

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Academic Standards Meeting Minutes
Friday, 10 March 2006
301 Gerberding Hall

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

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Minutes & Announcements
2. Subcommittee Business: SCAP, Other
3. Degree Definition Finalization
4. Board of Deans Letter of Transmittal
5. Adjourn.

1. Minutes

The minutes for the 24 February meeting were approved by SK, and seconded by GD with no changes. The next meeting will be canceled; FCAS will reconvene on 7 April.

2. Subcommittee Business: SCAP

Proposals to be addressed by the Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs (SCAP)
March 3, 2006

Old Business:

1. **Biochemistry** — (BIOC-20060109). New Program Leading to a Bachelor of Arts in Biochemistry degree.

Background/Justification: The enrollment growth for the biochemistry degree has created two primary issues that this new degree proposal addresses. The first of these is that there are a significant number of students who wish to obtain a deep understanding of the field of biochemistry, who are seeking a broader educational experience than is practical given the extensive coursework requirements of the existing B.S. degree. To meet this need, we believe the UW should offer the proposed B. A. in Biochemistry, a degree that is less extensive in coursework compared to the B.S. thus providing students with the flexibility to study biochemistry while pursuing other interests.

The second issue arises as a result of the failure of a small number of capable students to achieve the high academic standards required to earn the B.S. in Biochemistry. At present, they are at a late stage diverted to the program that leads them to the B.A. in Chemistry. It would make far more sense for these students to complete the proposed B.A. in Biochemistry.

Action Taken: 2/17/06 - Not Routine, SCAP votes to Hold application.

2/17/06-- Debbie Wiegand to contact BIOC to discuss the possibility of having representative from BIOC come and talk to SCAP. SCAP wants definition from FCAS on what defines a BA vs. a BS.

- SCAP is interested in looking into broader possibilities for the BA in Biochemistry, such as double major, adding electives/focus in Global Health, Public Health, Bioethics, etc.

Action Taken: 3/3/06 – No new action. Keep on hold.

New Business:

1. **International Studies/Asian Studies** — (SISA-20051228). Revised Program Requirements for the Major in International Studies/Asian Studies within the Bachelor of Arts.

Background/Justification: 1) The addition of SIS 201 conforms to larger revision for all major sequences in the School of International Studies. 2) Restructure the six concentrations. 3) SISSA

200 is added as eligible civilization course for students in the South Asia concentration. 4) References to “option” are replaced with “concentration” to bring the major into compliance with current usage.

Action Taken: 3/3/2006 – Routine changes, SCAP approves pending receipt of attachments of advising sheets for concentrations (Scott to get).

2. **Program on the Environment** — (ENVIR-20051227). Revised Program Requirements for the Major in Environmental Studies within the Bachelor of Arts and Revised Requirements for the Minor in Environmental Studies.

Background/Justification: 1) Simplified degree options/tracks – We have eliminated the degree options, creating a simplified structure that maps directly to our learning goals and is easier for student to understand and navigate. 2) Improved foundational content – We have added new foundational requirements in Earth Systems Literacy and Values and Culture, dropped Biology 116 as a n option for foundation in biological science since its content is too narrow to meet our Learning Goals, and change “Domains of Knowledge” into a streamlined “Perspectives and Experiences” set of requirements. d our quantitative requirement. 3) New Core and 4) Simplified “matrix” – We have greatly simplified and shortened the list of approved courses for the matrix portion of our old degree, reframing the former

Action Taken: 3/3/06 - SCAP to hold application for more thorough review and the passage of ENVIR 200 & 300 currently with the Curriculum Committee. SCAP concerned about the rigidity of the 100-200-300 sequence on transfer students.

Scott to get more information from PoE.

3. **Psychology** — (PSYCH-20051213). Revised Program Requirements for the Major in Psychology within the Bachelor of Arts.

Background/Justification: We propose adding a specialized experience in Psychology requirement to the BA degree. This requirement would parallel but differ from the specialized experience requirement we already have in place for the BS in psychology. We would accept other appropriate UW specialized experience activities for the BA from an approved list available in the Psychology Advising Office and/or approved on a case-by-case basis.

