

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Academic Standards Meeting Minutes

Friday, 21 October 2005

36 Gerberding Hall

Chair Don Janssen called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Announcements, approval of agenda, revision and approval of minutes
2. SCAP
3. General Questions for 10-year Reviews by Graduate School
4. Undergraduate Distance Learning (DL) Degree Programs

1. Announcements, Agenda, Minutes

The agenda and minutes were revised and approved.

DJ: Eliminated Clarification of need for Tri-Campus Program Review from the agenda. Also added the following two housekeeping issues:

DJ: Issue 1 – *ex-officio* voting rights - I think our committee needs to extend *ex officio* members voting privileges. Not only are they informed and a great help to our committee, but also they seem to have better attendance than actual members of the committee. I would entertain a motion to give *ex officio* members voting rights.

SB: So moved.

SW: Seconded

Unanimous in favor

DJ: Issue - Regular Guests - I would also like to extend indefinite invitations to Rob, Debbie, Philip and Todd as regular guests.

CI: That sounds great, but also give them the option of dropping off the agenda if it does not match.

DJ: Absolutely. I like having the people here who can help us. Right now, Rob and Debbie, expect to be here. Philip and Todd should expect that, too.

I move that Robert, Debbie, Philip and Todd be invited as regular guests.

SB: Seconded.

Unanimous in favor

DJ: Now, concerning the minutes - Robert and I tried to edit and to fill in the context that Monica was not able to capture because we talk too quickly. If we were not able to recall the context of a particular statement, then we just cut it out.

SW: Who was selected on SCAP?

GD: I was. Brixey was on honors.

SB: Laura Newell was asking about non-FCAS members for the subcommittees.

DJ: I didn't get to that yet. I want to talk to her about that, the number of persons she needs on Honors. She has two non-FCAS persons in mind now, although one is gone for research work. I'll need to hear back from Laura if she wants four faculty total on Honors.

JN: I would like to discuss a line from the previous minutes. It is on sheet 5, second full paragraph. It reads: "Buck said that from 'reading the charge, what Jerry's

(Baldasty) group is intended to [do] is really different: it doesn't address [the] administrative structure relationship between faculty and administration,' but focuses [on] what students want out of undergraduate education." I don't believe it is just what students want.

- CI: They are seeking student input, because in the earlier process they were not included, but--you are right—it is not simply about students.
- SW: Why not just say, "will include what students want."
- RC: I tried to paraphrase in those minutes so that the charge was specifically about what the institution offers as the undergraduate experience.
- CI: There will continue to be many conversations, which will focus on improving the undergraduate experience. Another item which probably needs to be deleted is listed under "Other" as Item 2. Just following the sentence "A preliminary proposal was submitted to the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB)" it reads: "but it was rejected. Ingebritsen will remind the dean of this decision." I think we can just delete that part, unless I do need homework. Since I did not see these minutes prior to this meeting, I did not do this.
- DJ: I want to apologize. I didn't realize you (Christine) didn't get a copy of the minutes to review. My goal is to record the important things that people say in order to use for later decisions. People, when they read these minutes, need to check to make sure the context is right. Am I right--most people just skim and look for their own name?
- CI: You're probably right, but this is the first time that I have seen these minutes.
- DJ: Once again, my oversight. I'll make sure you are included on my email list. But, for the rest of you, please add significant wording or context that is not caught in note taking.
- SW: Well, I have another comment on the "Other" section. It is Item 4—what is the quote "always a book" about?
- CI: That is about the Common Book Group initiative from the President. He would like all incoming students to have a common experience, and would like that to be in the form of a common book that is sent to all freshman. *America Is In the Heart* is one of the books that we are considering, along with *Bold Spirit* and *Kite-Runner*. We are still trying to narrow it down.
- JN: I would like to follow up on "Other New Business." In the minutes it says, "Dean Ortega also asked the committee to prepare a list of concerns whenever a program is approved." Have you (turning to DJ) met with her lately?
- DJ: I have exchanged some e-mails, and my feeling is that they want us to suggest questions to them, for each department. We really need to get questions to them in Spring for next year's review.
- JN: Honestly, we just keep saying it hasn't happened, but we haven't proposed what we actually want to happen.
- DJ: Good point. But, for housekeeping reasons, we still need to approve these minutes, with the changes. **Motioned** to approve the minutes of 7 October 2005.
- GD: **Seconded.**
Unanimous in favor

