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Humanities Division meeting minutes 09/13/ 2016

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Humanities Division Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, Sept. 13 @ 6:30 p.m. (HFA 6)

Preliminaries:

- PG Garavaso (PG) welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially the student representatives, who are attending for the first time. She noted that Jayne Hacker was also present in order to take notes for ECAS revisions.
- PG asked everyone to sign the attendance notepad as it comes around.

Curriculum Form Approval:

1st each coordinator introduced his/her discipline's proposed ECAS forms. There was then discussion as necessary. PG suggested that we deal with all courses first and then vote at the end.

(1) Jimmy Schryver, Art History:

ECAS forms included:

- 2 courses to be taught in the spring by a new faculty member: Latin American Art & Art beyond the West. PG said that preliminary approval was granted today, but the faculty would still like to get them in the catalog for future use.
- 1 new course proposed by Jimmy, called Rome, Jerusalem, and Constantinople: The Art of Three Ancient Capitals. This 2000-level course is designed to provide an introduction to material Jimmy teaches at the 3000-level. It also helps diversify Art History course offerings beyond the western canon.
- 1 new, provisionally approved course called Modern Art in Germany to be taught by the new Art History hire (who has postponed her appointment for one year).
- A course title change from Principles of Art to Interpreting the Visual World: An Introduction to Art History. Julia Dabbs explained that this title is more accurate. She also said that the course will no longer be offered every semester. Mary Elizabeth Bezanson (MEB) asked about the phrase "Helps the student to understand" and suggested a more active construction more similar to language in other course descriptions. Julia appreciated the suggestion.
- A course title change from Art and the Byzantine Empire to Faith, Image, and Power: Byzantine Art and Empire. Jimmy said both new title and revised course description better reflect the course content.
- A course deactivation for Boundaries and Transitions in Medieval Art, which Jimmy said is not likely to be taught any time soon. Barbara Burke asked how this would affect Medieval Studies. Jimmy explained; there will be no negative impact to Medieval Studies.
- A third course title change from 16th-Century Italian Art to After Leonardo: Mannerist and Venetian Renaissance Art. Julia explained that

this title is clearer to students and more accurately reflects the course content.

(2) Michael Lackey, English:

ECAS forms included:

- A provisionally approved IC course called Environmentalism in Science Fiction and Fantasy. Josh Johnson explained the reasons that he developed the course (which he is teaching now) and why he thinks it will appeal to students
- 2 new 2-credit courses called Writing with Style and Scholarly Writing Workshop. Tisha Turk explained that the former will focus on the sentence level and will involve a great deal of reading, identifying stylistic elements, writing, and re-writing. PG asked if it would be a 7-week course or whole-semester. Tisha said a whole-semester course but for less time. She then explained that the latter proposal (Scholarly Writing Workshop) will support juniors and seniors who are working on their own writing projects for their own disciplines, projects, etc. The course writing would be related to these projects, as well as include some class-specific writing. There will also be reading related to academic discourse across and within the disciplines. PG asked if students would take this at the same time that they are writing senior seminar papers or before. Tisha said the ideal would be concurrently with their projects, though “before” might occasionally make sense. Michael asked about how it would work for a student doing a UROP, and Tisha clarified. PG asked if this might mean a student is getting more credit for less work, but Tisha has no doubt that the workload will be worth two credits. Tammy Berberi asked about logistics (course cap, whether it can accommodate all the students who need it, etc.). Tisha is thinking first-come, first-serve for 12 or 16 students max. Barbara’s perception is that there is a great desire for HUM electives and that this could be phenomenally popular in other divisions. Tisha thinks that would be ideal and that the goal would be to attract primarily non-English majors. Lisa Bevevino asked if faculty in other disciplines (such as languages) could offer similar courses in their own language. Tisha said she thinks that would be great if others developed similar courses because she thinks there is a need. Tammy asked if Tisha had talked to disciplines that already have discipline-specific advanced writing courses. Tisha said no; she imagines students who don’t have the need (because, for example, it’s already being met in their home discipline), will not register. Sarah Buchanan followed up on Lisa’s question and asked if it should be listed as a Humanities course instead of an English course. Then non-English faculty could teach it. Tisha said she had thought about listing it as Interdisciplinary Studies before settling on English. Her concern with listing it as Humanities is that it should be more interdisciplinary/interdivisional than that would suggest. She ultimately chose English because this is where a lot of students expect to find writing classes. Jimmy asked Michael how it will affect WLA offerings, and he asked Tisha how it will affect her course load. Tisha

said it would likely replace the English IC course that she has been teaching (and that is easily replaced by other English IC courses) and that it makes sense for her to teach more upper-level writing courses like these. Michael reinforced this idea, asserting that we need to better utilize Tisha's expertise for upper-level writing. Ultimately, he added, it will strengthen our program. PG suggested trying it as an English course and then changing to a more inter-disciplinary course if that makes sense based on the students who are attracted. Tisha reported the value for students applying to medical school of actually taking a course in an English discipline.