Action Taken: 3/3/06 – Routine changes – SCAP recommends approval and forwards to FCAS.

Don Janssen will tentatively invite Phil Reid to respond to the Biochemistry during the FCAS meeting, April 7. Christine Ingebritsen will find out how Biology feels about this Biochemistry major. There was discussion over whether this BA in Biochemistry is a stand-alone major, or just a watered-down BS. The Baltic Minor has undergone Tri-campus Review. The comments were generally very positive, yet FCAS would like Terje Leiren, chair, to respond to posted comments and follow-up on several concerns.

3. Degree Definition Finalization

Steve Brixey and Robert Corbett revised. Following is the final working document that was sent to the Board of Deans. In the final discussions surrounding these definitions, the committee discussed making sure that the definition was not geared toward a specific discipline, or that BA is not specifically geared toward a career in mind. However, the BS is often more specialized than the BA and often the BS is a pre-requisite for certain advanced study programs. Robert Corbett will incorporate these changes and email onto Whitney, so she can distribute to the group.

Types of University Degrees

The totality of a university education including general education requirements, the student’s major and any elective courses required to fulfill the credit requirement is known as a “degree.” General education requirements may also be known as “distribution requirements” or “core requirements.” Traditionally,

these courses introduce students to the variety of disciplines at the university including the arts and humanities, mathematics, social science, and natural sciences. (Most major universities require competency in a second language and introductory courses in college composition.) Pedagogically, these courses are meant to introduce students to variety of ways that society, culture and nature (and their interactions) are studied at the university including: the understanding of human culture, art, and artifacts through the analysis of ideas and texts; appreciation of art and cultural products through concepts of beauty, symmetry and expression; understanding society and culture empirically through quantitative and conceptual analysis; understanding nature through appreciation, experiment, and theoretical frames of reference. While these skills traditionally have been taught in basic disciplines such as literature, history and chemistry, the growth of interdisciplinary approaches at the university and the rise of teaching through application have lead to the extension of the general education into professional disciplines.

Universities award various different *types* of degrees, which are referred to through *degree titles* including the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), the Bachelor of Science (B.S.), the Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.), the Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering (B.S.E.E.), Bachelor of Nursing (B.S.N.), etc. While the bachelor degree in general represents a university education in ensemble, the degree titles specify the nature of that education. (Majors specify the focus of a university education, but do not appear in the formal title. At the University of Washington, only the degree title appears on the diploma.) Programs leading to professional degrees in such fields as nursing, engineering and fine arts include the focus of the education in the degree title and typically are restrictive in content. Broadly speaking, while Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science are less restrictive, they also differ as to degree of specialization. Here follows working definitions of the BA and BS.

Bachelor of Arts degree: The Bachelor of Arts degree usually indicates a liberal arts education and is most often awarded to students pursuing majors in the arts, humanities and social sciences. It is typically the most flexible of university degrees, as most majors within it do not require extensive pre-requisite courses. The major, while providing the specialization required of all degrees, allows students to choose among options. Accordingly, research is defined broadly and, to some degree, may be defined by the student. Broadly speaking, the goals of the BA are to acquaint the student with a discipline and to instill in them the skills to pursue that discipline on their own.

Philosophically, the BA aims to provide a student a broad undergraduate education. Depending upon whether the BA's elective component is restricted to the major or not, it may be used to add strength to the major, to complement the general education, or to explore and develop personal interests, as well as to qualify for advanced study in the major or an associated field. Through its combination of specialized study and flexible exploration of the university, the BA provides a critical foundation of skills and knowledge useful in any career.

Bachelor of Science degree: The Bachelor of Science degree, like the Bachelor of Arts, emphasizes a broad selection from the disciplines of the university. However, the Bachelor of Science degree is often more specialized than the Bachelor of Arts degree. While including the same survey of university disciplines in its general education requirements, the Bachelor of Science often also requires prerequisite courses for entry into a major. Majors within the Bachelor of Science will typically require more specific credits and the courses for the degree will often be more directly aligned, so there is less flexibility. Programs leading to a BS generally have more quantitative and mathematical requirements, while the programs involve a high level of interdependence of required courses and consequently incorporate sequential studies. Research within the major will often require prescribed methods such as laboratory study or fieldwork.

