

Approved April 23, 2008

Executive Council
ASB 230
April 16, 2008

Members Present: Steve Rice, Susan Eisner, Irene Kuchta, Anita Stellenwerf, Amruth Kumar, Maria Vail, Marcia Sexton, Lisa Cassidy, Erin Augis, Eric Karlin, Martha Ecker, Wayne Hayes, Eric Wiener

Members Absent: Jim Morley (absent due to jury duty)

1. Transition to new curriculum-Martha Ecker

Vice Provost Ecker was invited to speak with Executive Council on the impact of the new curriculum and solicit feedback from the faculty. A report on the transition to the new curriculum will also include feedback from students. Vice Provost Ecker reported that student reaction to the new curriculum is mixed with most students confused over the experiential learning piece, mainly due to inconsistencies across courses. Members of Executive Council provided brief faculty perspectives/reactions to the new curriculum including the original goal of teaching a 3-3 load. The decreased number of required courses, 40 to 32, has restricted the ability to add needed courses, the perceived gap between 3 and 4 credit courses varies between schools, and perceptions of the rigor of some courses is also confusing. Other reactions to the new curriculum included the inconsistent use of flex time, lack of room in the class schedule, the general education core being tied to the school core, and systematic review of the transition to the new curriculum. It was pointed out that flex time and the experiential learning piece were originally intended to provide cost savings. General feedback also included the incorporation of Writing Intensive (WI) designated courses, the lack of science courses in the General Education core, and redundant requirements between General Education, the school core, and the majors. Several faculty also commented that experiential learning had always been part of their courses but suggested that there be a new way to monitor what "counts" as experiential. Overall reaction from the Executive Council was that there have been trade-offs at all levels, adequate resources are still an issues, flex time is not an adequate substitute for compensating faculty for extraordinary service, and review of the curriculum should be ongoing. A brief general discussion also included the topics of curricular issues in the area of writing skills, establishment of norms/consistency across units, estimates of the cost for a writing program, class size reduction, and online courses.

2. Proposed Master of Arts in Sustainability Studies-Wayne Hayes and Eric Wiener

Professors Hayes and Wiener brought the proposed Master of Arts in Sustainability Studies to the Executive Council in preparation of review by ARC and Faculty Assembly. Professor Hayes provided a brief history of the program development while Professor Wiener provided information on the interdisciplinary aspects of the program and the suggested modular approach to teaching courses (see also handout). Pending ARC's review, the proposal is on the agenda for the April 30 Faculty Assembly.

3. In-Service

The schedule for the May 20 In-Service:

- 9:00a Welcome

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- 9:15a-10:00a Middle States Presentation
- 10:15a-11:15a Convening Group time
- 11:15-12:00p Unit rep led discussion/Convening Groups report out to Unit Reps
- 12:00p-1:15p Lunch with Unit Rep reports
- 1:30p- Faculty Assembly

Agenda items for Faculty Assembly include: 1) Question & Answer with Provost Barnett and the Chair of the General Education Assessment Committee, 2) IPP Task Force, 3) Streamlining Task Force, 4) Mentoring, 5) Wrap-up of pending faculty business.

Action Item: Councilor Rice will reserve space for the Unit rep led discussions.

Suggestion: It was suggested that Faculty Assembly President-Elect, Eddie Saiff, be invited to co-facilitate Faculty Assembly.

Action Item: Councilors Kumar, Cassidy, Augis, and Kuchta will serve on the Streamlining Task Force along with Alex Olbrecht representing ASB. A faculty rep from CA will be announced soon.

4. Minutes

Minutes of the April 9 Executive Council were approved and will be posted.

Submitted by M. Sexton, April 18, 2008