

## **Minutes of the Educational Policies Board**

**October 15, 2007**

1. Chairperson Steve Miller called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. October 15, 2007. Roll was called and the following members were present: Chair Steve Miller, Vice Chair Steve Bachofer, Past Chair Barbara McGraw, Catherine Banbury, Ravi Bhandari, Tory Courtney, Ben Davis, Craig Johnson, Carol Lashof, Yung-Jae Lee, Joseph Lupino, Lisa Manter, Cynthia Van Gilder, Paul Zarnoth, Sue Birkenseer, Sue Fallis, Charlie Hamaker, Brother Charles Hilken, Christa Kell, and Dean Steve Woolpert. Absent was Ken Otter. Chair Miller introduced Ben Davis as the newly appointed School of Science representative on the EPB, which completes the membership of the EPB for the 2007-08 academic year.
2. Also present were: CTO Ed Biglin, Dean Tom Carter, Annalee Lamoreaux, Dean Frank Murray, and Chris Sindt.
3. Minutes of the September 17, 2007 meeting were approved as submitted by voice vote.

### **REPORTS**

4. Chairperson's Report – Chair Miller reported on following from the Provost's Council of Deans meeting:
  - Discussed the first year experience and the BOSS report. Discussion about dropping the cohort program and alternative models for first year advising. The deans and the Academic Vice Provost did not want to move forward without faculty input.
  - The academic deans will meet to develop an academic strategic plan in accordance with the BOSS report.
  - The upcoming WASC visit is scheduled for October 29-31. WASC will meet with the PRC.

#### The Grad Council of Deans meetings:

- Met with Pete Michell, Jeanne DeMatteo and Sue Hooks to discuss budget plans as well as program initiatives. Several years ago the grad programs and SEED contributed 27% of the total revenue, as opposed to 19% today. Discussed how new program initiatives could increase the overall contribution. They are expecting steady growth for graduate programs in the future, with undergraduate programs remaining stable.

#### SOLA Advisory Board met:

- Dean Woolpert reported that eleven members sit on the board to raise profiles of the school of Liberal Arts, strategic planning and fund raising.

#### The Academic Senate meeting:

- Senate met on October 4, 2007. Faculty forum on tenure to a program was reviewed. A second faculty forum is scheduled for October 24<sup>th</sup> during community time.
- A Program Closure document was submitted and briefly discussed. The document will also be discussed at the open forum.
- Jim Sauerberg reported on the faculty salary policy. SMC continues to meet the minimal goals, however not achieving the goal of meeting the median of other WCC schools.

- Discussed the President's decision with withdraw from the peer assessment portion of the U.S. News and World Report rankings. The Senate voted to send a letter to the President requesting that faculty be consulted in the future.

Other:

- Provost candidates on campus. A time is scheduled for the EPB and Senate.
- Core Curriculum Task Force – A draft of the learning goals was sent to faculty by Ellen Rigsby. The CCTF will hold a public meeting on October 17<sup>th</sup> during community time.

5. Undergraduate Policies Committee (UPC) – Vice Chair Bachofer reported that the UPC met on October 1<sup>st</sup>. The UPC accepted a name change for the Department of English (formerly the Department of English and Drama) and Psychology renumbered Psych 103 to Psych 105. Two additional items are pending: Ethnic Studies Minor and a new Art History course.

Past Chair McGraw questioned the status of the termination of the CIS Minor. She noted that last spring the EPB approved a request to remove it from the catalog, pending a review to close the program. She suggested that Vice Chair Bachofer remind Virginia Smith to submit a proposal to close the minor.

6. Graduate Policies Committee (GPC) – Chair Miller reported that the GPC met with the MS in Financial Analysis and Investment Management representatives to discuss the formal review of the program. Fast Track approval was obtained in 2004 and formal approval is pending. The GPC has requested additional documentation; the proposal will be presented at the next EPB meeting.

7. Program Review Committee (PRC) – Lisa Manter reported that the PRC met with the Environmental Science and Studies Program. The next review scheduled is the English Department Program Review.

8. Admissions and Academic Regulations Committee (AARC) - Annalee Lamoreaux reported that the AARC met on October 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss community time and Turnitin.com. The AARC is on track to distribute surveys to department chairs regarding community time at the end of the month. The AARC is planning and creating a survey to be distributed for Turnitin.com at the end of the semester. The AARC will soon send a letter to faculty requesting samples of papers not submitted to Turnitin.com.

Annalee Lamoreaux reported on the October 8<sup>th</sup> joint meeting with the UPC, Senate representative Ted Tsukahara, Vice Provost Frances Sweeney and Russ Tiberii regarding the cohort advising program. They discussed the pros and cons of the program and the concern for the need of an immediate decision regarding the continuation of the cohort program. Issues around faculty workload were discussed. Vice Chair Bachofer added that there was a concern about equity for departments with large numbers of majors and whether those faculty should be recruited for freshmen advising. The cohort program seems to have damaging effects in other areas of the curriculum. A motion on the subject appears under New Business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

9. Motion to Discontinue the Cohort Advising Program – A motion was made by Carol Lashof and seconded by Ravi Bhandari to approve the following motion to discontinue the cohort advising program.

