

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Academic Standards Meeting Minutes
Friday, 27 January 2006
36 Gerberding Hall

Chair Don Janssen called the meeting to order at 1:34 pm.

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Announcements, Agenda, Minutes
2. Subcommittee Business: SCAP, Other
3. 10-year Review
4. Adjourn.

1. Announcements, Agenda, Minutes

DJ: Is there a motion to approve the minutes?
SK: **So Moved**
GD: **Seconded**
Unanimous in favor

2. Subcommittee Business: SCAP

SK: There were a series of minor changes for SCAP. We have had a back and forth correspondence over the Scandinavian Studies revision phrasing. The department has come up with a good solution. We initially thought the minimum language requirement was unclear, since it was unusual that they are allowing first-year language credit, but they seem to have worked it out. Second, we worked on the title of majors in the Slavic languages: they think they have a Russian major, but the catalog disagrees. We had a discussion over a major vs. an option.

DJ: The Diversity minor has gone through Tri-Campus review. There were two comments posted. [reads the comments]. I think the recommendation to have advisors help students cluster coursework around themes or coherence should be one of those comments entered on the database and filed away for the 10-year review.

DJ: All the comments were positive and required no follow-up. No Tri-Campus objections, so I'll go ahead and send on the form as Tri-Campus completed.

DW: I'll get the feedback to the advisors.

DJ: How do minors get reviewed?

DW: They are reviewed in the regular review process, even interdisciplinary minors have a home department.

SBR: Beyond just expediting students through the process, I think it is also vital for advisors to help students understand the logic of "clustering" courses: this will provide them an umbrella or optic to gain a better perspective on what the research they will be involved with and what it means.

DJ: Comments were posted on six of the proposed majors. Most were "as is," with some minor clarifications. Biggest themes revolved around no core focus or required credits of 45 or more credits to make it a major. The new UWT computer science proposal went up and will close on February 10. I'll look at that one. Anyone else can look at this and give me comments by next Friday. I'll post them as FCAS chair, after discussing by FCAS.

- DW: There was nothing official that said 50 credits is the min. for a major.
- DJ: Of course, UWT & UWB might not consider our rules their rules.
- SK: Another point, how is a class 10 credits? I couldn't see why one course could be 10 credits.
- JL: We do that here in upper-division Spanish courses.
- SK: Yes, but those are only offered in summer and the student can only take that one class.
- LN: We have 3-9 credit classes, so they can be taken multiple times without looking like they are repeat courses.
- SK: Seems it would be smarter to have different course numbers for repeat courses rather than variable credit hours.
- SBR: Along with these issues, I am also concerned about the wholesale cross-listing of a large number of courses. Example: several studio art classes are actually cross-listed as humanities, and even history. We all know studio classes function in a different way than a interpretive scholarship classes. Maybe the use of courses in this way is to put out the immediate curricular fires, but a culture of where every course is cross listed and means something different solely on who takes its, not on course rigor, objectives and outcomes could generate a serious problem. An extreme example of where this logic can go wrong, would be like taking a culinary course cross-listed as a pre-med surgery course because it has advanced use of knives. This is carrying the example to an extreme, but interdisciplinary is essential for a modern research university, but is good only to a certain point; there has to be core knowledge expertise in order for interdisciplinary cross over to make sense and generate new knowledge.
- RC: Does the student get to choose their course title?
- DJ: Does this contribute to the problem on campus with double majoring: if the same requirement lead to two different degrees, should we have both? We need something to differentiate the majors. What if the core for one major meets the requirements for a minor, should those two be separate?
- SK: Physics and Astronomy overlap but they are two degrees. It isn't 100 percent.
- JL: Are you trying to absorb them and turn them into options?
- DJ: I am concerned if students can take all the same classes and get different degrees.
- JL: Well, as a student LSJ/Political Science student, I am an example of that very thing. There is a lot of cross-listing; many of my fellow-students are getting another degree, while being in a lot of my same classes. I guess, I'll just ask, where is the threshold?
- SBR: The core is essential. I think we need to address it on this campus first.
- MD: I agree in some areas, but I disagree in others. If students are able to select classes wisely and pull off two majors in under 180 credits, I think they should be rewarded and not penalized.
- DJ: I guess we need to find out where the Provost wants to go with this, and that will determine our trajectory.

3. 10-Year Review

- DJ: On the handout, I bolded the questions that this group would like added to the 10-year review, and we have invited Melissa Austin to discuss the process.
- MA: Thank you. I want to give you a quick orientation on the 10-Year Review. [She goes through the handout]
- DJ: Since we deal with undergraduate academic programs, we wanted to know what

happened with them once they left us. Since we approve the programs, we naturally have questions and would like to create a mechanism that allows us to slip into the review process. During the 10-Year Review, we would like to follow-up on the questions raised during our initial review, and would like to know if we can get them included in your initial charge letter.