Philosophically, BS degree programs provide for a specialized and research-oriented undergraduate education; practically, the students will often be considering graduate study or careers in specific fields that require the use of experimentation and the application of scientific principles and facts in solving problems; understanding of the critical role of mathematical reasoning; analysis and techniques in comprehending problems in the natural or social sciences. However, while "science" in the title makes it appear that the degree is awarded for achievement in the natural sciences, what it truly connotes is the amount of specialization.

Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in Natural and Social Sciences: When a program offers both a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Science, the distinction between the two programs often between one that offers specialist training in the field with curricular flexibility for the student (the BA) and an integrated, research-oriented program, often with more quantitative requirements (the BS). Often the BS is specifically tailored for students who plan careers in the field, while the BA provides a more generalized university education, but also equips them to work in allied fields. In some cases, a BA will also require a specialized or experiential component, since the practice of a field may occur in many other places besides a laboratory.

4. Board of Deans Letter of Transmittal

Janssen has been working on a letter of transmittal to relay these definitions to the next Board of Deans meeting for their review. Generally, FCAS agreed that the Deans might want to know the background behind crafting these definitions: why was this necessary and what will this mean for future BA and BS proposals. Christine Ingebritsen would be on hand to answer those questions, and asked the Robert prepare a brief summary of the reasoning behind FCAS's actions. Janssen will send over revised transmittal letter to Whitney to send out to the group. After Board of Deans feedback, FCAS would like to make these definitions available on the 1503 page to serve as guidelines for future proposals.

March 10, 2006

To: Dean Patricia W. Wahl, Chair, Board of Deans
Box 357230

From Don Janssen, Chair, Faculty Council on Academic Standards

Subject: Degree Definitions

The Faculty Council on Academic Standards (FCAS) approves new and modified degree program proposals on behalf of the entire Seattle Faculty of the University of Washington. We make every effort to work with the units proposing new or modified programs in order to create a degree program that is in the best interests of the proposing unit, the students, and the University. Occasionally our discussions include whether the type of degree proposed is appropriate. These discussions usually relate to the BA and BS degrees.

FCAS recently searched University documents in an attempt to get clear definitions for BA and BS degrees to guide our program-related discussions. We were surprised to discover that not only does the University have no definitions, but also that the Higher Education Coordinating Board for the State of Washington doesn't define the degrees either. FCAS decided, therefore, that working definitions of the BA and BS degrees (at a minimum) should be developed as guidelines for both our discussions and for units proposing new or modified degree programs. We do not intend these definitions to be rigid, static rules in the ever-changing world of higher education, but rather working guidelines that can help all involved in differentiating among the different types of degrees. We are especially concerned that the working definitions show these degrees to be different, while of the same value. We occasionally see proposals for a new BA degree in the same field as an existing BS degree that makes the BA look like a less rigorous degree, rather than a different but equal degree in the same field.

I have attached our most recent revisions of our BA and BS degree definitions. We (FCAS) would appreciate your comments. While we have committee members from many different colleges and departments on campus (FCAS Membership List attached), we wanted your input to these definitions as well. You can either send me comments directly, or I would be happy to attend one of your meetings to answer questions and hear your discussion.

Thank you for your assistance with our work.

cc: Patricia Huling, Executive Assistant to the Provost, Box 351237

Attachments: Degree Definitions
FCAS Membership

The meeting was adjourned at 2.26 pm.

Minutes recorded by I. Whitney Thompson iwt@u.washington.edu

Present: *Faculty members:*
Buck, S., Dillon, G., Janssen, D., Keith, S.

Ex officio members:
Rickerson, C., Ingebritsen, C.

Regularly invited guests:
Corbett, R., Winslow, M, Wiegand, D.

Absent: *Faculty members:*
Brixey, S. (excused), Stygall, G. , Tripathi, A., Woods, S. (excused), Newell, L.
(excused)

Ex-officio members:
Trudeau, M., Louie, H. (excused), Lee, J. (excused), Navin, M. (excused)