

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The Faculty Council on Academic Standards met on Friday, **May 20, 2005** at 1:30 p.m. Chair Don Janssen presided.

Synopsis

1. Approval of May 20, 2005 Minutes.
2. Old Business:
 - SCAP.
 - Routine proposals.
 - Awards Subcommittee Update.
 - Other?
3. New Business.
 - Curriculum Committee – Wiegand/Mildon.
 - Planning for June 3 – Arts and Sciences: Dual Degree/Major discussion with Paul LePore.

Approval of minutes

The minutes of the May 6, 2005 FCAS meeting were approved as amended.

SCAP: Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs

Routine Proposals – May 13, 2005

1. College of Arts and Sciences – Asian Languages and Literature (ASIAN-021605). Revised Requirements for the Minor in Chinese. “The proposed changes in the minor update the listing of courses to reflect current offerings and reword the description to accord with the language in the proposal for the major.” **THIS PROPOSAL WAS DEEMED “ROUTINE” BY SCAP.**

2. College of Arts and Sciences – Asian Languages and Literature (ASIANa-021605). Revised Program Requirements for the Major in Chinese within the Bachelor of Arts. “The primary change proposed is a reorganization of the four categories of courses from which undergraduate majors are required to choose. The previous version stipulated: Language courses (50 credits), area related humanities and social science courses (25), literature courses (15), culture (5). The new version runs: Language courses (30 credits), linguistics courses (5 + 5 optional), literature courses (15, or 10 if 5 optional linguistics taken), China-related humanities and social sciences courses (25). The changes chiefly reflect a rationalization of the presentation of the requirements; substantive differences are fewer than might appear to be the case. Thus the earlier version’s “50 credits” of language courses was a misstatement that the new version remedies. The new “linguistics courses” category recognizes a course previously required but confusingly listed under “area related humanities and social science courses.” The previously required “culture” course, actually a course in Chinese history, has been folded into “China-related humanities and social sciences courses” under the new version. Other, minor changes include the removal of courses no longer taught.” **THIS PROPOSAL WAS DEEMED “ROUTINE” BY SCAP.**

3. College of Arts and Sciences – School of Music (MUSIC-011005). Leading to a Bachelor of Music degree within a major in Music Education. “The School of Music 10-year review resulted in a recommendation that the School of Music move from a five-year double degree to a four-year degree Bachelor of Music as our primary degree. The School has decided to eliminate the BA/BM option as a recognized degree track. While most of our majors currently offer a four-year Bachelor of Music (BM), Music Education had never had such an option. Thus we are proposing a four-year Bachelor of Music with a major in Music Education to bring our program in line with the new priorities of the School of Music.

“This change will have a positive impact on the competitiveness of our program. While we are highly regarded in the state, students do choose other schools based on the four- versus five-year time to degree. This change will also support UW initiatives to move students to graduation more quickly and maximize scholarship support for music students.” **THIS PROPOSAL WAS DEEMED “ROUTINE” BY SCAP.**

4. The Informatics Program proposes to offer a Freshman Direct Admission Program (FDAP) to recruit top high school students to Informatics and to the University of Washington. Applicants to UW who express an interest in the Informatics program will be considered for FDAP upon application to the UW. Applicants will be evaluated based on a careful review of qualitative and quantitative factors, including high school GPA, SAT scores, personal statement, and any additional information provided in their application file. FDAP students will be formally declared Informatics majors upon admission to the UW. Students selected for FDAP will participate in the academic and social life of the Information School, participating in courses, activities, and research opportunities as appropriate during their freshmen and sophomore years. The attached “Continuation Policy for the Informatics Major, Revised to include Freshman Direct Admissions,” (approved by faculty May 9, 2005), will apply to all majors, including FDAP students.

The number of early admission students will not exceed 10 percent of the number of majors we would admit each year. At this time, the program admits 70 students each autumn quarter. This means that a maximum of seven freshmen would enroll in the program each year. Initially, we intend to enroll even fewer (3-4) early admissions students until the level of services required can be determined.

