoma Common Course Numbering System. In discussion, the committee expressed the response that the proposal made general sense, and would help with transfer credit, but that the devil would be in the details: that difficulties would arise in individual department's abilities to develop uniformity.

The discussion then segued into the fate of the Course Numbering Proposal initiated by VPAA Bowen and passed by the AAC last spring. Frank Chorba informed the committee that the proposal had been forwarded to Bob Boncella for action by the Graduate Committee, but that Boncella, not having received specific directives about what to do with the proposal, had done nothing. It was suggested that Boncella be told to have his committee take action on the proposal.

3) Alteration in Degree Requirements for Bachelor of Arts in Music

Prasch reprised the explanations offered for the proposal at last week's CAS faculty meeting. The change was approved unanimously.

4) Optional Minor in Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino/a Studies

Prasch reprised the explanations offered for the proposal at last week's CAS faculty meeting. Bowen noted that her office was strongly supportive, since the program might provide a draw for a more diverse student population.

Some concern was raised about the language in the notes to the final page of the proposal (listing courses that had been taught in the field over the last several years), since that language might be taken as prescriptive rather than descriptive (e.g. "It will be offered regularly in the summer" might compel it to be taught every summer). It was moved and unanimously approved that the words "is anticipated that" be added between "It" and "will" in the description in the notes related to SP 307, SP 340 and 380, and SP 306 and 331.

With that alteration, the new minor was approved unanimously.

5) Changes in English Creative Writing Emphasis

Prasch summarized the arguments made for the change before the CAS faculty. Questions arose about whether it was intended to raise the total number of hours in the major, and if so by how much. It was agreed that queries would be made to English chair Howard Faulkner to clarify the proposal. Prasch volunteered to do the querying.

After discussions with Faulkner, which confirmed that 3 additional hours were required for the new proposal, the committee approved the change by email vote.

6) Chair and Faculty Evaluation Process

Frank Chorba raised the issue that faculty evaluations might be available to chairs before they do their own evaluations of faculty which, especially in small departments where real anonymity might not be ensured, could present problems. The committee agreed the issue was really one for the Faculty Affairs Committee.

7) Language of Student Medical Withdrawal Policy

Phyllis Berry raised the issue of the catalog language relating to student medical withdrawal—whether students could get an withdrawal without a grade and were eligible for refunds when medical conditions prevented their completion of a course--in light of their unit's experience with one case. The committee reviewed the existing catalog language. VPAA Bowen promised further investigation into the matter.