

Minutes of Faculty Meeting 566 – November 3, 2010

Chair Tom Kelliher called the meeting to order at 3:33 PM in Heubeck Multipurpose Room A. Sixty-six members of the voting faculty were present.

There were no objections to the FEC recommendation to stop the regular meeting business at 4 PM to allow for a full discussion of the general education recommendations.

Approval of Minutes

As there were no objections, the minutes of the October 6, 2010 meeting were approved as distributed.

Provost's Remarks (Marc Roy)

Tom Kelliher will be the new Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs beginning in Fall 2011. Marc thanked Janine Bowen for all of her work and dedication.

Marc announced that tenure-track faculty would be receiving an email to complete the COACHE survey. The purpose of the survey is to understand how tenure-track faculty feel about various things with respect to the job climate at Goucher. All feedback is anonymous.

Marc reminded everyone that Middle States is requiring all faculty to include learning objectives in their syllabi, beginning next semester. There is value to students in having the objectives of the class clearly articulated. On the topic of syllabi, Marc reminded everyone to send their syllabi to the archives; archiving syllabi assists students after graduation, as well as providing evidence for the Middle States review.

With respect to assessment, Marc wished for us to consider how we might go about assessing whether students are learning what we want them to learn in the general education classes as part of our discussion. We need to be able to measure whether students have learned what we want them to.

Last week, President Ungar sent an email about student behavior on campus, in particular, the recent rise in alcohol poisonings and vandalism. Marc asked the faculty to take a few minutes in each class to encourage students to be safe, to look out for each other, and to engage in safe behavior because what happens outside the classroom influences the classroom. A united faculty shows the students that we care about them and what they do. In particular, it was noted from the floor that drinks combining alcohol and energy drinks are part of the problem. The drinks are so dangerous that they have been outlawed in several states, and students are not aware of the danger.

There were no questions for Marc.

Proposal for a Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Major (Mark Ingram)

On behalf of the Curriculum Committee, Mark Ingram moved that the faculty approve the proposed biochemistry and molecular biology major, and there was a second from the floor. The only question raised during the discussion was whether this new major would cause the college to incur additional costs. Judy Levin stated that the new major streamlines two separate existing concentrations, uses existing courses and staff, and will require no new resources.

The proposal passed unanimously with a voice vote.

Sabbatical Leave Policy Faculty Legislation Proposal

Tom Kelliher reminded the faculty that Faculty Legislation is the bylaws of the faculty. Any proposed changes to Faculty Legislation must go through two faculty meetings. Any major objections to the proposal will be heard today, and the matter will go back to FAC.

On behalf of FAC, Judy Levin moved that the faculty approve the proposal, as written and distributed via email. There was a second from the floor. Judy provided an overview of the proposal. The proposal arose from a technical glitch with respect to the pre-tenure leave in the fourth year. At the end of the leave, the sabbatical clock resets to zero, and twelve full time semesters of teaching are required before the next leave can be taken. The problem occurs for those faculty members who take their pre-tenure leave in the spring semester and do not get credit towards the next leave's clock for teaching in the fall semester. In the Faculty Handbook, regular faculty sabbaticals allow for "banking" of semesters. Thus, the policy for pre-tenure leaves needs to reflect that for faculty sabbaticals, and both policies need to be in Faculty Legislation (not just the Handbook).

The following questions were heard from the floor.

1. How does teaching in the summer fit into this policy?
 - a. We have only had the summer session once, so it is not clear. (Judy Levin)
 - b. Summer teaching is not full-time teaching, so it does not count towards the sabbatical clock. (Eric Singer)
2. How do ICA's count?
 - a. Separate payment for the ICA is the compensation plan.

Michael Curry noted that this was a clear and thoughtful proposal. Tom Kelliher recommended that any further discussion be postponed until the December faculty meeting. There were no objections to this recommendation.