2.SCAP: Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs

The following proposals were deemed "routine" by SCAP at its October 14th meeting:

1. College of Arts and Sciences – International Studies / Comparative Religion (SISCR-061405). Revised Major Requirements. “The addition of SIS 201 to the Comparative Religion core course requirement conforms to larger revisions for all major sequences in the School of International Studies. Jackson School undergraduates in all majors will be required to complete a restructured version of SIS 201 (currently titled “Introduction to Political Economy”; it will be renamed “The Making of the 21st Century”).”

2. College of Arts and Sciences – International Studies / European Studies (SISES-042805). Revised Major Requirements. “The addition of SIS 201 to the European Studies core course requirement conforms to larger revisions for all major sequences in the School of International Studies. SIS 201 will replace the existing requirement for a cross-cultural or cross-disciplinary “case study” course, so that the total number of credits required in the major still totals 60. The purpose of the case study requirements was to insure at least a minimum of focused, comparative study within the major; however, it has been the faculty’s experience that European Studies majors routinely deal with comparative issues in their other coursework. In addition, the thrust of SIS 201 (“Making of the 21st Century”) is highly comparative, if on a global rather than a European scale.”

3. College of Arts and Sciences – International Studies / European Studies (SISES-072905). Revised Minor Requirements. “The proposed change to the European Studies minor mirrors the change being concurrently proposed for the major. In the faculty’s view it would be confusing and unwieldy to maintain a frequently-changing list of “case study” courses solely for students undertaking the minor. In addition, SIS 201 will provide comparative focus for Euro Studies minors. Under the new plan, the 15 credits of Euro Studies core courses (EURO 301, SIS 201, modern European survey course) will be the same for both the major and the minor.”

4. College of Arts and Sciences – Physics (PHYSIC-081005). Revised Program Requirements for the Major in Physics. “We propose a relatively minor change in our requirements of Physics electives for the major following recent changes in the number of credits awarded for several junior level classes. Three years ago we modified two series of courses, PHYS 321, 322, and 323 (Electricity and Magnetism), and PHYS 324, 325 (Quantum Mechanics) by introducing an additional class day devoted to a tutorial/problem solving session (requested heavily by majors for several years prior to change). Concurrently, we increased the number of credits for these classes from 3 to 4. We kept the relevant overall minimum requirements the same:

Core courses: PHYS 321 and 322.

Modern Physics: either PHYS 324 or 315 (Applications of Quantum Mechanics, 3 credits).

Physics Electives: five credits of upper division courses in Physics or cognate subjects from the approved list.

The intention of the original “five credits” of upper division courses was that students take at least two additional courses beyond the minimum to receive a BS. With PHYS 323, 324, and 325 now being 4 credits “technically” students still have to take two additional courses (we have several upper division 3-credit courses and labs), but students that take one of the 4-credit courses as elective ask for the 5th credit to be waived or covered by independent study, PHYS 401, 402, 403, which we don’t allow. The “two courses of upper division Physics or cognate subjects from the approved list” reinstates the original purpose of the minimum BS in Physics. The change adds one credit to the minimum requirement for a BS in Physics, from 85 to 86 credits of Physics and Math courses (for those who take Phys 315 as requirement), or from 86 to 87 (for those who take Phys 324 as requirement). Requested change has been approved by Physics faculty.”

