

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

FACULTY COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The Faculty Council on Academic Standards met on Friday, **January 14, 2005** at 1:30 p.m. Chair Don Janssen presided.

Synopsis

1. Approval of the minutes of the December 3, 2004 FCAS meeting (see attachment).
2. Regional Biocontainment Laboratory proposal.
3. Continued discussion of upper-division credits.
4. Special Admissions Subcommittee: Interim Policy on admissions for student athletes.
5. SCAP: Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs (two routine proposals).
6. Transfer Credit Legislation passed by the Faculty Senate: Dec. 2, 2004 Senate Meeting.
7. Distance Learning Course Approval and the University Handbook.
8. Announcement: Lea Vaughn: Secretary of the Faculty: Revising section of University Handbook.
9. Early Admission Programs (to be taken up at 1/28/2005 FCAS meeting).

Approval of the minutes of the December 3, 2004 FCAS meeting

The minutes of the December 3, 2004 FCAS meeting were approved as written.

Regional Biocontainment Laboratory proposal – Don Janssen

Janssen told the council that Faculty Senate Chair Ross Heath expressed disappointment – at the January 10, 2005 Senate Executive Committee Meeting – that faculty governance was not abided by in the grant proposal process for a new DHHS/NIH biosafety level-3 Regional Biocontainment Laboratory (RBL) at the University of Washington. Ross said, “I was surprised because, despite an RFA date of 6/29/04, a letter of intent date of 11/29/04, and an application date of 12/29/04, a number of key people on campus (including members of cognizant faculty councils) were unaware, or only marginally aware, of the full implications of the proposal.” Janssen said the main point being made by Chair Heath – relevant to FCAS – was that faculty should have known about the proposal, and particularly, faculty councils should have been informed and consulted about the proposal.

Continued discussion of upper-division credits – Mariko Navin

Navin looked at 42 student transcripts with 35 or fewer upper-division credits, provided by the Department of Enrollment Services. The Interdisciplinary Visual Arts Program (IVA), for instance, stood out as the program where a number of students graduate with a minimal number of upper-division (UD) credits. The program requires only 10 credits of upper-division Art coursework, but a number of students graduated with as few as four or five UD credits in Art coursework. In a follow-up phone conversation, Judy Clark, Director of Academic Advising and Student Services in the School of Art, told Navin that these students may have been grandfathered in under the pre-2004 admissions and graduation policies. She said the School of Art has been trying to “shore up these requirements” and said that the minimal number of UD courses required of IVA majors had been recognized to be a problem in the School. She added that while the faculty in the School of Art is currently trying to address the problem, they may not regard this issue in the same way that it is perceived at the University level. Navin said that the large number of lower-division courses accumulated by students in the IVA program may reflect the interdisciplinary nature of this program where students sample a wide array of introductory courses in various areas (e.g., painting, design, ceramics, etc.) As many of these are introductory, survey or beginning courses, they are numbered at the 100-200 level. However, Navin noted that many students “take these courses right up through their senior year (without moving on to upper-division coursework), and thereby accumulate huge numbers of lower division credits.” Art History, Navin stressed, in contrast to the intro/survey/beginning Art courses, tends to offer more upper-division, content-specific topics that help students earn UD credits. Navin noted that, in many cases, Interdisciplinary Art majors “coupled their major with a minor in Art History, where they earned most of their upper-division courses.”

Navin said that students in other programs also had graduated with relatively minimal upper-division credits. Some students had taken a lot of lower-level courses, but could have taken upper-level courses. She said she was surprised by the number of students taking first-year foreign language courses (which contributes to the increased lower-division coursework and perhaps edges out UD course options). Some students take two or three different languages, thus earning 30 to 45 credits simply in first-year foreign language courses.

As for lower-level coursework, Navin said that some students accumulate greater numbers of lower-division coursework for lower-level coursework (e.g. Math 102, 107, English, etc.), but this does not explain the lack of UD coursework (except with reference to minimal UD requirements in the major).

In Sociology, Anthropology, and American Ethnic Studies, the reviewed transcripts in these majors ranged from about 15 to 25 UD coursework. In each of these areas, students took a number of 100-level introductory or survey courses in their discipline and related fields, and a series of 200-level courses in sub categories, or as an introduction to more specific areas, and the 300-400 level courses appeared to be part of this progression to more specific or advanced study, for the most part.

Finally, Navin noted points raised in the follow up conversations with Clark. First, asked if the transcripts reviewed were representative of the IVA majors, Clark confirmed that they likely were. The norm of IVA majors' enrollment in upper-division courses was expected to be approximately 10-15 credits. Clark also asked the FCAS to consider the nature and quality of the lower-division Art classes when looking at the number of lower division credits. Clark noted that many of the 100-level Art courses had a small student to faculty ratio and were very demanding. She believes that the quality of the students' experience in many of the lower-division Art courses may be more intense and rigorous than what students may experience in some (high enrollment) 300-level course across campus.