Strategic Planning Update (LaJerne Cornish)

LaJerne announced that the Strategic Plan would be the focus of the January retreat, especially the portions that concern the academic program. The committee has been meeting in the subgroups on a weekly basis, trying to distill the next big thing. Many issues fall under the goals of the prior strategic plan; thus, since we still need to achieve these goals, they will be repeated in the new strategic plan.

The January retreat will be January 20, 2011.

Draft Proposal from the General Education Steering Committee (Sasha Dukan)

The General Education Steering Committee took on the task of revising or developing a new set of general education requirements. They were guided by the following: What works best for the students?

It is clear that the faculty are not satisfied with the current general education requirements, and we need something that is more manageable. The proposal is the best possible proposal, and the committee needs to know if this is the right direction. The committee has already received feedback from individuals and departments; however, that feedback was not incorporated into the proposal that was distributed. The feedback will either be implemented, or the committee will be in touch with the departments to ask for more input and to have further discussions.

The committee tried to follow a traditional structure and noted that there is some flexibility with respect to having divisional requirements. This proposal reduced the 15 current requirements to 12, and addresses the mission statement of the college. The language of the proposal is not polished and will be improved.

Today's discussion is about the proposal as a whole, not the individual requirements. The committee views the study abroad requirement as an important part of the general education requirements. The committee could not look at all of the aspects of the study abroad requirement and asked that today's discussion not be about study abroad. The study abroad requirement will be a discussion point at the January retreat.

Penny Cordish asked if a single course can still satisfy two requirements, and the answer was yes. Marc Roy noted that the committee looked at the requirements of the cohort institutions and other groups. Marc asked us to consider the strengths of the proposal and to discuss what might work better. Michael Curry thanked the committee for the proposal. Bob Slocum asked whether we are approving these requirements at the December meeting. Sasha Dukan stated that we were, but any individual requirements can be changed. Janet Shambaugh asked that the faculty member recording the individual group discussions note thoughts regarding the study abroad requirement.

There being no further discussion from the faculty as a whole, individual groups (by table) discussed the proposal.

Faculty Discussion of General Education Reports

Mark Ingram's Table:

1. The mathematics requirement and its place in the overall general education requirements:
 - a. The phrase "work with numbers" represents a change from the current mathematics requirement (abstract reasoning).
 - b. Would it be better for the mathematics requirement to be a part of the foundational courses that are listed at the beginning?
2. Ensure a balance of divisional representation
 - a. There are too many courses in Division I.
 - b. Students may not get the balance among their courses that we intend.
3. Engaging world in intercultural understanding requirement.
 - a. This requirement is different from the other requirements in that it does not represent a way of knowing.
 - b. It is redundant when placed with the other general education requirements, such as the human behavior requirement.
4. There is a desire to have divisional/departmental accountability for individual general education requirements.
 - a. This may help to identify the courses and how each requirement is going to be satisfied within those courses.
 - b. The interpretation of the general education requirements would be less fluid as well, especially for transfer students.
5. Students must take courses in each division to graduate.

Jack Carter's Table:

1. Generally supported the focus on a liberal arts education.
2. Students must take a course from each of the four divisions.
 - a. There was a question about how to handle courses that are cross-listed across divisions.
3. There was support for the elimination of general education requirement #7 (research gen. ed.).
4. Does it make sense to allow courses that count for the major to count for general education requirements?
 - a. The consensus was that it would be too hard to get through all of the general education requirements if they did not count.
5. The repositioning of the study abroad requirement motivated the reasoning behind the requirement better.
6. There was not strong support for Wellness 135, but we would have to know what the academic content is for the course.

7. It is, however, important to keep the activity requirement.
8. The group was in favor of the e-portfolios.

Janine Bowen's Table:

1. The current proposal was well written.
2. The group was happy to see the elimination of gen. ed. #7 (research) in this proposal.
3. The proposal clarifies the choices made in the old (current) system.
4. There was discussion of the use of electronic portfolios.
5. There was a discussion of the vetting process that will be used to determine which classes satisfy the requirements.