5. College of Arts and Sciences – Geography (GEOGRA-051805). Revised Program Requirements for the Major in Geography within the Bachelor of Arts. “1) Require both a research methods course (Geog 315, Explanation and understanding In Geography) and a

quantitative analysis course, Geog 326 (Introduction to Geographic Research). We currently officially require Geog 326, which emphasizes social science statistical analysis methods. However, we are finding that our students are ill-prepared for undergraduate research and thus created Geog 315 as a way to help students understand how to generate a researchable question, how to choose appropriate research methods, how to locate and present appropriate evidence, and how to think about the actual research of our faculty, who visit the class as well to discuss their work with the students. We have been accepting Geog 315 as a substitute for Geog 326, but feel strongly that our students need a foundational quantitative methodology course as well as a general orientation to the epistemological and methodological aspects of research raised by Geog 315. (See Appendix A for a syllabus for Geog 315). 2) Eliminate a currently-required entry tutorial for all new majors (Geog 397). The key components of this course – helping students become familiar with the research of UW Geography faculty and forming learning communities around key themes, issues and areas of study – are a part of the newly-required Geog 315, Explanation and Understanding in Geography. 3) Eliminate the current capstone requirement. We have been designating specific 400-level courses as capstones, but have found that this limited list has created enrollment bottlenecks due to irregular course scheduling. Instead, we intend to underline the importance of summative senior-year academic experiences by developing learning goals for all of our 400-level courses and benchmarking those learning goals against already-existing departmental learning goals. We feel that this will be a very important step in moving toward meaningful assessment of learning outcomes, especially since we also intend to begin to assess student learning profiles. We will continue to require at least three 400-level courses for all majors. 4) Allow 5 credits of internship (Geog 496) or independent study (Geog) 499 to apply toward the required 60 Geog credits.”

6. College of Arts and Sciences – Chemistry (CHEM-072105). Revised Program Requirements for the Major in Biochemistry within the Bachelor of Science. “Both the overall cumulative GPA and departmental GPA (all chemistry, biology, and biochemistry courses counted toward the degree) required for the biochemistry degree are 2.8. The minimum cumulative GPA requirement for the BIOC 440, 441, and 442 series is currently a 2.2. However, analysis of student grade data from this course series over the past three years has demonstrated that only those receiving a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or greater have a reasonable probability of receiving the BS in Biochemistry. Furthermore, the current individual in-major course GPA required to count toward the degree is 1.7. Again, data analysis has shown that this low standard is incongruent with the expectation that a student will obtain a 2.8 cumulative department GPA. The changes proposed here, a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 in the BIOC 440, 441, 442 series and an individual grade of 2.0 in any chemistry, biology, or biochemistry course counted toward the degree, are consistent with the GPA performance requirements for the BS in Biochemistry. These changes will allow students to assess at an earlier stage their likelihood of earning the BS in Biochemistry.”

SCAP also recommended approving the following proposal that will require tri-campus review:

College of Arts and Sciences – Earth and Space Sciences (ESS-082205). Leading to an Environmental Earth Sciences Option within the existing major in Earth and Space Sciences. “The Department of Earth and Space Sciences has a strongly interdisciplinary faculty, and the interests of our majors are correspondingly diverse. Many of our students come to our department with an expressed interest in the environment, but at present there is no clearly-defined set of courses that correspond to a degree in “environmental earth sciences”. Existing options emphasizing 1) traditional geological sciences, 2) geobiology, and 3) geophysics. These options leave too little time for environment-related classes for those students whose particular interest is either in applied geosciences (e.g. geotechnical work, remote sensing, environmental quality) or who plan to go on to graduate school in any of various interdisciplinary fields (e.g. studies of climate, marine geology, biogeochemistry). The new option in Environmental Earth Sciences provides for these students by replacing some required classes from traditional geology with other, more interdisciplinary and environment-oriented classes. It also requires a statistics

course in place of one quarter of physics, and places greater emphasis on geochemistry and geomorphology, which are the cornerstones of this field.”

SCAP also discussed a very preliminary proposal for a BA in Biochemistry to take some of the pressure off of students near graduation, some of whom are unable to make the 2.8 GPA required for graduating with a BS in Biochemistry. Consequently, they have to find other related programs that they can complete.

GD: All the proposals that were shared we deemed routine, except a couple that raised interesting issues. One raised an issue about the graduate requirements to Biochem. They were concerned with kids not graduating, since the department raised the GPA to 2.8, where before it had been 2.5. So, they proposed a BA Biochemistry major that will relieve some of the pressure on near-graduation students, who don't meet the requirements.

DJ: A change like this will still require a tri-campus review. Since a 2.8 requirement could be construed as a significant change to improve the degree's value, we should—to be safe—run this through a tri-campus review. This could alter the general balance.

