

Minutes & Agendas

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UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING

November 1, 2007

Johnson Hall Conference Room

Present:

Andrew Bonamici, Hilary Gerdes, Dave Hubin, Elizabeth Jarvis, Dean Livelybrooks, Alexandra Marcus, Lylye Parker, Steven Pologe, Karen McLaughlin, Ron Severson, Karen Sprague, Bill Rossi, Elizabeth Reis, and Jim Imamura

Absent:

Gavin Bruce, Herb Chereck, Anne Laskaya, Andrew Leavitt, Arkady Vaintrob, Kate Wagle, Malcolm Wilson, Alan Kimball, and Paul Engelking

Minutes:

The motion was made to accept the minutes from the October 18, 2007 meeting.

Moved: Bill Rossi

Seconded: Karen McLaughlin

The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously.

Agenda

The Chair announced that there was only one item for the agenda and that was to conclude the review of the Multicultural courses needing the full Council discussion and to begin forming recommendations based on the Council's review.

Four remaining courses were reviewed by the Council. Of 18 courses that were forwarded for full Council discussion, 2 were found to fit the Multicultural criteria, 15 were found to not fit the Multicultural criteria, and 1 course remained unclassified until more information could be obtained from the department regarding the course.

Discussion

The history of the development of the criteria for Multicultural courses was reviewed. Council raised several points of concern during the ensuing discussion:

- In general, there has been poor communication of criteria for designating a course as satisfying the Multicultural requirement in the General Education curriculum;
- What is to be done with Multicultural courses that are "topical";
- Syllabi should state clearly how a particular course meets multicultural criteria;
- It is important to be transparently clear in explaining the

Multicultural intent of a course in the spirit intended by the academy. Unless these expectations are clear, then students' learning in these courses cannot be assessed;

- Instructors of Multicultural courses might create "portfolios" of student work samples as one means of assessment.

The Chair asked the Council to consider where the Undergraduate Council's comments and recommendations should go. Several ideas surfaced:

- Comments and recommendations should go to the Provost's Office and to deans and department heads, as well as to the Committee on Courses. Any recommended actions should be introduced to the University Senate;

- The Committee on Courses should review courses that do not appear to fit the Multicultural criteria. A deadline for response from the Committee on Courses could be included;

- Issue a memo of intent to make recommendations to the University Senate;

- Deans should review Multicultural courses that do not appear to fit the criteria ;

Other suggestions:

- An updated syllabus for a Multicultural course should be required each year it is taught;

- The specific relationship of the course to the Multicultural category in which it is placed should appear in the course description.

The Chair noted that the Undergraduate Council needs to make clear, definite recommendations. These recommendations need to be seen as regular updates of the curriculum, and not as an irregular, destructive intrusion..

Questions raised by Council members were:

- What are advisors' role in transmitting an understanding of the Multicultural requirement to students?

- Should individual faculty members be contacted in advance if their courses are among those that appear not to meet the Multicultural criteria?

- Could a question asking whether students taking a course satisfied the Multicultural requirement (or a requirement) be incorporated into the new electronic course evaluations?

- Can examples of courses that do and do not meet the Multicultural criteria be included with the Council's recommendations for improved course information (syllabi and course descriptions)? (These

would not have to be “real”

courses).

The Chair stated that he would draft a proposal for action based on the Council’s identification of courses that don’t meet Multicultural criteria. The draft will provide context for the recommended actions and will incorporate key points raised during today’s discussion. The Chair also encouraged members to think about Council recommendations to address broader issues that arose during the review process.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next UGC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 15, 2007, 11:00am at Johnson Hall Conference Room.

Undergraduate Council, 5256 University of Oregon • (541) 346-1221 • Last Update: November 28, 2007