- 1 new course called The Biographical Novel, which Michael justified as very similar to the American Biographical Novel research seminar that is already on the books but that this one allows for him to teach from a more global selection. PG asked if this would replace The American Biographical Novel or if both would be taught. Michael said "both," as he may want to do the American focus again and would like it to be available. Jimmy asked about potentially confusing prerequisite language. Does "two from 31xx and 35xx" mean 2 or 4 courses as prerequisites? Various English faculty noted that this is how the prerequisite language is written for all of our 4000-level courses, and that students understand it means two (but the language may be worth revising!). [*Post-meeting clarification: The current language for English 4000-level courses actually reads "two from 31xx-35xx," which is clearer*]. MEB returned to PG's question and asked if students could take both courses and get credit for both or if they are too similar for that to be okay. Michael explained that, since a faculty member only teaches a seminar every two years, that situation will not likely arise.

(3) Sarah Buchanan, French:

ECAS forms included:

- Three different types of changes, which Sarah summarized. Tammy is changing the credit load for all of her electives to "2-4 credits" in order to give herself greater flexibility based on teaching load in a given semester. Prerequisites have been revised and updated. Additionally, editorial changes have been made to better reflect content and when courses are actually offered. French titles will become English titles. MEB raised a concern about the variance in the credit numbers (2-4), since students will have no way to predict the credits to be received for a course. Tammy explained that an internally published schedule within French gives students a heads-up on this. MEB remained concerned about the lack of predictability, since some majors are advised by non-French faculty who might not know the internal discipline information. How does this work inside the Grad Planner, for example? Sarah explained, noting that flexibility *is* worked in, and said this credit range will make more sense later this semester when we see the French PCAS revisions. Lisa noted that the credit range is not new and that many French courses are already listed in this way. Tammy added that by the time students are thinking

about the cluster electives, the faculty have already had them in other classes and have done informal advising on these kinds of things, so all students *will indeed know* about the requirements and credit options. MEB explained her concern that there still might be a few (such as transfer students) to slip through without having the necessary information. PG asked if these courses are only for majors. Tammy said non-majors and/or minors *can* take them. Also, the credit load will be listed in the class schedule for a given semester. Tammy said that since the courses that are pre-requisites for *these* courses are required on this campus, there should not be a problem with keeping students informed. PG asked for Lisa to share the examples she mentioned so that she has them handy when she goes to Curriculum Committee. Barbara asked if a particular course was or was linked to the July in Paris course, and Tammy said no. MEB asked if we could vote on this particularly ECAS change (the 2-4 credit issue) separately from all of the other ECAS changes.

(4) Mark Collier, Philosophy:
ECAS forms included:

- One new course called The Meaning of Life, an IC course that Lory Lemke is teaching this semester.

Pieranna then called for a vote on all ECAS changes except for 2-4 credit change for French. The Hum ECAS changes were approved.

Discussion about the French discipline credit range resumed, as Tammy explained that, since students usually do more than four credits in a cluster, they usually end up with more credits than they need, making it highly unlikely that confusion re: credits will end up with students not meeting the minimum requirement. Sarah again noted that some courses already have a 2-4 credit range. She is changing hers to 4 credits because that works best for her, but Lisa and Tammy prefer the range. She assured everyone that it *does* work in the way the major is structured. Lisa further explained that this also works better with the upper-level courses now being taught as 2 credits. Jess Larson asked if any would ever be 3 credits. Lisa said not here but sometimes in France, so they want to allow for 3-credit courses that get transferred in from France. Sarah said they *have* comped the extra credits if students come up one credit short, as Jess explained Studio Art does, but that they want to make their policy more explicit now. Jess wondered if this was unnecessarily complicated. Sarah said it is not more complicated, in her opinion, and that it affects *many* students so is really important. Jess thinks 2 *or* 4 makes more sense than 2-4. Sarah asked if PCAS would allow for 2 or 4, but that was uncertain. Pieranna is concerned about how Curriculum Committee will receive this information. Sarah said she would be happy to provide a document that fully explains the policy. Tammy said there are probably other ways to address the issue if this is what the Humanities Division prefers. Pieranna suggested that Tammy, Lisa, and Sarah discuss a solution and then then advise Jayne on what to do.

With the promise from the French discipline that they will figure out a way to address the concerns raised, Pieranna asked for a vote on this last ECAS proposal. The proposal was approved with one “opposed” vote.

American Indian Studies Update:

PG explained that the name for American Indian Studies will change to Native American and Indigenous Studies. Furthermore, although the budget for this discipline has been moved into Humanities, it is still an interdisciplinary studies program under the direct supervision of the Academic Dean.

Language General Education Proposal Update:

PG provided an update on the proposal, which was discussed and voted on by Curriculum Committee in May. The vote was: 7 in favor, 1 opposed, & 2 abstained. Thus the proposal passed, with the expectation that the language will be amended as discussed, and will be presented at Assembly this fall.