GD: It is only for a particular series.

DJ: Oh. This is only for a particular series. I misunderstood. I guess it would be routine than. I thought they were raising the bar on the whole thing. But the proposed Earth and Space Option would still require a tri-campus review. I'll have to figure out how to enter it into the process.

The Diversity proposal will still be oncoming sometime, right?

RC: Yes, they are still working on revisions.

3. General Questions for 10-year Reviews by Graduate School

This portion of the meeting was deferred until after the Distance Learning discussion.

CI: Let's revisit this later; we need to give the next item the most time.

4. Undergraduate Distance Learning (DL) Degree Programs

Bill Corrigan presented a possible alternative to the current online courses offered at University of Washington, which preceded an open discussion for the members of the committee to discuss their reactions and hesitations about such a system. Most of this discussion revolved around community and the struggles of a distance-learning program to facilitate creating a viable, learning environment, where students can connect to the subject and to each other.

DJ: Starting a distance learning degree is a new beast. We are continually looking for ways to add distance learning as a new dimension. So, we have invited Susan Turner, Vice Provost David Szatmary, and Bill Corrigan to talk to us about distance learning proposals and to find out what we might be looking for and expecting in these programs.

VPDS: We have two issues today. One deals with the process to design online learning courses, and the other deals with a possible proposal for an online undergraduate degree completion program in electrical engineering. Mani Soma, the acting dean in the College of Engineering, has developed a piece of hardware which allows students to now complete experiments formerly done in a lab in an online environment at home. We have received \$260K to develop the online undergraduate degree, if the faculty in the department, College and FCAS approve. For now, we just want to know what this group would be looking

for, if it does ever get this far.

- DJ: Honestly, we don't know what is possible in distance learning. Your best assumption will be to assume that we are not familiar with any of the program.
- BC: We have been producing online courses since 1998. We are trying to figure out a better process, and our proposed solution is radical departure from our current practice. The current process results in high quality, instructionally sound materials that conform to department and University of Washington standards. We build a course in a similar way to the publishing process. E-learning content is built using a team model with stages of draft-review-revise-test-produce-test-publish for each lesson. There are problems with this approach. This Process sets up barriers between instructors and materials, and is one that doesn't match the Higher Education environment very well. Secondly, there is not enough focus on projects or activities essential for student learning. We have not kept up with the recent development in e-learning community over the past 10 years. Thirdly it is difficult to keep the course materials up-to-date in a timely fashion. One problem that is universal is frequently changing textbooks. Finally, the process is lengthy. It can take up to 12 months to produce a course after everything has been agreed upon. Our proposed solution allows the faculty to create the materials, using common office software like Microsoft Word or PowerPoint. Instructional Designers who currently spend a lot of time creating Web pages would assist by providing custom tailored templates that match desired approach to the course.. Along with this, we would like to incorporate synchronous tools for online office hours, chat tools, audio, or a sharing desktop feature. This approach would allow faculty access to material all the time. For instance, if they discover a link that doesn't work or an outdated assignment, rather than waiting for us to fix it, they can just make the change.
- SW: Is this program "Macromedia Breeze"? If it is, it is super.
- BC: Yes, it is. This solution gives the faculty more control, yet still have instructional design support. We see this improving a "Community a Learners," by using these online tools. Plus, this cuts down on the development cycle, maybe 3-4 months rather than 12. It allows incredible flexibility. Imagine an online office hour, where a student can chat with a professor about an assignment on the left (referring to the handout with a freeze frame of a potential online office hour). Yet, on the main screen would be the student's paper, and they could go through it together. The student can control the conversation or the professor—either way. In addition, we could have webcam capability. We seek the committees input regarding this proposed development model If courses were to come to this body, what are you looking for? What are your hesitations?
- CI: One of our concerns over undergraduate education is building community. With DL degrees, I have hesitations about its ability to build a community. Does DL automatically imply that they would not be coming to this campus, building a traditional community? My second concern is this: how do we ensure that quality is retained? Students get engaged in a common moment, in the same area—is it the same quality in remote locations? I know that nursing is doing a similar thing—would this be appropriate to all disciplines and areas? And, how does this relate to what they are now doing with podcasting?
- DJ: I have other concerns. You mentioned templates. Templates create uniformity, which only works so long with students. For example, I know a great professor who is only here for Autumn Quarter. He put together outstanding PowerPoint

slideshows. However, while they were great for one class, students, who had him twice, tended to nod off very quickly. The presentations were too similar. I know it is difficult to actually define what is different enough to keep kids awake, but I am just concerned if someone would be doing more than one class at a time.