MA:

Absolutely.

DJ:

Learning goals are a shortcoming at this University, and a 10-year review should request those learning goals up front. As we said in our additional question to be included in the review, **“Attach a copy of program requirements with sample student pathway (or typical student course load, by quarter), along with a narrative, explaining the program.”** We thought this would be helpful for reviewers to get quickly up to speed and to assess where they are heading.

MA:

We ask for learning goals in every charge letter. It seems to parallel a document that we send out in the appendices.

DJ:

Next, we would like to see if the program changes have turned out positively and want them to keep track of the changes and their outcomes. **“What program changes occurred in the last 10 years or since the last review, and what has been the effect?”**

MA:

I have just a small concern about this one. We want to make the review forward-looking. Maybe we could rework the wording just a bit.

MN:

When Don first raised this, I thought it was an excellent question. It is less a retroactive acknowledgement, than accounting for what change was implemented and, more importantly, how it has affected the program. For example, by changing a capstone requirement, a program will have ripple effects on the faculty load, curriculum, enrollment, etc., and the effects should be considered and evaluated.

SK:

It is important to ask how the outcome has changed their trajectory and how it has influenced where they are today. Also, it is important for a program to ask how do we account for our changes? How do they affect other areas in a unit?

TM:

Retrospective questions don't seem out of place since many of the other questions seem to ask these same types of questions.

SBU:

I think another aspect of this question is asking what further changes they want to make and how will they influence future changes.

DJ:

There just needs to be more information than check off boxes.

MA:

I guarantee no one would get away with just answering “yes.”

DJ:

The other addition was **“How have you integrated this into the curriculum and how does it “enrich” the curriculum?”** and **“In what ways have you been able to involve undergraduates in educational opportunities based outside the classroom or beyond the campus? How have you integrated this into the curriculum and how does it “enrich” the curriculum?”**

SBU:

Research opportunities are already in there. But what about service learning, peer-teaching, fieldwork, internship, international programs—all dimensions are important to campus. I think we need to add a parenthesis.

DW:

Well, and how does this enrich learning goals?

DJ:

And the final **“How are you making this information available to current and prospective students?”** There also is another concern about writing in the major. General acknowledgement that there needs to be increased awareness.

SBU:

I think this general process will be helpful for units to focus and get ideas for their future.

MA:

This is intended to be a useful exercise, not just a check mark. Many complain but have come back and said how useful it was.

- DJ: Our motivation is to close the loop, since we focus on the approval of the undergraduate programs, we want to know how our initial concerns are played out.
- MA: It will be nice to all be on the same page about all undergraduate programs being reviewed.
- SBU: In the past, it has always been a little bit awkward having the graduate school review the undergraduate programs.
- MN: I think there was, in the past, a perception that the Graduate School review focused primarily on “graduate” issues and that the undergraduate aspects were somewhat incidental. Recently, I’ve noted a greater movement towards calling this the “10-year review” rather than the “graduate (school) review” -- which emphasizes a holistic approach, the inclusion of both the undergraduate and graduate aspects. That is why I inquired earlier when you mentioned that student input was being collected via the GPSS student survey, how (if at all) undergraduate input was being gathered. Particularly given the past perception that the graduate school review is focused on graduate issues, I wanted to make sure that undergrad input – and not just graduate student input – was being solicited.
- MA: This has all been very good. Just so your group knows, we have twenty new degree proposals this year. We are doing 2-3 meetings per week, so we are extremely busy.
- DJ: We would like to know when we should get our questions, which are kept on the database at the program’s approval, to you, so they can be included in a charge letter.
- MA: I’ll need to get back to you on that. I’ll first need to check with Suzanne Ortega and clarify things with her, since I am here as her representative.
- DJ: Is there a motion to adjourn?
- LN: **So Moved**
- SK: **Seconded**
Unanimous in favor

The meeting was adjourned at (3:17 pm). *Minutes by* (l. Whitney Thompson, Office of Undergraduate Education, iwt@u.washington.edu)

Present: Faculty members:

Brixey, S.
Buck, S.
Dillon, G.
Janssen, D.
Keith, S.
Newell, L.

Ex officio members:

Lee, J.
Navin, M.

Regularly invited guests:

Corbett, R.
Mildon, T.
Wiegand, D.

Special guest:

Melissa Austin, Director of Public Health Genetics, Associate Dean for
Academic Programs, Graduate School

Absent:

Faculty members:

Woods, S. (excused)

Stygall, G.

Tripathi, A.

Montine, T.

Ex-officio members:

Nyquist, J. (excused)

Trudeau, M.

Rickerson, C.