

COUNCIL OF CHAIRS
Minutes
Wednesday, September 10, 2008
HUB Student Senate Room (119)
Action items in red.

Present: E. Ahl, E. Allard (replacing D. Beronä), Provost Bernier, N. Betchart, T. Boggess, B. Boschmans, P. Cantor, K. Chong, I. Cucina, P. Fedorchak, D. Haight, K. Hart, E. Hoffman, V. Lelas, L. Levy, B. Lopez-Mayhew, D. Mackey, R. Marshall, G. Mears, C. Moniz, D. Moore, L. Reitsma, J. Santore, A. Thurston, W. Tomkiewicz, C. Vascak, D. Zehr

The meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m. by Chair Warren Tomkiewicz who welcomed new and returning chairs and assistant chairs.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of draft minutes from May 14, 2008
Motion to accept/seconded.
Approved as submitted

NEW BUSINESS

1. Course entry date for schedule – J. Santore
It seems that the date for scheduling the next semester's courses gets earlier and earlier each semester. Would like to see the date pushed back. It is hard to judge new adjuncts by this early in the semester. The grad school course schedule dates are not in sync with ours – which is because they are on a quarter system vs a semester schedule. Two weeks of advising may be a contributing factor. **Ann Thurston will look into this year's deadlines to see if the date is slowly creeping earlier.** There was a suggestion that if we go paperless with the schedule (completely online), we should be able to move the deadline back. **Provost Bernier asked the chairs to take this idea to their faculty: Would they be in favor of a paperless schedule if they knew that the course schedule deadline would move back? Please bring each department's feelings on this to the first meeting in October.** Discussion.
2. Recordkeeping, specific to general education Directions and Connections evaluations – J. Santore
Reply from Dean Zehr: Undergraduate Studies is out of the evaluation of general education course process. He sent an email last spring to the chairs that the departments need to take ownership of the courses they teach in the general education program. There is a link (which he will send to the chairs) to a document showing all departments with their gen ed courses and their sunset dates. **He asks that you keep track of the sunset dates because you are required to do an evaluation in the year preceding the sunset date.** You don't have to evaluate every gen ed course every semester. The bubble sheets go to Dr. Brown who will email you the results. **(It was requested that the sheets have a field for course number and title.)** This way you will have the data and have control. All departments should have received the last of the UGS files recently. Discussion.
3. Assessment – D. Moore

Assessment is a tool for getting where we want to go. All of our external stakeholders see it as a requirement for us, but it's what we ought to be doing anyway. Knowing where we are helps us determine how to get where we want to go. On www.plymouth.edu/assessment is the old information that departments put together a few years ago when they were asked to choose one goal and show the evidence of how it was being met. Distributed a handout of this information. **Please look at this and see if you want to use it or do something else. Please look through your department files to see what has been done already in your departments.** He would like departments to be able to say, "this is how we looked at what we did." In the 6-year program review process, this information will be asked for. Assessment is essential for planning quality programs. Discussion.

4. Curricular Revision (continuation of the retreat discussion)

Provost Bernier: The only way to change teaching workload is to look at revising the curriculum. When questioned about inequities in workload that might be created, she acknowledged that there are already inequities in workload across the campus and even within departments. Some faculty teach 125 students/ semester while others teach a total of 17. She asked ALL programs to move to 120 credits this year. There shall be no programs with electives that require greater than 120. It makes no sense for a student who has completed 120 credits and all major and gen ed requirements to return to take 2 elective credits. There is a goal of having 15 credits of electives in each major, but not by adding elective credits above the 120. As discussed at the Chairs Retreat and provided in the curricular revision document, revising the curriculum, reducing requirements and simplifying offerings is a means of reducing teaching workload. Any reductions made will benefit the department by reducing tenure-track faculty loads. Departments will not be asked to replace adjunct teaching with the credits that are "freed up," however, faculty load cannot be reduced by increasing adjunct costs nor can it be reduced by reducing general education teaching credits. If a department realizes a budget savings due to its curricular revision, Provost Bernier pledged that the department's current number of adjuncts will not be reduced.

Announcements

1. Alice O'Connor distributed copies of this year's view book for the chairs to review. Please give your feedback to VP Dick Hage.
2. The Frost Faculty Cookout is today at 5 p.m.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting/seconded.

Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alice O'Connor, Scribe