SB: In our area, we have enormous interactivity, but students tend to numb out after a certain amount of time. The implicit order has to change; otherwise, students start to slip. There is a fundamental need to not have vision fixed for so long. They get numb.

CI: Yes. I know the look. My son gets it after 40 minutes of videogames.

BC: Of course. These are valid concerns. We will have to incorporate usability testing while we develop the course. Templates are to help someone get going, not to be used as an end. They are not meant to limit, but to help. Our plan is to have many different templates to choose the most applicable. Our goal is just to get the text content going.

JN: Have you tested it with anyone yet? Is there something similar in Nursing happening right now?

BC: We are still in preliminary stages, and, for now, we are just trying to get a response, though we do have a prototype.

CI: There still remains the territoriality issue. Will the students ever meet, come together and form some kind of community, shared moment, or identity?

VPDS: First, we want to have a sense if this will work. Quality is the essential question. We, even now, have online degrees, where people never meet. The university is even talking about offering degrees in other countries—for all of these concerns, quality will be the issue.

CI: I would want to combine this technology with other types of interaction. We should go back and forth. I had a similar experience in Iceland, and I would have liked—along with the videoconferencing—to see them in person. Maybe people would benefit from an initial meeting to establish familiarity, and then they could break out.

SW: For distance learning, University of Phoenix is the leader. They are responsive and able to get remote people together. We have much to learn. They have fantastic tools to actually teach students and reach them.

VPDS: What exactly are their tools?

SW: Well, every paper goes through a web editor before it ever goes to a faculty reader. Yet, it does not just check, it tells you the reasons behind the rules. They teach for a future in information literacy. It's fantastic.

BC: We are familiar with the University of Phoenix program, and while there are impressive benefits, we still see that the faculty cannot change material; there is not much flexibility. Their goal is to be as simple as possible, and in the process, they lose flexibility. Our goal is to let faculty interact more fluidly with the design and maintenance.

SW: But they spend a lot of time in development with teachers. It is teachers who design the programs.

DJ: When we are talking about DL, and especially off-site capability for students are we also talking about offsite capability for faculty, teachers specifically faculty not being in the same area but still being able to interact remotely with other faculty in program development and modification?

VPDS: Most of the faculty will be here on campus for the proposed degree, and they will be full faculty.

DW: Is the goal to move students through at the same time? Is this to be a

- synchronous system?
- CI: We have master's degrees that are distance learning, but no more. Correct me if I am wrong, but my image is that DL degrees don't have high retention rates; people fall out quickly.
- VPDS: When we offer an online degree, we have high retention rates. Lower retention rates exist for courses not associated with a specific degree program.
- SB: How is this going to be extrapolated over time? How will this play out? How can we write letters of recommendation for students we have never met? I have followed students, literally, for 20 years. I know them. I can recommend them, but I am wondering how we, as faculty, can construction relationships with students we have never met.
- CI: This is a valid concern. Our requirements now insist that students must set foot on campus, though there are internships and other activities that take students away. However, it may get to the point that students will graduate without setting foot on this campus, and when we get there, I have reservations. Can we do this on a trial basis?
- VPDS: The proposed program is a two-year degree completion program in Electrical Engineering with an emphasis in digital signal processing.
- MT: How do you control switching from a distance-learning program to full-time?
- SW: I would control it with a signature. That's how we do it in our program. It gets expensive to keep switching between programs. I think we should just state that you cannot switch from night class to day class.
- DJ: Undergraduates seem to need that peer-support system for that first period of time that they are in a department. For example, there is an older student in my class, and he seemed to struggle relating to these kids. How will this work in a virtual community?
- BC: There are many answers to that question. Certainly the faculty play a role in helping people find ways to connect. You just need to set up a space for them to interact.
- DJ: I guess, you are proposing that the faculty would just look for lurkers in the back?
- BC: We train faculty to look for those lurkers, and how to engage them with the rest of the students.
- CI: I think there still needs to be a combo of face time and screen time. You come together and then you break out.
- VPDS: Currently, one masters degree program from the I-School does offer a similar situation. Students come together for an intense onsite summer program and then they complete coursework during the academic year via online. We also have a masters degree in Strategic Planning for Critical Infrastructures offered totally online with one of the students in Iraq.
- CI: But you can do videoconferencing and webcam; we still need a community.
- JN: Quality is difficult to define between what we want and what students want.
- CI: We don't want to miss out on the "mojo" or turning point that happens with people in a classroom.
- DJ: Jonathan, you have been given voting rights. Be aggressive. No need to raise hands and wait to be called on in this meeting.
- JL: Well, I have several concerns. Who is your target age group? Professionals? 18-22 year olds? Because our learning needs are different.
- VPDS: Our market is one that is not able to come to Seattle, and/or who have other responsibilities: family, work, etc. We may find a far more diverse group than what is on campus.