Tammy further explained that the original proposal required two semesters of language at any level and that this idea was seen as incompatible with UMM culture and practice. So the compromise was simply to raise the bar for minimum language skill from 1002 to 2002, which does not necessarily imply 4 semesters of coursework. About 42% of our students will still take 1001 and 1002, and that will be their requirement. Students testing into 1002 will have to take two semesters. Barbara asked if every language has a 2nd-year offering. Tammy said informally, yes. There are a suite of formal 1-year courses, and all instructors offer a 2nd year via directed study. But the scenario in which students would actually need this does not really happen, since most students who take those particular languages do not already come in with experience in those languages. The only languages that do not have a 2nd year are Latin, Italian, and ASL. Jess asked who is paying for the courses that are being taught as directed studies. Viktor Berberi explained how Chinese is covered. Jess said she is concerned that we're creating a requirement that requires faculty to teach free courses. Viktor responded that we are not obliged to provide a second year in all the languages. If we do not have a course already, we are not going to add it. Sarah said there are also other options for getting those courses (study abroad, Twin Cities, community colleges, etc.). Students are not locked into a particular language, either. MEB has concerns about how we are going to sell this on the floor of assembly and agreed with the concern raised by Jess. She argued that we should not *sell* a program by saying faculty will teach "freebie" courses, nor should we sell it by saying they can fulfill *our* requirement elsewhere (i.e. community colleges). Sarah stressed that no one is being forced to do a directed study, and the number of students we are talking about is nearly zero (1 in 5 years). Janet agreed that these practices are already in place. Sarah asked that faculty help address rumors about the language proposal if they hear them: 1st, this is coming from the Languages, not from Bart. 2nd, this is not a grab for resources by the Languages but an attempt to get our students to a proficiency level adequate to a Liberal Arts education. Tammy returned to the concern about more advanced language courses, explaining that alternatives *are* feasible within the resources we have. Furthermore, she said, even though we are still only requiring 8 credits (a single year of language), a 2002 threshold has a lot more credibility. Jess asked what would happen if a student came with a language not offered on campus. Would the student have to start over? Tammy said only if they do not meet the proficiency level in that program. Tammy reiterated that the *only* thing the proposal changes is a 2002

threshold instead of a 1002 threshold. Sarah explained the 3 ways students can meet the language requirement.

PG asked that Humanities faculty attend Assembly when the proposal is to be discussed.

Tammy asked that faculty speak up at Assembly if they support the proposal, since resistance is often articulated far more than support.

Query Re: Electing Representatives to Constitutional Committees Division-by-Division:

PG explained that Membership Committee has asked divisions to discuss how they would feel about changing the way representatives are selected for Constitution committees (Scholastic, Planning, Faculty Development, Finance, etc.), specifically by having divisions put forward a slate of candidates rather than have Membership select individuals from all divisions. PG simply needs feedback from the division so that she can forward it to Membership.

Sarah explained how challenging the Membership Committee task was when she was on that committee.

Julie Eckerle was curious about where this initiative was coming from, since Jacquie Johnson has made clear her preference for elected rather than appointed committee representatives.

Brad Miller said that he is a new member of Membership Committee but that they have not met yet. So he knows nothing about this issue but will happily share feedback from the division.

Viktor asked if Membership is asking us to vote as a Division?

Jess pointed to a gender problem and asked if, instead, a division could suggest a *pool* of Constitutionally available people that Membership could then pick from.

PG wondered if individuals might actually volunteer.

Barbara explained that Membership Committee can ask for slates of people willing to serve but that, unless we re-write the Constitution, we cannot vote (this in response to Viktor's question).

Julie suggested that this proposal would simply shift the awkwardness of individuals having to respond to service requests to the division-level, when it might be even more uncomfortable for individuals so inclined to say "no."

MEB wondered what the constitutional-amendment review committee might say. She *does* think that FacPa needs to be elected.

PG pointed out that most of the comments so far are negative. She asked if anyone supports the idea.

Tammy said that there are too many competing priorities for staffing committees for us to actually decide. But there have been some odd committee compositions. Also, she pointed out that it seems that some divisions are much clearer about who does what / when and who is going to be chair of a committee, etc. The Humanities Division loses some opportunities for input as a result. So she is generally in favor.

Jess suggested that it is sometimes useful to be appointed to a committee because you often do not know that you will like it until you're on it.

PG particularly recommended that individuals volunteer to be on Finance, as she has found it very helpful to understand more about that aspect of campus.

She also agreed with Tammy that other Divisions *do* talk about populating committees in very systematic ways.

Sarah suggested that one does not exclude the other—that having strategic discussions could be useful but that we do not have to have elections.

PG brought the discussion to a close by suggesting that this could be a new task for the next Division Chair.

Chancellor Search Update:

Sarah, who is on the Chancellor Search Committee, said that they have an excellent pool of candidates, she is optimistic about the search, everything is moving on schedule, and candidates will be brought to campus in mid-October to early November.

Minutes Recorded by Julie Eckerle