Navin told the council that she looked for patterns. "If students are taking too many lower-level courses, they might not get to upper-level courses unless there are program guidelines to do so." As a general observation, she noted that "some lower-level courses should perhaps be considered 300-level courses."

Janssen said, "If a program has a minimum of upper-division requirements, but has an organized path, that may be better." And lower-division courses with smaller enrollment, many council members suggested, may be better than lower-division "mass market courses". It was emphasized that this was a profile of "native students only". Washburn commented that the 1975 University Curriculum Policy Board's [a body that no longer exists except in the Faculty Code] definitions of upper and lower division courses had been reclaimed from the archives and said, "This information should be added to the University Handbook."

Special Admissions Subcommittee: Interim Policy on admissions for student athletes

Stygall noted that more on this issue will be addressed at the next council meeting. She said the admissions process for student athletes is difficult because, in part, "they are recruited over a longer period of time than are other students". The categories of the Special Admissions Subcommittee have been reduced to two. The Subcommittee has redefined what it is that makes athletes fit into the two categories. And there are "fixed targets" for special admission student athletes. "But the policy itself and the numbers [of special admissions] have not changed," Stygall stressed. Washburn said, "The Athletics Department agreed to accept what we proposed. We are talking to the Athletics Committee, and to Pat Dobel, Faculty Athletic Representative." Asked how many "at-risk student athletes" are affected by the interim policy, Washburn said there are about 30 at-risk student athletes that the policy concerns.

Stygall said, "We built in a lot of reviewing of these students' academic performances, and the NCAA is demanding more academically from student athletes." It was pointed out that there was no inclination to change the numbers involved in special admissions because of so many significant positions being newly filled in Athletics, including Athletic Director and several head coaching positions, football of them.

Janssen said the Special Admissions Subcommittee will pass its recommendation to FCAS, and that recommendation, if approved, will become the two-year policy. He added that the NCAA has increased the number of courses to be taken into consideration in the admissions GPA. This issue will be placed on the January 28th FCAS Agenda.

SCAP: Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs

Proposals deemed "ROUTINE" by the Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs (SCAP)

January 7, 2005 SCAP Meeting

1. College of Arts and Sciences – International Studies / Japan Studies (SISJS-111004). Revised Minor Requirements. "Adding three new courses developed by Professors Robert Pekkanen and Saadia Pekkanen, new JSIS faculty members in Japan Studies: 'Civil Society in Japan and East Asia'; 'Japanese Trade Diplomacy'; and 'Japan in the International

System'. Also adding a formerly inactive course, SISEA 242 ('Japan in the Contemporary World'), now revived and re-titled; it will be taught in rotation by several members of the Japan faculty."

2. College of Arts and Sciences – French and Italian Studies (FRENCH-083104). Minor in French Studies. "The FIS faculty voted unanimously to launch a minor in French Studies for one compelling reason: our students have been requesting this option for years and we finally decided that we should attempt to accommodate the demand. We already offer a minor in Italian Studies, so this move will also give our programs better balance.

An additional factor prompting this move was the effect of the 210 credit cap policy. A good number of students told our advisor and faculty this past year that, because of the cap, they would not be able to complete a double major with French or Italian as the #2 major. Such students could at least fit a minor into their credit limit, we are told.

It is difficult to predict enrollments in the French minor. What we expect is that fewer students will enroll as majors (we currently have 120-140 declared majors) and a good number will enroll as minors instead."

FCAS Transfer Credit Legislation passed by the Faculty Senate: December 2, 2004 – a follow-up

Washburn said, as a follow-up to the FCAS Transfer Credit Legislation passed by the Faculty Senate at its meeting on December 2, 2004, "We will be working with academic advisers. And we will notify students with 90 credits of community college work about the specifics of the legislation." It was also decided that it would be useful to include an article in the DAILY notifying students of the Transfer Credit Legislation (specifically, how the legislation will affect their credits at the UW). Washburn also said that Debbie Wiegand's office – Undergraduate Advising – will prepare an article to be sent to community colleges, so that they will be apprised of the specifics effected by the legislation.

Distance Learning Course Approval and the University Handbook – Lea Vaughn, Secretary of the Faculty

Janssen said he contacted the Registrar's Office and was told that the legislation establishing Distance Learning courses had a "grandfather" period lasting until June 2005; after June 2005, UWEO may only offer University credit courses in distance-learning format that have been designated as DL-suffix courses.