- DJ: That seems to be the group that is attracted to distance learning program, am I right?
- JL: But those who are attracted to the DL programs—would they have the technological capabilities to entertain this type of interaction?
- CI: Good point. Even more, does the degree look the same as one earned on campus?
- MT: Also, I think part of the benefit of coming on campus is that students learn sociability. There is social interaction and development that prepare students for the workforce.
- SB: We had a similar situation with some of our students. They were technologically savvy, but in the lab environment they were unable to interact. In class, they did not function well.
- RC: The “house” of UW currently does offer degrees in different ways. Bothell [and Tacoma] offer their undergraduate programs mostly in evening courses to working people.
- CI: In the end, we need to be intellectually open and work with people that think DL is “it” and remind them that this is only one place. However, we still need to keep coaching these groups and help them go through this process, so we can build a community around the UW experience. We want to develop Husky loyalty.
- VPDS: Some schools who have DL have incredible diversity among their students.
- CI: Maybe we can bring them to campus on Friday, Saturday school to build that community.
- DJ: If there some sort of pilot program existed, approval would be so much easier.
- VPDS: There are no other proposals for an online undergraduate degree, besides the Electrical Engineering degree, which still needs approval from the department faculty and the College.
- DJ: Once this gets approved, it would be easier for a second one to get approval since we would better understand undergraduate DL degrees. Before we considered a second undergraduate DL degree proposal come through, however, we’d like to see an entire cohort of students go through the first DL program. [He thanked the guests and they were able to leave.]

5. General Questions for 10-year Reviews by Graduate School

It was decided to address this at another time after Dean Ingebritsen and the committee had had time to review the questions and brainstorm solutions.

- CI: Regarding these questions, I would like to have everything that exists before me. I need a copy of the questions.
- JN: I have those.
- CI: We need a fresh look.
- JN: We can work on the questions, but we also need to work on the process and relationship between this committee and graduate school council.
- CI: Let’s brainstorm questions and how to better facilitate this relationship.
- DJ: For our next meeting, I promised a ½ hour for the Undergraduate Experience Committee, who asked for our input.
- CI: I suggest that we give them an entire hour to allow for discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at (3:05 pm). *Minutes by* (l. Whitney Thompson, Office of Undergraduate Education, iwt@u.washington.edu)

Present: ***Faculty members:***

Brixey, S.
Dillon, G.
Janssen, D.
Woods, S.

Other ex officio members:

Ingebritsen, C.
Lee, J.
Nyquist, J.
Trudeau, M.

Absent: ***Faculty members***

Stygall, G.
Tripathi, A.
Montine, T.
Buck, S.
Keith, S.

Ex-officio members

Navin, M.
Richards, L.

Guests: Robert Corbett, Coordinator of New Programs, Office of Provost
Debbie Wiegand, Assistant Dean, Student Academic Affairs, Undergraduate Education
Vice Provost David Szatmary, Educational Outreach
Bill Corrigan, Director, Distance Learning Design, UW Educational Outreach
Susan S. Turner, Senior Director, UW Educational Outreach