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Social Science Division Meeting
October 1, 2012
5:30 p.m.
Imholte Hall 109

Faculty in Attendance: Chair Leslie Meek, Oscar Baldelomar, Nick Benesh, Cyrus Bina, Kent Blansett, Ed Brands, Sheri Breen, Steve Burks, Mike Cheyne, Donna Chollett, Rebecca Dean, Jennifer Deane, Clayton Forester, Solomon Gashaw, Farah Gilanshah, Roland Guyotte, Hiro Imai, Brooks Jessup, Tom Johnson, Seung-Ho Joo, Arne Kildegaard, Paul Kivi, Nick Leonard, Tim Lindberg, Ben Narvaez, Bibhudutta Panda, Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Roger Rose, Jennifer Rothchild, Cheryl Stewart, Dennis Stewart, Sheng Xiao, Xia Zhang

Student Representatives in Attendance: Ann Austin, Zach Johnson, Elizabeth Pappenfus, Miles Wangenstein

Excused Absences: Steve Gross, Heather Peters, Elaine Nelson, Kevin Stefanek

Guest: Tisha Turk

I. Announcements

Chair Meek called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Jennifer Deane announced the Master Advisors' intent to host an event focusing on helping undecided majors choose a direction. "Speed dating" format, pizza served. Wed, October 10th at 5:00 in Oyate. Any faculty who want to come and talk about their major are welcome. Further, all are encouraged to send undecided major advisees to the event.

Once the changes are in PCAS (by Wed.), Terri will mail them out to Discipline Coordinators to make sure they are correct. She needs to hear back from you on Thursday or Friday, since she has to send them to Darla by 4:30 on Friday.

Single semester leave forms are being redone and should be ready by Thursday. If you have been working on one, the questions will be much the same; the form will just be more user-friendly. Deadline is October 29th for the Dean's Office, so forms need to be given to Leslie by Oct. 25th so she can read and sign them.

Deadline for Imagine Funds is Oct. 25th.

Deadline for Sabbatical Leave Requests is Nov. 5th for the Dean's Office. Leslie needs them by Nov. 1st so she can read and sign them.

Deadline for EDP Grants is Nov. 16th in the Dean's Office. Leslie needs to see them by Nov. 14th so she can read and sign them.

Brooks Jessup moved to approve the September 10th minutes, Roland Guyotte seconded. Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

II. History PCAS Changes

Speaking to the History Discipline changes, Jennifer Deane explained that the change was a philosophical change rather than a practical one; the new language better reflects the nature of the requirement, and will help students to understand what is expected.

Additionally, for the minor, there is a new number for the methods course. Jeff Ratliff Crain suggested that the history discipline group courses into categories to help students keep track on APAS. Chair Meek said that that has already been suggested, and that Terri has sent an email about it. Deane added that so far the discipline hasn't encountered any difficulties, and isn't sure whether it wants to go that route or not.

Cyrus Bina moved to approve the changes, Paul Kivi seconded. A unanimous vote approved the history changes.

III. LAHS Changes

Ratliff-Crain explained that because there is more and more demand for writing grants, etc. in the field, LAHS is adding a research methods requirement.

Soc 3103 and Psy 2001 are new required courses. There is the expectation that students will be taking Soc 3103, but if they're double majoring/minoring in psychology, the requirement is fulfilled by Psy 2001 (a required course for Psy majors and minors). Being a psychology major or minor is a new prereq for Psy 2001.

Other changes are mostly cleanup intended to preserve the theme/intent of LAHS.

Ratliff-Crain moved to approve, Guyotte seconded. A unanimous vote approved the LAHS changes.

IV. Management Changes

Steve Burks announced a friendly amendment to a Management course – the addition of prereqs to Mgmt 3123. Jennifer Rothchild moved to approve the first change, Tim Lindberg seconded. A unanimous vote approved.

The second change, Steve Burks explained, was to add public speaking to the major requirements. Guyotte asked if the discipline would be rigid about requiring the course for everyone, as some students come into college with good rhetorical skills. Burks replied that exceptions could be provided on a case-by-case basis.

Roger Rose moved to approve the second change, Seung-Ho Joo seconded. A unanimous vote approved the change.

The third proposed change was a business language requirement sub plan. In the past, Burks explained, someone coming into the major who already has language competency

(i.e. an international student who knows English in addition to their native language) has been waived from the language requirement. Now, the discipline has created a parallel requirement: students have to take 8 credits in another language.

Bina: This has been proposed because of increasing globalization, and because being able to effectively communicate is important. The change would thus be relevant.

Burks: We approached the English discipline to see which courses would be relevant.

Tisha Turk: 2000 level classes in the English aren't language classes; they're literature or writing, which aren't appropriate for goals of management major. We picked the least awful options for proposals, although they still don't seem to fulfill management's hopes. Several English faculty who have dealt with ESL students also want to mention that it would be a ton of extra work for them. In the past, professors have had to essentially teach extra seminars during their office hours to help ESL students keep up. Those students need/want language instruction, but that's not what happens in these classes.