Lea Vaughn, Secretary of the Faculty, said the relevant provision in the University Handbook is Volume Four, Part III, Chapter 9, Section 3, Part D, which reads as follows:

D. UW Educational Outreach (UWEO), through its Distance Learning Program, also offers DL-suffix University credit courses to matriculated and nonmatriculated students, without regard to their relative proportions. After June 2005, UWEO may only offer University credit courses in distance-learning format that have been designated as DL-suffix courses. The provisions of subsections D.1. through D.6. shall continue to apply to non-DL-suffix distance-learning courses offered through June 2005 by UWEO, but are superseded by other *Code* provisions in application to DL-suffix courses.

1. Distance Learning courses are available to matriculated and nonmatriculated students.
2. Distance Learning offers credit courses which are a part of the University of Washington's current curriculum. The courses are listed in the Distance Learning Catalog.
3. Students may apply a maximum of 90 credits of Distance Learning coursework towards the credit requirements for graduation.
4. Grades for Distance Learning courses appear on official University of Washington transcripts but are not included in the calculations of grade-point averages.
5. Matriculated students should consult academic advisors before enrolling in a Distance Learning course.
6. Students may enroll in Distance Learning courses throughout the year and have up to 12 months from the date of registration to complete the coursework.

Vaughn said, "Anything on the books already is grandfathered through June 2005. After that, once again, all DL courses will require the DL-suffix." Though she did add that there is "a bit of a free-float."

Buck said, "A regular [classroom] course offered with DL content will not need special approval." Janssen said it was the "498 courses that brought up this issue; their content is not University-approved." He said the intent is to have higher-level scrutiny for all DL courses. Vaughn said, "Anything considered 'DL' has to go through the full approval

process.” Washburn said, “David Szatmary [Vice Provost, UW Educational Outreach] wanted all these courses (all “C” and “X” courses) converted to DL signification.”

Newell asked: “When do we call a course DL?” Buck replied: “We sidestepped defining that because of the difficulty in doing so. We thought it would be self-defining.” Vaughn said, “You have the implicit understanding that there’s a format distinction in the DL-suffix wording in the Handbook. But you do fudge the question: When does a course with Web content become a course that needs to be designated DL? You might write some kind of guidance for deans, directors, and chairs, with the provost’s signature, stipulating that departments be responsible for determining DL designation. The rationale for this is not just faculty’s responsibility; but students should be put on notice as to what they have signed up for. It is a notice of ‘fairness to students’ issue.”

Washburn said the issue of how much course content is in the classroom and how much is on the Web is a real issue for UW Bothell “because they use the Web extensively in many of their courses.” Woods said, “It would be problematic for us in Nursing, too,” though she said it is particularly the graduate courses in Nursing that are so heavily Web-oriented. Buck said, “I don’t want to define the middle, just the end-points. The middle ‘hybrids’ should go through the regular curriculum review process.” Washburn said, “What’s lost in DL format is the discussion element. There are two different outcomes from the same course, depending on whether the instructor is present – i.e., in class – or on tape.” Vaughn said, “But, *if* it’s a DL course, it must be reviewed every three years.” Washburn said, “We really haven’t changed the substantive aspects of correspondence courses through the use of the Web. Only a few of the courses submitted for DL approval are taking full advantage of the Web. Most courses are still using the same lesson plans they used as correspondence courses, and are using the Internet for lesson submission. Because most courses are offered asynchronously, students cannot discuss the course with each other, and the power of the Web is therefore not being fully exploited.”

Vaughn suggested that the council “consider sending a message to all faculty, at the end of Spring Quarter, explaining when the Distance Learning suffix must be noted.” Buck will head a subcommittee to draft the council’s statement. Laura Newell and Tim Washburn will serve on the subcommittee with Buck. He said, “I’ll bullet the issues to be addressed first.” He also observed that “for regular coursework, some Distance Learning enables students to work around work issues and other problems.”

Announcement: Lea Vaughn: Secretary of the Faculty: Revising section of University Handbook

Vaughn said, “We’re paring down the University Handbook. I’m proposing revision of the numbering of the Handbook, to make it more logical and easier to use. Rebecca Deardorff, Director of the Rules Coordination Office, will manage the Handbook.”

Early Admission Programs

Janssen said early admission programs will be an item on the Agenda for the January 28th FCAS meeting.

Next meeting

The next FCAS meeting is set for Friday, January 28, 2005, at 1:30 p.m., in 142 Gerberding Hall.

Brian Taylor
Recorder

PRESENT: *Professors* Janssen (Chair), Buck, Keith, Newell, Stygall, Tripathi and Woods;
Ex officio members Navin, Nyquist, Pitre, Richards, Siddiqui and Washburn;
Regular guest Robert Corbett, Coordinator of New Programs;
Guest Lea Vaughn, Secretary of the Faculty.

ABSENT: *Professors* Labossiere, Montine, Reusch and Simon;
Ex officio members Bridges, Trudeau and Wiegand.