

CAS Faculty Meeting

Minutes

April 21, 1999

Call to order, 3:30 PM.

Dean's Report

Birthday wishes to Dell Smith.

The Dean moved that degrees be conferred to the undergraduate class of 1999. Seconded.

The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Committee Reports

AAAS

Barbara Balko proposed a change in catalog copy:

"Students may graduate with a maximum of two majors if they complete all the requirements for both majors."

Bill Randall felt the Curriculum Committee should look at the issue. This will be done by e-mail before the next meeting.

Old Business

Section VIII A of the Curriculum Committee's General Education report was under consideration. Paulette Bierzychudek felt that the language in the recommendation implied that writing clearly flows from non-science courses. After some discussion, it was moved that the first sentence be rewritten as follows:

"Just as liberally educated people have knowledge and appreciation of the humanities, creative arts, and social sciences, and have the ability to communicate clearly and effectively, so also they have..."

Bill Randall accepted the motion as friendly.

Bill Rottschaefer: proposed the following amendment to VIII, C 1 page 15:

Drop: "and even aesthetic dimensions of work in the sciences and social sciences"

Add: "philosophical, social and aesthetic dimensions of work in the natural and social sciences"

The reason provided was to broaden dimensions of scientific reasoning that can be addressed in the Category C courses of the Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning Requirement. This would include

philosophy of science, plus possibly courses from communication. Philosophy of science and logic courses use same type of reasoning.

Bill Randall judged the amendment as unfriendly; it broadens the course list beyond a quantitative requirement.

Three people supported the motion on the grounds that it in fact, did not broaden the list to non quantitative courses, but instead reinforced the desirability of including aesthetic and philosophical dimensions in QR courses. In discussion, it was argued that the Rhetoric of Science class does not fall under a quantitative heading, and that the current recommendation does not exclude philosophy of science if a case can be made. The point is to keep quantitative content.

One person opposed the motion.

Bill Rottschaefer moved his amendment and it was seconded.

The question was called and seconded, and passed by a voice vote.

The motion passed 23-19.

Bill Rottschaefer moved the following:

To Category C, page 16, Change "Quantitative Reasoning" to "Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning"

The reason provided was to make the title better fit the types of courses that fall under Category C.

The motion was seconded.

Bill Randall did not consider the amendment friendly.

One person opposed the amendment, pointing out that psychology classes which meet the QR requirement largely do not contain scientific reasoning.

The question was called and seconded, and passed by a voice vote.

The motion failed by a voice vote.

Bob Owens asked if after the list of category C classes, does the word "expect" mean "strongly recommended?"

Bill Randall stated that such a change would not be friendly, since "expect" is stronger than "strongly recommended," but not as strong as "required".

Curt Keedy pointed out that this expectation is primarily directed at math majors.

No comments were registered for sections IX, X.

For XI, Bob Owens asked why the rationale was silent on 2 of the 3 topics, speaking, and writing?

David Savage replied that the Curriculum Committee recommends a task force to address changes. So the current, inadequate catalog copy stands.

Remove the split infinitive: "to develop further."

Consideration moved to item XII. Bill Rottschaefer offered the following amendment to XII, C 2 (b), page 21:

Add: "However, the committee recognizes the significance of interdisciplinary work and the interdisciplinary nature of many of the issues addressed in a liberal arts college. Thus it urges departments, where possible and appropriate, to develop senior culminating experiences that reflect such interdisciplinary work."

The reason provided was to reflect and support the interdisciplinary character of many of the liberal arts disciplines.

After some discussion, Bill Rottschaefer changed the language and moved the following:

Add: "However, the faculty recognizes the significance of interdisciplinary work and the interdisciplinary nature of many of the issues addressed in a liberal arts college. Thus it is glad when departments, where possible and appropriate, develop senior culminating experiences that reflect such interdisciplinary work."

The motion was seconded.

One person spoke in favor of the motion as it reflected support for an emphasis on interdisciplinary work as the will of the faculty.

Two people opposed on the grounds that the amendment had no substantive content.

John Callahan, noting that the minutes would reflect support for interdisciplinary work on the part of the faculty, moved tabling the motion. Seconded.

The move to table passed by a voice vote.

After some procedural discussion, Bill Rottschaefer made the following motion:

Insert as XIII

"The faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences affirms the central importance for liberal education of a well thought out program in General education. It also recognizes the essentially interdisciplinary character of such a program. The faculty, thereby, recognizes that such a program requires the participation of faculty members from diverse disciplines. It also acknowledges that a good general education program requires the participation of faculty who are competent to teach in the various portions of that program. Thus it affirms the principle that no faculty person will be required to teach in any portion of the program for which he or she does not deem himself or herself professional competent."

The reason provided was that General Education is one of the central features of a liberal arts education. One of the features of excellent general education programs is their interdisciplinary character. Thus it seems important to affirm these features. Moreover, the quality and strength of the program depends upon having competent and committed teachers. Requiring faculty to teach material which they deem themselves unprepared to teach detracts substantially from the quality and strength of the program. Thus affirming a principle of competent and willing participation also seems important.

In discussion, it was pointed out that new faculty in the social sciences and humanities are hired with a contractual expectation that they will teach in the first year course.

Two people spoke in favor of the amendment, arguing that current practice is coercive. Two spoke against, maintaining it provided too broad a discretion to the faculty.

The question was called and seconded, and passed by a voice vote.

The motion required a 2/3 majority. The vote was 25 opposed , 17 in favor.

Dick Rohrbaugh moved the amendment be referred to the Inventing America Planning Committee and reported back to the faculty the next academic year. Seconded.

Bill Rottschafer, maintaining that this is a wider issue, requested that it be referred instead to Curriculum Committee.

Dick Rohrbaugh accepted this proposal as friendly, as did the Secoder.

John Callahan noted that we are referring the issue and not the motion itself. Can it also be referred to Academic Council as well?

Both points were accepted by Rohrbaugh and the Secoder as friendly.

It was noted that the Curriculum Committee has provided recommendations to generate more flexibility in staffing.

The question was called and seconded, and passed by a voice vote.

The motion carried by a voice vote.

Clean copies of the report were requested for the next faculty meeting

The meeting adjourned at 5:05.

Respectfully submitted, Eban Goodstein