Guyotte: Does English still offer the modern language class?

Turk: It's now called Grammar and Language, and is very much in demand.

Deane asked Burks which specific skills he was hoping non-native skills will gain from this change.

Bina: Reading comprehension.

Burks: Tisha says these aren't courses about language, they're courses about writing, which is great in our opinion.

Deane: I'm wondering if you're looking for students to gain the straightforward clarity of communication specifically related to business. Don't see how literature would do that.

Guyotte: Native speakers of English have to take intermediate Spanish or German. It seems like the equivalent would be an intermediate ESL course.

Turk: that's what the Humanities Division would like: to have an instructor who could teach ESL beyond the beginning level.

Tim Lindberg: How does this relate to someone who comes to UMM and test out of the language?

Burks: Right now, anyone who has native competence has the language requirement waived. What we propose is to create a parallel requirement.

Ben Narvaez: To be able to enroll here, do students have to have passed out of the 2000 level English requirement? Otherwise it wouldn't be very hard to be a student here.

Seung-Ho Joo: We don't have the breadth in foreign languages offered here. If they have to take another language, that would strain our resources and spread the students thin. It's a lot of extra work for students, too. I have a strong reservation about the first requirement.

Narvaez: The first requirement is to give them a choice.

Burks: If some students pass out of the second language, they're waived entirely.

Ratliff-Crain: You identified several courses that get at skills you're looking for. That seems the preferential route.

Burks: What we meant by part two was course work taught in English, not English courses. We're not limited ourselves to English discipline courses, although we do think some students will want to take them.

Narvaez: Is that really any different, because students have to take a course in English to graduate? Does it matter if it's 1000 or 2000 level?

Bina: We decided that 2000 level is the more mature level. A student has to have the analytical skill to succeed at that level, if not the English language skills.

Jennifer Rothchild: If we vote for this, are we basically saying we're not going to worry about those two issues (humanities issues, etc.)? I'm concerned that we're voting for things we're not able to problem solve. Will we just figure it out later?

Rebecca Dean: It seems that you wouldn't have to have any particular class; any class on the 2000 level will require a certain amount of mastery of the English language. But to graduate, don't students have to have taken a certain amount of credits at a 2000 level?

Guyotte moved to table the proposition. There was no second.

Kivi: In a perfect world, we'd have a 2000 level ESL course available to these students. I don't know how far from this we are, but that's how I'm hearing things.

Burks: We would certainly support resources going into such a change. I will say that in terms of the extra workload of having ESL students in 2000 level courses, we've had 50 of them per year coming into our courses for the past several years; we realize this is an issue.

Deane: We're sympathetic to the aims of your discipline; we agree that language training is vital. My only concern is if there should be this kind of focus. ESL support to make Humanities function better is more urgent than this. If I were to vote no, that would be why.

Arne Kildegaard: We're talking about a flow of students that is quite monitored. 5 students per year would be attempting to accumulate credits in this way. This is not a raging number of students coming through. If this happens, it's likely that administration will approve additional resources in the ESL area.

Elizabeth Pappenfus: From a student's perspective: we have the burden as well to help out our fellow students. We can see that ESL students struggle more in the classes.

Roger Rose: It's a trickle of students now, but this population will likely expand. Are we still talking about a plateau, or could we be looking at 15 students in the future?

Sheng Xiao: What is our focus here? My understanding is that the only requirement is that non-native students were not required before to take any foreign language courses, so if they were to take 8 extra credits in a foreign language, the problem would be solved.

Burks: We've pretty much reached our steady state from Shanghai. 140-150 are here, and that number should be stable going forward. This breaks down to 1 or 2 students per course. There's no prospect for a sudden flood.

Zach Johnson: I know this isn't just an issue within the Social Science Division: it does affect the students overall, but there are different programs and resources around campus that do help. Stellar is one such program. A lot of other colleges are currently facing the same issue. This is really something that needs to be addressed by the whole campus.

Lindberg: there are 2 different problems here: that students need ESL, and this proposal, which seems to say that it's not fair because American students who speak English have to take extra languages but ESL students don't have to. I don't see the purpose of this change then.

Ratliff-Crain: It's unfortunate that this language ends up being so ambiguous. I'm stuck on "language-rich."

Bina: This proposal is speaking to the heart of the liberal arts college aim.

Burks: If people don't feel comfortable voting immediately, we can take a straw poll and get an idea about where to go from here.

Kildegaard: There is a serious language issue at UMM. We know that it's a lot of work. The idea here is that students would benefit from someone taking their writing seriously. We try to do that, but we're facing 15-20 ESL students per class. Students need it, though.

Chair Meek then called for a straw poll. 11 voted in favor of the proposal, 11 voted against, and 6 abstained.

Burks said that the proposal would be withdrawn for the time being, but that it should be revisited in the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Holly Gruntner, Morris Student Administrative Fellow