

Minutes of the Educational Policies Board

February 18, 2008

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Steve Miller on February 18, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. Roll was called and the following members were present: Chair Steve Miller, Vice Chair Steve Bachofer, Past Chair Barbara McGraw, Catherine Banbury, Ben Davis, Craig Johnson, Annalee Lamoreaux, Carol Lashof, Joseph Lupino, Lisa Manter, Ken Otter, Cynthia Van Gilder, Paul Zarnoth, Sue Fallis, Charles Hamaker, Brother Charles Hilken, Christa Kell, and Steve Woolpert. Absent were Tory Courtney, Yung Jae Lee, and Sue Birkenseer. (Ravi Bhandari is on medical leave and his replacement had not yet been confirmed.)

Also present were: Provost Bethami Dobkin, Dean Frank Murray, Registrar Julia Odom, Dino Pruccoli, Vice Provost Frances Sweeney, Associate Registrar Leslie Welty, and Sarah Vital.

2. Minutes of the January 28, 2008 meeting were approved with one abstention.

REPORTS

3. Chairperson's Report – Chair Miller made the following general announcements:
- Service for John Dennis to be held 2-18-08 at 6pm at St. Benedict's Church in Oakland, and a memorial service is to be held on campus during community time and a reception afterward in the soda center.
 - Those wanting to contribute to a scholarship fund in John Dennis' name should contact Dan Lewis in the Development Office at 4616
 - Scholar's reception at the library this Friday at 5:30
 - R & T election—nomination ballots to be distributed 2-19-08 asking for all nominations for the 7 positions on Tuesday, February 19th; ending Monday, February 25th. This is a deviation from the normal nominations process
 - Chair Miller introduced Provost Bethami Dobkin who attended her first EPB meeting.
 - Ravi Bhandari is out on medical leave. The CoC is working on his replacement. Academic Senate did not meet since our last EPB meeting. The next scheduled Senate meeting is on February 21st at 3pm.

Provost Council of Deans Meetings

Met on Feb 6th. It was Provost Dobkin's first meeting and she outlined several items to work on in the upcoming year:

- She is working on a system to better track allocation of resources, especially the budget line related to faculty. This should allow deans to make more informed decisions about replacing faculty and how the resources are utilized across campus.
- Provost's role in the R & T process will not change
- Provost is well aware of the need for an academic master plan and will indeed be seeking faculty input
- Several receptions are scheduled to Welcome Beth to the campus.

Grad Council of Deans Meeting

Met on February 11. Full agenda that included the following:

- Investigating the possibility of assigning a staff member responsible for designing and producing academic publications that originate with the individual schools and designed for external audiences.
- Converting course evaluations for graduate courses to a scantron-readable format by April 1. We are exploring the possibility of creating a common set of questions (that can be augmented by individual programs).
- Convening a group that includes the registrar and program directors, to look at the way we track and account for progress toward degrees of graduate students.
- Encouraging graduate faculty to try "Turnitin" for master's theses.
- Working on a "Graduate News" email for graduate faculty and program directors. Beth will author these in the short term and perhaps the GPC will take over this responsibility in the fall.
- Investigating the possibility of a graduate student portal off of the College website. The portal would first be used as a repository for existing policies (Code of Conduct, Academic Integrity, and Grievance Procedures. WASC has been asking for something like this for years and the GPC has been working on this for about a year and has collected policies from individual programs but has not inputted the information into one document that would be similar to the undergraduate catalog.

Monthly meeting with President, Provost, and Chair of the Senate

The group has not met since November, but Judy Selland is coordinating schedules and the group should meet in the next few weeks. Chair Miller said he fully intends to raise the issues discussed in the last EPB meeting about faculty input on the Academic Vision statement for the College.

4. Undergraduate Policies Committee (UPC) – Vice Chair Bachofer reported that UPC met to consider four items: 1) Clarification on a .25 credit class, 2) Anthropology major revision was approved and on the agenda for EPB, 3) Considered a motion to ensure that a librarian continue to serve on the UPC next year under the new structure, and 4) Discussed the Writing in the Disciplines proposal which has resurfaced from 2003. UPC felt that writing in the disciplines would be folded in with the Core Curriculum Task Force. The UPC is supportive of the concept, but would like to know what departments have been doing in this regard since the original proposal in 2003. The UPC is following up with Dean Woolpert regarding concerns about the business costs associated with the proposal. How can this effectively work for different departments? Lisa Manter said there has been a movement for a writing center, and it seems tied together with this proposal. Barbara McGraw said the students need a designated writing course. She also said that when the conversation began several years ago it was suggested that it replace the second English course rather than be an additional course. Vice Chair Bachofer requested that faculty send him feedback as to how departments have implemented writing improvement methods recently. This is a continuing conversation.
5. Graduate Policies Committee (GPC) – Chair Miller reported that the GPC met with Dean Carole Swain to discuss fast track approval for the MA in Education with an emphasis in Lasallian studies. The proposal was approved as a fast track program. The GPC also discussed its role in creating a list of common items for grad course evaluations.
6. Program Review Committee (PRC) – Lisa Manter reported that the PRC met with the Graduate Counseling Program. The next scheduled review is January Term.

