Senate Committee on Educational Policy  
Monday, November 6, 2006

Minutes

Present:  Abbas Aminmansour (Chair), Thomas Berfield, Loren Bode, Cheston Brauer, Jo Duchene (ex officio), Phillip Geil, Joseph Goldberg, Susan Lamb, Faye Lesht (ex officio), Carol Malmgren (observer), John Marden, Keith Marshall (ex officio designee), Claire Pedersen, Laird Thompson, Kenneth Watkin, Chet Zych (ex officio)

Absent:  Avantika Gupta, David Kovacic, Kristi Kuntz (ex officio designee), Brian Pierce, Leslie Struble, Kelly Tappenden, Daniel Walsh

Guests:  Michael Corn, Director, Security Service Information, CITES; Stephen Marshak, Professor and Head, Department of Geology; Rob Olshansky, Interim Head, Urbana and Regional Planning; Mary Ramsbottom, Associate Dean, LAS Administration; Bruce Rhoads, Head, Department of Geography; Mark Roszkowski, Chair, Conference on Conduct Governance

A regular meeting of the Senate Committee on Educational Policy convened at 1:15 p.m. in Room 232 of the English Building with Chair Abbas Aminmansour presiding.

I. Approval of the Minutes

Zych suggested some editorial changes to the Minutes of October 9, 2006; they were approved as amended. The minutes of October 16, 2006 were approved as written.

II. Remarks of the Chair

Chair Aminmansour reported that the Public Hearing for the proposed formation of the School of Earth, Society, and Environment had been held last week, October 31. The minutes of the hearing are forthcoming; the hearing was also videotaped of which he will share the URL upon receipt.

Revised Student Code Section 1-404(b) — Mark Roszkowski, Chair, Conference on Conduct Governance

Professor Roszkowski reported that proposed revisions to the Student Code had started with a letter from Robert Parker, Professor of English, expressing his concerns that students can drop a class after being found to have violated academic integrity. Roszkowski distributed copies of suggested revisions to language for Code section 1-404(b): The first two sentences would remain the same. The third sentence would read: "After such written notification, the student may not drop the course, or switch the course to Credit/ No Credit status." The remainder of the existing subsection (b) would be deleted. He reported that Eve Harwood is discussing this issue with the A Deans. Ramsbottom shared her concerns pointing out that the College of LAS apparently has reported the highest indications of these incidents; an undetermined number of cases are never actually seen as some faculty members feel that the investigations take too much time. She also pointed out that many students do not fully understand the implications of this rule. Ramsbottom will confer with the A Deans Committee to finalize a draft on the proposed language.

Roszkowski also distributed copies of proposed language related to A+ grading and honors credit for the Committee’s consideration and review.

III. New Business

E-mail Security — Michael Corn, Director, Security Service Information, CITES

Mr. Corn noted that e-mail is the backbone of business; if it does happen to shut down staff is often found to be at an impasse. He reported that a lot of what his department does is compliance as they frequently run student records via e-mail; however, there are FERPA issues with student rosters or class grades and he wanted to sensitize the EPC to the issue of confidentiality. Corn said he considers SPAM a nightmare and noted that there are ways to communicate via e-mail without risk to this institution.

IV. Old Business

Review and discussion of the four Leadership proposals

EP.07.09, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Establish an Undergraduate Civic Leadership Minor in Political Science

EP.07.10, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Establish a Joint Degree Program involving the Civic Leadership Concentration, Masters of Arts in Political Science and the Juris Doctorate, College of LAS and College of LAW

EP.07.11, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Establish a Graduate Concentration in Civic Leadership within the M.A. in Political Science
EP.07.12, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences requesting the establishment of a Civic Leadership Program in Political Science

Bode gave an overview of current standings with these proposals saying he had talked with Dean Mester as to how to recognize “Fellows” in this Program, and whether or not the minor should actually be deleted. Malmgren reported that she recently drafted proposed guidelines for undergraduate students and fulfilling requirements of distinction. Marshall thought that noting departmental distinction on a transcript is a complex issue, but definitely one that needs to be addressed by the EPC. The members held a short discussion voicing concerns as to recognizing intense academic rigor on a transcript. Zych thought the College should justify the minor and revise for a broader definition. Geil shared concerns regarding retaining funding from outside benefactors. It was noted that the subcommittee chairs should schedule a meeting with the proposal sponsors regarding these concerns.

Subcommittees

Subcommittee A

EP.07.04, Proposal from the College of ACES to revise the Plant Protection Concentration in the Department of Crop Sciences  Zych referred to incorrect course offerings.

EP.07.09, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Establish an Undergraduate Civic Leadership Minor in Political Science  See above.

Subcommittee B

EP.07.10, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Establish a Joint Degree Program involving the Civic Leadership Concentration, Masters of Arts in Political Science and the Juris Doctorate, College of LAS and College of LAW  See above.

EP.07.14, Proposal from the College of Fine and Applied Arts requesting a Joint Degree Option in Master of Urban Planning  Geil noted that his biggest concern continues to be the open-ended degree concept; he questioned the 40-hour course requirement and who in the Graduate College would approve the courses. Professor Olshansky noted that the Graduate Coordinator from each program would sign-off on course work. The Chair asked that the department resubmit the proposal in Educational Policy format and that Professors Olshansky and Geil work together on addressing the issues in question. Lamb found this to be an onerous situation, and not a good prototype for a large number of students; also thought joint degrees to be difficult to administer. Malmgren thought there could be implementation problems by means of petition and individuals making judgments.

Subcommittee C

EP.07.06, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for the Formation of the School of Earth, Society and Environment  The Chair reported that a Public Hearing was held on October 31, 2006 in regard to the formation of the School of Earth, Society and Environment; however, he had not received any comments or concerns. Thompson noted that while he is not opposed to the reorganization of three small units, he was inquisitive as to why his department, Astronomy, had been left out. Professor Rhoads replied that there has been a dialogue on this issue for several years and that there is still scope for expansion with other departments. However, he did point out that with this type of reorganization, department autonomy is lost and such changes are often difficult for faculty. After a short discussion Goldberg made a motion for approval; Geil seconded the motion.

The proposal was unanimously approved to forward to the Senate.

EP.07.11, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Establish a Graduate Concentration in Civic Leadership within the M.A. in Political Science  See above.

V. Pending Items (Waiting to hear from sponsors.)

EP.06.32, Proposed guidelines for Multi-Institutional Degrees (USC OT-218), letter from Elliot R. Kaufman, Chair of University Senates Conference

Timing of mid-semester grade reports for freshmen (to be discussed in Spring 2007)

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.