## Proposal to Eliminate Cohort Advising in 2008

### A Brief History of the Issue

- ✓ During the 2002-2003 academic year, Saint Mary's College instituted a Cohort Advising Program (CAP) with the goals of providing more effective advising and increasing retention. In this program, faculty teaching SEM 020 (*Greek Thought*) have three roles: Instructor, academic advisor, and co-curricular event coordinator. (Currently, each cohort has a budget of \$1,000 for co-curricular events.)
- ✓ Since its inception there have been various questions about the effectiveness of this model of advising.
- ✓ Recent data suggests the CAP has not helped SMC achieve the goal of increasing retention.
- ✓ Item 1.5 of the BOSS report calls for the vice-provost for undergraduate academics, the dean of academic advising and achievement, and the AARC with providing "an assessment of undergraduate academic advising."
- ✓ Recently the Provost's Council of Deans met to discuss the issue of freshman advising and felt strongly that the faculty should have input on any plans to change the current advising structure.
- ✓ The vice-provost for undergraduate academics, the dean of academic advising and achievement, selected members of the EPB and the Academic Senate, currently serve on a task force to consider alternative models of advising.
- ✓ There is on-going discussion between the collegiate seminar office and the vice provost for undergraduate academics to eliminate the CAP starting in Fall 2008.

### Some Strengths of the Cohort Advising Program

- ✓ Students have ongoing contact with academic advisor, for at least the initial semester
- ✓ Opportunity to build cohesion through extracurricular cohort events

### Some Problems with the Cohort Advising Program

- ✓ Serious decline in number of ranked faculty willing to take part in CAP
- ✓ Lack of training of cohort advisors
- ✓ Cohort advisors did not have contact with students during Spring Term
- ✓ Role conflict: instructor, advisor, co-curricular event coordinator.

### Proposal

- ✓ To eliminate the CAP and replace it at some point before the start of the Fall 2008 semester with an advising structure that separates freshman advising and SEM 020.

Carol Lashof said she very much enjoyed her experience as a cohort advisor, but there are too many faculty commitments to allow her to volunteer. Chair Miller said he has been a cohort advisor for six years, and it is a very rewarding experience. Balancing the responsibilities of advising and teaching is complicated. The program does seem to work for the initial semester.

Dean Murray stated that it is recognized that entering students need more attention than has been provided institutionally in the past. It was initially expected that the cohort program would provide a connection between the seminar instructor and the freshmen student, however, in the second semester the students no longer have their advisor as a teacher. There is an inherent conflict with the administration of the Collegiate Seminar class relating to the time required for advising. It is difficult to get ranked faculty to teach seminar due to the cohort

advising responsibilities. Dean Murray said that due to scheduling deadlines for next year, a decision about the cohort program needs to be made soon.

There was much discussion about freshmen retention and the freshmen experience, including the disrepair of the freshmen dorms, travel courses not being open to freshmen, etc. Should advisors be volunteers, or should each department be required to provide a certain number of ranked faculty for advising?

Charles Hamaker said that 12 of the 32 cohort sections being taught this fall are being taught by ranked faculty. The Collegiate Seminar office would like to see more ranked faculty teaching seminar.

Christa Kell said she likes the cohort model. She said it is shame to terminate a program because we can't figure out how to get ranked faculty to teach it. It seems like a good model, all of the retention studies refer to relationships between faculty and students. She would like to retain the structure of faculty and student interaction around a subject matter.

Sue Fallis asked for student input. Dean Murray responded that a questionnaire was given to first year students over a three year period. There were lower returns from the spring when students were no longer in the class with the advisor. For those students that have a good experience in the first semester, it seems to continue to be a good experience. But for those students that do not bond with the instructor or advisor it seems insignificant; they do not have a strong sense of either agreeing with the program or disagreeing with the program. There are also a small number of students that dislike the program.

For the three years that the surveys were conducted, the number of freshmen leaving the college was approximately 10% per year. Suddenly over the last two years the freshmen have been leaving in greater numbers, for a wide range of reasons. The cohort program has not been successful in increasing retention.

Sue Fallis summarized her understanding that the Seminar program is not benefiting from the existence of the cohort program, in fact it is doing damage to the integrity of the Seminar program. She suggested that one must look at what the cohort program isn't doing for students, from a student perspective, in order to be able to consider a new model to replace it. What is it that is lacking in the first year experience that is not enhancing the ability to retain the students? The only reason to discontinue the program at this moment is to protect the integrity of Collegiate Seminar.

Annalee Lamoreaux said that based on the joint meeting held on October 8<sup>th</sup> retaining the cohort program did not seem to be desirable based on the impact on Collegiate Seminar. It is not feasible to devise a complete program and have it in place by next fall. One option discussed for the fall was finding faculty willing to take on freshmen advisees. Steve Bachofer added that faculty care about the curriculum and if cohort is leading to detrimental effects to Seminar, faculty would be more motivated to volunteer for a formal advising program. It was decided that the first step would be to end the cohort program and the faculty could come forward with an alternative program.