Janet Shope's Table:

1. There was concern expressed that students in Division I and Division II would not have to leave the division to fulfill their requirements.
2. There was a discussion about the abstract and quantitative reasoning requirement.
3. With respect to the process of selecting courses, there needs to be a list posted somewhere.
4. For the vetting process to determine which courses satisfy each requirement, someone should be responsible for each way of knowing.
5. The proposed system may become cumbersome very quickly.
6. Each way of knowing should be associated with a division versus listing all of the courses.
7. The courses need to be articulated now.
8. There is a desire to keep the system simple.

Seble Dewit's Table:

1. The conversation here mirrored that of other tables.
2. Is the mission to expose students to topics or foundational knowledge?
3. There needs to be equity among the divisional offerings.
4. Each division needs to limit the number of courses offered for each requirement.

George Delahunty's Table:

1. The group was happy with the streamlining of the requirements in the proposal.
2. The requirements should be broken down along divisional lines.
3. The assessment process for each general education requirement should be built into the vetting process for the courses that will satisfy the requirements.
4. We should consider whether Wellness and Connections would transfer to other institutions.
5. Study abroad should be a separate requirement from the engaging the world requirement.

Laura Burns' Table:

1. The new proposal is neither simple nor direct. It will become just as complex as what we have now.
2. There needs to be a refinement of the goals.
3. Divisional requirements are the best way to go. Partitioning along divisional lines is not clear in this proposal.
4. Does the study abroad requirement serve our students?
5. Is it possible to delay voting on the proposal until a later date?
6. Do we need more time to discuss the proposal?
7. Disciplinarity would be much clearer.
8. How do we make sure that the advising process is direct?
9. Are the requirements serving our students well and satisfying their educational needs?

Sasha Dukan's Table:

1. There was some concern expressed about the number of general education requirements and whether it was to be one course per requirement (or one course plus the study abroad).

2. Some discussion about how to implement the general education requirements took place.
 - a. Should it be a student-centered model where students select their courses under advisement from their adviser?
 - b. Or should it be a list of courses as we have now?
 - c. The student model would prove difficult for the adviser.
3. It is not clear if the proposal is division based or methods versus content based.
4. An interdivisional committee should be created to approve the courses that would satisfy the requirements.
5. Do we want the requirements to reflect interdisciplinary collaboration?
6. The courses listed under the engaging the world requirement are in small departments and would create a disproportionate burden on those departments.

Bob Welch's Table:

1. It was noted that there is one department with courses that satisfy three of the requirements.
2. The study abroad requirement, if it is being kept, needs to be by itself. The rest of the engaging the world requirement can be moved to the human behavior category.
3. How are decisions going to be made about the courses that will satisfy the requirements?
4. Is Frontiers still needed, or can 100 level classes satisfy this gateway course?

Matthew Hale's Table:

1. The group thought that the values of the college were articulated well.
2. The proposal is relatively simple.
3. With respect to the study abroad requirement, there is no clear documentation of the cost to the college.
4. A list of courses that satisfy each requirement needs to be provided.
 - a. Who decides what courses go on that list?
 - b. We need easy accessibility to the courses that will satisfy the requirements.
5. Divisions and divisional boundaries are artificial.
 - a. For example, a digital communications class could be considered to fulfill an art related general education requirement.
6. Wellness should no longer be a requirement.
7. A student can get away without exploring all divisions.
8. The e-portfolios are not a good idea.

Announcements

Cynthia Kicklighter announced that there would be a sustainable beer and wine night in the Gopher Hole on November 5, 2010 from 6-8 PM.

The second weekend of the production of *Animal House* will be Thursday, November 4, 2010 through Saturday, November 6, 2010.

Chair Tom Kelliher adjourned the meeting at 5:10 PM.

Gretchen A. Koch, Faculty Secretary