7. Admissions and Academic Regulations Committee (AARC) – Annalee Lamoreaux reported that the AARC has begun looking at the results of the fall Turnitin.com survey. A recommendation will be submitted to the EPB before the end of the spring term. The AARC also has a proposal on the agenda for a change in commencement requirements for undergraduates. Academic Advising was also discussed and a goals and mission statement for academic advising will be developed before the end of the year.

8. Graduation Project – Registrar Julia Odom and Associate Registrar Leslie Welty appeared before the EPB to make a presentation on the graduation project. Registrar Odom explained that at the end of each academic year, they review the requirements that students have completed and what requirements remain for graduation. Those students who have not completed their requirements receive a letter from the Registrar's office, with a copy to their advisor. The Registrar's office has begun to follow-up with the students that have remaining requirements. The Registrar's office contacts the students four to six months after the commencement ceremony, asking how they can assist them in completing their requirements, and they continue the follow-up. Leslie Welty presented data indicating the numbers of enrolled students and the numbers of those graduating. The program appears to be working. Of the undergraduate students who attended the May 2007 commencement, only 57% had completed all requirements for graduation (In previous years this figure was 70%.) As of February, 2008 a total of 75.44% of the 2007 class has now graduated. From 2002 through 2006, approximately 72% of the students had completed the graduation requirements. However, in 2007 that figure dropped to 57%. Julia Odom said that Mark Figueroa is investigating the reason for the drop in the number of students graduating in 2007.

9. International Programs Coordinating Committee (IPCC) – Dino Pruccoli reported that the President has charged the IPCC to develop a strategic plan by 2008. The IPCC has developed the following statement and Dino is presenting the statement to various committees on campus to ask for feedback. He asked faculty to forward any suggestions or concerns.

Internationalization of Saint Mary's College implies adopting an international dimension into the key functions of the institution. It means a deliberate transformation of how we teach our students, conduct research, learn from each other, and how we are of service to our communities. Through curricular and co-curricular means, the College seeks to prepare graduates for a world that has become culturally, environmentally, and economically interdependent. For this reason, Saint Mary's College recognizes the importance of internationalization by being an integral part of a global society.

NEW BUSINESS

10. Anthropology Major changes – Vice Chair Bachofer said the Department of Anthropology submitted changes to the major requirements. The changes track closely the changes approved to the Sociology major last month. The two departments have split, and are creating a more distinct identity to their individual majors. The UPC supports the proposal. Chair Miller said the department of Sociology sent a letter of support and the proposal is also supported by the Dean of SOLA. A MOTION was made by Past Chair McGraw and SECONDED by Ben Davis to approve the proposal. Vice Provost Sweeney asked if in the process of the separation of the courses between the Departments of Anthropology and Sociology, they had accounted for the diversity requirement. Cynthia Van Gilder responded that the issue has not been specifically addressed, but she has brought this to the attention of

Robert Bulman in the Department of Sociology. A roll call vote was taken on the motion as follows:

Steve Miller	Yes	Carol Lashof	Yes
Steve Bachofer	Yes	Joseph Lupino	Yes
Barbara McGraw	Yes	Lisa Manter	Yes
Catherine Banbury	Yes	Ken Otter	Yes
Ben Davis	Yes	Cynthia Van Gilder	Abstain
Craig Johnson	Yes	Paul Zarnoth	Yes
Annalee Lamoreaux	Yes		

The motion was approved by a vote of 12-0-1.

11. Vice Provost Report – Vice Provost Sweeney reported that the first honors receptions were held the previous weekend and the excitement among the students for SMC is wonderful. She encouraged faculty to be responsive to the honor students.

Vice Provost Sweeney thanked the EPB and the AARC for its work on community time. She announced that the Cabinet, President and Provost have formalized community time making it permanent status. There is a new iteration with a designated meeting time, which will continue to be assessed this year.

12. First Year Advising – Vice Provost Sweeney reported that the new 2008 freshmen advising model will go forward based on the student academic area of interest. Vice Provost Sweeney thanked the AARC for its thoughtful and comprehensive work on moving this forward through the various faculty committees. Faculty will have a maximum of 10 freshmen advisees. She received feedback and constructive criticism for the new model at the Chairs meeting. She requested feedback about the implementation of the new model. The Campus Deans and Directors settled on a “Feast or Famine” first year focus for the fall and are expecting advice from the English and Composition faculty around the summer reading text. The text will be purchased for the students and given to them at orientation.