The Information School believes that the early admission program is vital to attracting top applicants to the Informatics program and the University of Washington at large. We offer a unique program which would be highly attractive to students, and the early notification of assurance of admission into our competitive major may be a determining factor which sways the student to select the UW as the institution of choice among other desirable options. **THIS PROPOSAL WAS DEEMED “ROUTINE” BY SCAP.**

Awards Subcommittee Update – Laura Newell

Newell said this is the second year that two President’s Medals have been conferred. The President’s Transfer Medalist is a student who has transferred out of a two-year school in Washington State with a certain number of credits and with 90 credits earned at the University of Washington. The straight President’s Medalist is a student who has spent his or her entire four years at the University of Washington. The candidates’ pool is taken from the list of summa cum laude students. The transcripts of all summa cum laude students are distributed to all members of the Awards Subcommittee. The top five choices are then submitted to Tim Washburn. Another meeting is then held to discuss those candidates. About three students in each category are selected, from whom the subcommittee requests personal bio’s. “We need the bio’s,” said Newell, “to help determine the best candidates.” [This system has been in effect for three years now.] The students address issues in their bio’s given to them by the subcommittee. A final meeting is held in which the subcommittee votes to determine the most-deserving among the final candidates. Those students are the President’s Medalist and the President’s Transfer Medalist.

Newell said, “We were disappointed in this year’s candidates’ pool. The awardees of the medals were excellent candidates, but the pool of candidates overall was disappointing. Perhaps it would be best to look at other than just summa cum laude students, who often are not well-rounded. Hopefully in the future we will drop down to magna cum laude students as well.” Washburn said, “You could also lower the summa cum laude bar. Then you could still perhaps find worthy all-round summa candidates.”

Curriculum Committee – Wiegand/Mildon

Wiegand distributed a copy of the revised “New Course Application”. “This form is completed by faculty members or by an adviser,” she pointed out. “The application then goes to the College Curriculum Committee and on from there to the University Curriculum Committee. It then goes to SCAP (the Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs).”

Wiegand said, with respect to item #4 [Credits and Hours], “We want to know the total contact hours, and the outside hours. We’re looking for the goal of two hours out-of-classroom for every one hour in-classroom. As for item #4b [“If variable credit, how will the number of credits awarded be related to the amount of student effort required?”], Wiegand said, “A course may be from 1-5 credits, such as may happen in an undergraduate research course. A question there is: How does the instructor define credit?” As for item #4c [“How will students be evaluated for credit or grades?”], Wiegand asked, “Is there a well-defined approach to evaluating the student’s work?”

As to Part 5.b. [“Types of students expected”], Wiegand said, “We pay a lot of attention to this. We need to control the range of students. And it has to be appropriate for the students who are *in* it. We have different expectations for undergraduate and graduate students in the same course. Graduate students should be doing a more intensive writing assignment, or some other project, beyond what the undergraduate students are doing. We also try to see that the course is not taught in two different places at the same time.”

Wiegand noted that applicants are expected to attach a course syllabus and an outline of their proposed reading list. Woods reminded the council that the Accreditation team, when it visited the University, said the UW should have learning objectives available to students assessing a course for enrollment. Wiegand said, “We’re looking at how to incorporate that. We’re looking for assigned readings, and at what level the assigned readings are. And we’re looking at how the assigned readings are spelled out on the syllabus. We will send it back if it is not fleshed out. Another thing we’re looking at is whether or not the numbering of the course – 100, 200, 300 or 400 – is appropriate for the actual level of the course. We also watch out for ‘credit for experience’ (as would be the case for TA’s). We are interested in whether there is content related to education (i.e., for the TA’s themselves).”

Wiegand told the council that the Curriculum Committee is looking at designating courses according to field of knowledge. And it wants to see that the course description “fairly represents the content of the course”. It also wants to look closely at the prerequisites stipulated for particular courses. “There will hopefully be a work flow engine eventually,” said Wiegand. Asked whether the graduate perspective is represented on the Curriculum Committee, Wiegand said there is indeed a Graduate School representative serving on the committee.