Paul Zarnoth noted that one suggestion that was offered was to require that all freshmen take My SMC course. He expressed concern that requiring yet another course for students is problematic, as that model would offer even fewer electives. He was uncomfortable with the

idea to end one program without a sense of what the new program will be. Yung-Jae Lee suggested that a proposal for a new program be submitted prior to discontinuing the current program.

Lisa Manter questioned whether it is a faculty responsibility to develop a plan for a freshmen experience/advising. Annalee Lamoreaux responded that the task force created to assess academic advising, in response to the BOSS report, included the AARC, the Dean of Academic Advising, and the Vice Provost. The task force is not only faculty.

Christa Kell attended the task force meeting, and she felt that the decision had already been made to end the cohort program. She was surprised to see the item on the agenda for EPB approval. Is it worthy of faculty's time to initiate an interim step, rather than wait and conduct a longer term plan. Brother Charles Hilken agreed that he thought the decision to terminate the cohort program had already been made. Dean Murray responded that the Vice Provost has an agreement with the Collegiate Seminar Board that it is in the best interest of Seminar to close the cohort program. However, the Vice Provost wants input from the faculty before it is finalized.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion to discontinue the cohort advising program:

Steve Miller	Yes	Craig Johnson	Abstain
Steve Bachofer	Yes	Carol Lashof	Yes
Barbara McGraw	Yes	Yung-Jae Lee	Abstain
Catherine Banbury	Yes	Joseph Lupino	Yes
Ravi Bhandari	No	Lisa Manter	Yes
Tory Courtney	Yes	Cynthia Van Gilder	Yes
Ben Davis	No	Paul Zarnoth	Abstain

The motion was approved by a vote of 9-2-3.

10. Motion for Exception to EPB Membership - Chair Miller brought the following motion forward, seconded by Past Chair McGraw, to allow Annalee Lamoreaux to become a voting member of the EPB:

**Motion to grant voting rights to the current AARC chair**

Situation: In July 2007, Annalee Lamoreaux was appointed to serve a one-year term (2007-2008) as Chairperson of the Admissions and Academic Regulations Committee (AARC). Her previous term, and the terms of all the other AARC members, expired in June 2007. During the beginning of the 2007-2008 academic year, the AARC membership was formed with three newly elected members. Because of the need to maintain some level of continuity with the important issues that this committee has been working on during the last two years, Annalee Lamoreaux agreed to continue to serve as Chairperson for 2007-2008. However, this appointment does not have voting rights.

In the past, while serving as chair of the AARC, Annalee had been appointed as the SEED representative and a voting member of the EPB. However, this year there are no longer SEED representatives to the EPB, thus, Annalee was appointed as a non-voting member to the AARC.

It is highly unusual to be the chair of an EPB subcommittee and not be able to vote on the issues brought forward to the EPB by the subcommittee you chair. To rectify this situation, I would like to make a motion to allow Annalee Lamoreaux to become an additional member of the EPB with full voting rights, in addition to her serving as Chair with full voting rights on the AARC, for the 2007-2008 academic year.

There has been precedent to allow an exception to the membership of the EPB by the 2004 vote to allow a nontenured faculty member (Chris Sindt) to become EPB chair.

The following roll call vote was taken on the motion to allow Annalee Lamoreaux to become an additional voting member on the EPB for 2007-2008:

Steve Miller	Yes	Craig Johnson	Yes
Steve Bachofer	Yes	Carol Lashof	Yes
Barbara McGraw	Yes	Yung-Jae Lee	Yes
Catherine Banbury	Yes	Joseph Lupino	Yes
Ravi Bhandari	Yes	Lisa Manter	Yes
Tory Courtney	Yes	Cynthia Van Gilder	Yes
Ben Davis	Abstain	Paul Zarnoth	Yes

The motion was approved by a vote of 13-0-1.

11. Report on Ombudsman Discussion – Past Chair McGraw reported that there has been recent discussion to create a fair and community oriented conflicts resolution policy on campus. Dean Swain, with the help of Kathyn Koo, brought David Rash, Ombudsperson from Stanford University, to SMC on October 3<sup>rd</sup> to present information on ombuds to faculty. He explained that the ombuds provides a neutral place for faculty, staff and students to talk and think through problems.

The creation of an ombuds program at SMC would address this need. Barbara McGraw stated that what is being considered is an organizational ombuds, a neutral, confidential person placed in an organization for the benefit of the entire community, including students. The ombuds offers an informal process, with complete confidentiality. It is often someone from the community. The ombuds represents neutrality, impartiality, independence, and confidentiality; not an advocate for any one party. There is evidence that this process can reduce litigation.

Barbara McGraw explained that Human Resources represents the College and does not offer a neutral model. The HR department investigates issues brought before it and represents the College. The position would be in addition to the Human Resources department.

David Rash will be invited back this spring to meet with the President's Cabinet and the Staff Council and she suggested that he be invited to meet with the EPB.

12. The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathe Michalosky  
Faculty Governance Coordinator