

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Academic Standards
November 8, 2013, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm
Gerberding 142

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Call to Order
 2. Review of the Minutes from October 25, 2013
 3. SCAP Report
 - a. Consent Agenda (Routine Actions)
 - b. Non-routine Actions
 4. Chair's Report
 5. Developments with the Integrated Social Sciences Degree Completion Program
 6. FCAS Guidelines for New and Online Major and Degree Proposals: Planning for Future Reviews
 7. Discussion of the Integrated Social Sciences Degree Completion Program
 8. Adjourn
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1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kramer at 1:30 p.m.

2) Review of Minutes from October 25, 2013

The minutes from October 25, 2013 were approved as amended.

3) SCAP Report [Exhibit A]

Consent Agenda (Routine Actions)

There were no items on the consent agenda.

Non-Routine Actions

Biology

Based on the response SCAP received from Biology, Taggart suggested approving the program changes. McNerney ask what the criteria are to approve this program. Traditionally, FCAS has let departments choose their admissions requirements for majors and minors as long as these requirements meet University and FCAS guidelines. When FCAS perceives potential issues, it will strongly advise departments to reconsider, but if the department persists with their proposal, then the council usually allows the proposal to move forward.

Kramer explained the approval process. Any substantive issues that are addressed by SCAP will be sent back to the department for answers. Once the department responds with acceptable answers, SCAP will approve the proposal and send it to FCAS. Once the proposal is approved by FCAS it will be forwarded to tri-campus review if large changes are being proposed within the program. The proposal then comes back to FCAS and if approved, moves to FCTCP for review.

Janice DeCosmo, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs, raised concern that this proposal addresses two separate issues; competitive majors and determining the appropriate size of majors for departments. If Biology wishes to create a competitive major it makes sense since it is following a trend many other departments are following. However, DeCosmo wanted to know the target number of competitive slots to be filled and how that number will be determined. Additionally, concern was raised whether there are enough slots for competitive majors compared to the number of students on campus.

Discussion ensued. The administration has discussed this issue and sees the possibility that the growth of new freshmen admissions could continue. Possible solutions to this problem may include balancing the growth by reducing new, upper-level students. The Provost has also looked into expanding direct entry into majors for direct freshmen, but Biology has not expressed interest in direct freshman entry. DeCosmo reiterated that the council still needs to address the total number of slots available for majors. FCAS' vote today would only determine if the requirements seem reasonable. A comment was raised that FCAS has the opportunity to send a message to Biology supporting competitive admissions, but request them to think carefully or reconsider the target number of majors at UW. Kramer explained that there has already been plenty of discussion about this issue. There is only so much which FCAS can do to regulate university-wide competitive majors. Additionally, there will be additional opportunities for discussion once this goes to tri-campus review. Discussion ensued. FCAS needs to ensure that the rules established are fair, transparent, and meet the requirements set by the university. FCAS has acknowledged that there is a trend of competitive majors, but the council needs to focus on the immediate proposal from Biology and not dwell on the larger issue. DeCosmo reiterated that FCAS needs to encourage departments to use resources appropriately for their major and this is an opportunity to comment on the problem. Kramer explained that FCAS has already commented on this issue. Ballinger stated that this concern has also been discussed by the administration and Arts & Sciences, and at some point will be able to provide alternatives to the Provost in the near future.

Kramer mentioned that FCAS set guidelines on this issue back in 2003 (from the minutes of FCAS May 2, 2003 meeting):

Guidelines For Admission Prerequisite Courses to the Major

- 1) Admission course prerequisites should be generally available to freshmen or sophomores, and should apply to general education requirements if the student is not subsequently admitted.
- 2) Admission course prerequisites should generally be available at community colleges.
- 3) Prerequisite courses for admission to the major should be at the 100 or 200 level.
- 4) No more than 20 specifically required credits should be required as admission to majors in the College of Arts and Sciences.

By reading the rules set forth from the council it appears that Biology would be in violation of the guidelines previously established by FCAS. Discussion ensued. Members expressed they disagree with these particular guidelines.

ACTION: Kramer will put a discussion of the previously-established guidelines on the agenda for a future meeting. Biology's proposal was then put to a vote. The motion received unanimous approval.

Public Health

SCAP is waiting for Public Health's response to concerns about BS science credits. Public Health wanted to approve changes that included courses embedded as program requirements, but the courses do not currently exist. Taggart clarified that the courses which are considered "core" courses of a program must be formally approved, not in a planning phase, in order to be accepted.