Newell said: “Faculty have the most trouble with the ‘Justification’ category. Some faculty have several courses, many that they will never even teach. ‘Justification’ should spell out more exactly what is to be justified. Such questions as: ‘Are you expecting prerequisites?’ should be asked. I don’t think 300- and 400-level courses should be combined. 400-level courses are often made up of half or more graduate students. And a 300-level course is transitional. We’re not serving undergraduate students appropriately.” Navin said, “I concur with Laura [Newell]. We need a better ‘justification’ category.”

Janssen asked, “Shouldn’t a graduate course always be one more credit than an undergraduate course?” Washburn said, “The joint [400-500-level] courses the form refers to would have the same number of credits, but with additional work required of graduate students.”

Wiegand also distributed a copy of the “Distance Learning Course Supplement”. She noted that the online course must be equivalent to the classroom course. (Sometimes a course is only taught in the Distance Learning delivery mode.)

Mildon distributed a chart showing the number of new courses, course changes, and course drops at levels 100-800 in 2004. There were 415 new courses, with 80 at the 300-level, 118 at the 400-level, and 170 at the 500-level. There were 554 course changes, with 100 at the 300-level, 235 at the 400-level, and 174 at the 500-level. There were 133 course drops, with 25 at the 300-level, 30 at the 400-level, and 56 at the 500-level. The total for the three categories is 1102.

Mildon said, “We are not seeing as much activity at the 100-200 levels as we are at the other levels (through the 500-level; there is naturally very little activity at the 700- and 800-levels.)” Woods observed: “What is missing in this data is the number of courses that *exist* at each level. Without those numbers, we can only compare the figures in this data with each other.”

Mildon said that, of the new courses in 2004, 20 were pre-approved, and the rest went through the Curriculum Committee. The course changes went through as pre-approval much more (at the curriculum office level in each college or school). Janssen said, “We might want to recommend the possibility of a five-year time limit on new courses, with a reapproval every ten years.” Washburn said, “That issue should go to faculty, and not to the Curriculum Committee. Ask the college curriculum committees to look into that issue.” Wiegand said, “It might be best to just ask for the curriculum syllabus to be presented every five years.” Keith said, “Have the departmental curriculum committees review their own courses.” Woods informed the council that the professional schools “do that anyway: they have to”. Navin recommended incorporating a self-study into the 10-year review.”

Janssen said one possibility would be to have the council recommend that the review be done at the college level. Wiegand said the review could come from top down. “But the college curriculum committees say, ‘SCAP will get back to us, if necessary’, and don’t really review their own curriculum as closely as they might.” Newell said, “The review should be done within the department itself.” Navin said, “It is too difficult to do in a centralized way. People outside the discipline will miss too much. We review the syllabus against what is on the books.” Wiegand said, “When this is all electronic, we could have something trigger the chair of the department.”

Wiegand pointed out that, of the 415 new courses, 107 were held by the Curriculum Committee for additional questioning, and of those, only five were denied. About one-fourth [of the new courses] are thus sent back with questions to the originating department and faculty member.

Planning for June 3 – Arts and Sciences: Dual Degree/Major discussion with Paul LePore

Janssen said two main issues will be discussed with Paul LePore, Assistant Dean, Dean’s Office, Arts and Sciences, at the June 3rd FCAS meeting: Multiple degrees, and, in particular, the role of Arts and Sciences in multiple degrees; and 2) the perceived lack of rigor in some degree programs. Janssen said he will draw up a single-page summary for LePore as preparation for the meeting. The council estimated that approximately 10% of the 6,000 undergraduate degrees conferred each year are multiple degrees, and most of those [multiple] degrees are from the College of Arts and Sciences. Keith emphasized that the council wants to focus its discussion with Paul LePore on possible guidelines on multiple degrees.

Brian Taylor, Recorder

PRESENT: *Professors* Janssen (Chair), Keith, Newell and Woods;
Ex officio members Navin, Pitre, Richards, Trudeau, Washburn and Wiegand;
Regular guest Robert Corbett, Office of the Provost, Coordinator of New Programs;
Guest Todd Mildon, University Registrar, Office of the Registrar.

ABSENT: *Professors* Buck, Labossiere, Montine, Reusch, Simon, Stygall and Tripathi;
Ex officio member Bridges, Nyquist and Siddiqui.