NEW BUSINESS

13. Program Review Committee Procedures (PRC) – Lisa Manter introduced the following proposal from the PRC. She said it is the intention to provide incentive to programs that are doing a thorough job of their self-assessment. It was determined by the PRC that the best incentive was to give an extension for the next program review, from 5 years to 7 years. The review process is becoming more substantial and programs are taking the process seriously.

Extension of Program Review Timeline

Departments and programs that exhibit the following will be placed on a seven-year cycle of review, in place of the standard five-year cycle:

- 1) thoroughness of review and demonstration of involvement of entire department in the process,
- 2) clarity of alignment with the mission,
- 3) clarity and appropriateness of learning goals and outcomes,

- 4) well-designed assessment practices,
- 5) clear and thoughtful analysis of department or program strengths and weaknesses,
- 6) well-defined and thoughtful action plans, including a reasonable timeline for completion, in alignment with self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses.

Departments and programs will remain on this seven-year cycle for as long as these elements are met at each review.

If the Program Review Committee feels that a department or program needs improvement in any one of these areas, the department or program will be asked to continue to submit reviews on the standard five-year cycle. To remain on the five-year cycle does not necessarily connote program weakness, but rather provides the opportunity for a department or program to engage in self-assessment practices on a more rigorous schedule until items 1-6 are achieved.

The following questions and/or comments were made regarding the proposal:

- The PRC only wants to see self-assessment and a plan. An extension can still be granted if there are issues to be worked out.
- Ken Otter said that the review process is helpful. He suggested that the incentive could be that the next review does not need to be as elaborate; only a subset of the review to keep it current.
- Is the incentive meant only for those programs that submitted a review on time?
- Seven years is a long time to go without an external review, especially at the graduate level.
- Vice Provost Sweeney said she would like to see the departments that have been through two program reviews to address the areas of concern in the action plan.
- Dean Murray suggested that departments provide an up-to-date report on where the department is on their action plan each year.
- Is this the best incentive? Is this what departments want as an incentive?
- Once the seven year cycle is awarded, is it assumed to remain on a 7 year cycle?
- What if new guidelines are established in the meantime? WASC has commented that we have a model for academic program review, we don't want to lose what is working.
- What is the basis for making the determination for a 7 year cycle? Majority vote, unanimous vote?
- Departments not being awarded a seven year cycle may feel slighted and demand an explanation.

Lisa Manter said she would take the document back to the PRC for further discussion.

14. Change Academic Requirements for Commencement – Annalee Lamoreaux introduced the AARC proposal to change the academic requirements for commencement. The intent is to encourage seniors to complete all degree requirements, while still recognizing the importance for the student to join their peers in the graduation ceremony. Any new guidelines will not affect currently enrolled students. The proposal is to change the policy to allow no more than two courses or courses remaining incomplete (the

current policy allows up to three courses or three course credits left to complete) or if there are three courses remaining, the student must be registered for the fall in order to participate in the ceremony.

Proposal:

To encourage degree completion for all seniors while at the same time recognizing the importance to non-graduating seniors of attending the Commencement Ceremony with their class, we propose that in order to attend the Ceremony seniors must have

- (1) no more than *two* courses or course credits remaining to complete, OR
- (2) no more than three courses or course credits remaining to complete their degree requirements and they are registered to take those courses at St. Mary's in the fall semester following the graduation ceremonies they wish to attend; AND
- (3) at the time the Registrar assesses eligibility for participation, a student participating in the graduation ceremonies must be in good academic standing (cumulative and major GPA of 2.0 or better) and have no incompletes.

This proposed change would take effect Fall, 2008 for the incoming freshman class and subsequent classes. It would not affect students currently enrolled.

Julia Odom explained that the commencement information is sent to students around the Thanksgiving break. Registration for fall does not take place until two weeks prior to the commencement ceremony. The determination has already been made for the class that is eligible for commencement. Therefore, #2 of the proposal is not feasible.

Due to the Graduation Project now being implemented by the Registrar's office, the urgency for a change in the policy is not as great. It was determined that the current policy of three courses has been in existence for a very long time. It was also mentioned that because SMC does not have a mid year graduation ceremony, it could also affect the number of those eligible to graduate.

The item was tabled for further discussion by the AARC.

15. Restructuring of EPB Fall 2008 – Chair Miller said he has been compiling a list of issues that he collected from the chairs of the subcommittees relative to the restructuring. He will forward the list to the incoming Senate Chair Brother Charles Hilken.

Dean Murray commented that all members were elected to the EPB, not to the subcommittee they serve. Chair Miller asked the members who are not completing their terms to consider moving forward with their subcommittee for next year. Past Chair McGraw said it would be helpful in the transition for current members with remaining terms to remain on their subcommittee.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Cathe Michalosky
Faculty Governance Coordinator