4) Chair's Report

Kramer attended the first enrollment task force meeting but has nothing to report at this time.

Kramer mentioned that Pengra is serving on the Provost's task force on online learning. The task force is chaired by Jim Gregory (past Faculty Senate chair) and Betsy Wilson (Vice Provost for Digital Initiatives and Dean of University Libraries).

There have been a number of conversations surrounding the implementation of the undergraduate diversity graduation requirement. Ed Taylor (Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Academic Affairs) will attend the next FCAS meeting to provide an update on the implementation committee. Several departments have already made considerable efforts in designating diversity courses while others are still in the early phases.

Kramer received an email a couple days ago from Jill Purdy (chair of the Faculty Assembly at UW-Tacoma) who said that UW-Tacoma has signed memorandums of understanding with surrounding high schools which assures admissions for students with a GPA of 2.7 and 480 on both SAT scores. UW-Tacoma faculty members were told by the administration that a faculty body on the Seattle campus established this as a minimum admission requirement. Purdy wanted to know where this decision occurred. Discussion ensued. Council members were not aware that anyone on the Seattle campus approved this proposal. Ballinger mentioned that he found out about this proposal 3 weeks ago when speaking with David Szatmary (Vice Provost for UW Educational Outreach) about the possibility in automatic admissions in a special high school-related program in the Kent School District. In discussions with Karl Smith at UW-Tacoma, it was noted that this project has been approved and Szatmary is discussing this with both UW Tacoma and Bothell. There are state standards which must be followed for such a program (CADRs). Discussion ensued about admission standards and the holistic process. UW Tacoma has been making changes in its enrollment direction and has been focusing heavily on students from Pierce County.

5) Developments with the Integrated Social Sciences Degree Completion Program

Kramer has nothing to report at this time and has not received any updates from the recent Social Science chairs' meeting.

6) FCAS Guidelines for New and Online Major and Degree Proposals: Planning for Future Reviews

Kramer discussed a recently-distributed document which outlined FCAS' policy for approving new and online major and degree proposals. FCAS is now doing the work the HEC board use to do which requires the council to think about the big picture when approving programs. A question was raised asking when these guidelines were approved. Discussion ensued. FCAS approved these guidelines in early April 2013.

7) Discussion of the Integrated Social Sciences Degree Completion Program

The 1503 will be submitted shortly and be on the agenda for the upcoming SCAP meeting. One of the concerns that have been raised is the courses which fall under this program. At this time there are several core courses that are not actual courses at this time: ISS 350, 355, 351 and the 400-level capstone course.

Hoff discussed his skepticism with the proposal based on conversations he had with chairs in Social Sciences. There does not appear to be pedagogical goals driven by faculty in this proposal. Additionally, there does not appear to be any supporting evidence that there is demand by Washington residents for this online program. There was a market-demand survey which was conducted to identify demand but does not provide any data on its findings. UW Professional Continuing Education (PCE) sent out a survey in the past but it was very broad and did not actually ask respondents if they would be willing to pay money for this online degree. In ISS pre-proposal Cambridge was listed as having a similar program, but it was not an online degree completion program that parallels this proposal. While the proposal claims there is evidence to support the demand for the program, it does not appear to be accurate based on the information provided. From further review it does not appear that other programs cited by ISS the pre-proposal are degree completion but rather interdisciplinary programs with concentrations and thematic areas.

Concern was raised about the thematic areas in the proposal. There is a lot of overlap between themes which does not indicate they are actually different. A comment was raised that ISS is trying to create a program with limited classes available. A question was raised if FCAS should determine which courses should be put into various themes based on their content at a detailed level. It was suggested to forward these questions to individual departments to receive their input if courses should fall under the themes. However, this brings up the issue of who owns the course. Discussion ensued. Faculty members develop the course but it is the department which ultimately owns it. A suggestion was made that the chair of each department review the proposal to provide feedback on what courses should fall under each theme. It would be useful to have a rationale attached for each course to explain why it falls under a particular thematic area. Additionally, it would be nice to have a set of criteria in order to properly determine where these courses fall under. ISS has proposed that they will shrink the number of thematic areas in order to clearly define the distinction between the different concentrations.

Discussion ensued. A question was raised if there is precedence in making these decisions and whether departmental curriculum committees can support the council in determining the appropriateness of the proposed thematic areas. The reasoning behind this proposal makes sense, but there is still uncertainty that the proposal has addressed the substantial issues. The Arts & Sciences curriculum committee signed off on the proposal, but it is uncertain that the proposal received a comprehensive review that addresses this issue. Discussion ensued. A suggestion was raised that the department chair should sign for their department agreeing that the placement of a course should fall under a particular theme.

A question was raised if current majors have this problem. Students in program like “Law, Society and Justice” and “Women’s Studies” take courses on their own and expected to make their own connections between coursework. This works well for students who are engaged but there is no level of control by the department. Students will emerge from the program with a major that looks well-structured but is actually a result of a disjointed experience. The real strength in any program is the engagement and facilitation of integrated thinking which is driven by the department. Discussion ensued. The interdisciplinary concept is unique by nature which allows students to learn about the world through different lenses.

Concern was raised about the scheduling of courses. This can be especially problematic with students entering programs part-time and completing all the required courses in a reasonable amount of time. Most of these courses will be offered by faculty who are getting excess compensation with a 3-year cut off period. After that faculty members have no incentive to continue offering their online courses. This issue also brings up budgetary concerns. Discussion ensued. Budgetary issues do not fall under FCAS’

jurisdiction. A comment was raised that it will still have an impact on regular teaching and ultimately influences academic standards.

A comment was raised that the proposal is very ambitious and creates a large program in a quick amount of time. A suggestion was raised that ISS begin with a couple thematic areas rather than all seven which are being proposed. It was mentioned that ISS could pilot the proposal before it starts a full-scale online degree program.

8) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Kramer at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes by Grayson Court, Faculty Council Support Analyst, gcourt@uw.edu

Present: **Faculty:** Kramer (Chair), Brock, Harrison, Hoff, Melin, Pengra, Salehi-Esfahani, Taggart
President's Designee: Ballinger
Ex-Officio Reps: Kollet, McNerney, Wensel
Guests: Robert Corbett, Jennifer Payne, Emily Leggio, Janice DeCosmo

Absent: **Faculty:** Keil (sabbatical), Cunningham, Janssen
Ex-Officio Reps: Chin Roemer

Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs (SCAP) Summary**1:30-3:00 pm****November 1, 2013****Gerberding 036****Old Non-Routine Business:**

1. **Biology - ([BIOL-20130827](#))** Revised admissions requirements and establishing a continuation policy for both the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science degrees in Biology.

Background: The Biology department is requesting to move to competitive admissions and implementing a continuation policy effective SUM/2014 as they feel unable to sustain 1700 undergraduate majors due to resources and a low level of student academic readiness to engage in an natural sciences major. The new admissions requirements would ensure students are adequately prepared to enter the major and the continuation policy will ensure they are meeting the University's Satisfactory Progress Policy.

Action Taken: 10/18/2013 - HOLD. SCAP would like the department to answer the following:

- Have they considered adding Direct Freshman admissions?
- Suggest they retain the more detailed paragraph on what will be considered in admission decisions so students don't try to only take "easy" classes.
- When are students expected to apply?
- Will current students (students admitted prior to SUM/2013 be exempted from the continuation policy?)
- Suggest a fixed time period for advising plan (1-2 quarters) and if not why not?
- Is it a 2.0 CUM in all courses applied to the major or only BIOL courses - it varies in the supporting documents?
- What happens in the scenario where a student has been on probation before and drops below a 2.0 at the end of winter quarter of their senior year, are they kicked out of the major per the only 1 probation policy?

Update: See departmental comments at end of 1503.

Action Taken: 11/01/2013 - Approve pending clarification on length of probation period (time student has to raise GPA in order to remain in the major). SCAP also recommends that the students that declare the major prior to SUM/2014 are grandfathered and not subject to the continuation policy.

Update: Per the department students have 2 quarters after major GPA falls below a 2.0. They are fine with the grandfathering.

New Routine Business

1. **Public Health - ([SPH-20130924](#))** Revised admission and program requirements for both the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in Public Health.

Background: The School wants allow NUTR 300 to count as an option for admissions, replace the current foundations courses with an integrated SPH core (courses under development), add selectives coursework in the BA and BS degrees, add 5 additional upper division elective credits, and replace the one quarter capstone with a two-quarter sequence.

Action Taken: 11/01/2013 - Hold for approval of new SPH core courses. Clarify BS science credits.

Other Business:

1. Ongoing discussion of online [Integrated Social Sciences](#) major.

NEXT MEETING: November 15, 2013