

**University of Puget Sound
Faculty Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2002**

President Pierce called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. in McIntyre 103. Fifty voting members of the faculty were present at 4:30 p.m.

Minutes of the September 25, 2002 faculty meeting were approved as distributed.

There were no announcements.

President Pierce thanked colleagues in the Registrar's Office for their good work dealing with problems created this past week with the web server repeatedly out of service during registration. A round of applause followed her thanks.

President Pierce then spoke of the shooting incident on campus November 13, 2002. She said there would be a review of policies and procedures, not because the incident was not handled well—because, she said, it was—but because safety and security were so important and because we wanted to do all that we could to make the campus safe and secure as we preserved our open campus environment. She described plans to bring in a consultant with experience in security issues on college campuses and, if the consultant recommends changes in policies, she would assemble a representative group to review policies and make specific recommendations for changes. She said she has posted a letter to parents on this issue on the parents' web page and on the internal home page. She said we were indebted to many of our colleagues across the campus who came together quickly and who dealt effectively with the November 13 event.

Dean Cooney had no report except to say that the women's soccer team had made it to the national NCAA Division III quarterfinals. He said the team members' average 3.5 grade average the last four years shows how academic and athletic success can go hand in hand at a Division III school.

Faculty Senate Chair Hans Ostrom reported that at its meeting yesterday the Faculty Senate discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the new class schedule. He said the senate would continue this discussion, and he asked us to contact senators with our views.

We turned to the first item on the agenda, course prefix designations for the new first-year seminars.

Bill Barry said that the issue is whether the new freshman seminars will have department prefixes or generic prefixes such as WRS or SCIS. He recounted the history of the discussions in the Curriculum Committee (CC) and in the Faculty Senate. He said there was agreement that courses would be grouped together with their descriptions at the front of the bulletin.

Barry M/S/vote reported later "that the freshman seminars in the new core have a generic core designation as prefix label, such as SCIS (for Scholarly and Creative Inquiry Seminar) and WRS (for Writing and Rhetoric Seminar)." Barry then spoke to the motion. He said that experience with problems with the current core led to agreement that the new seminars would not count toward the major. He suggested that department labels might move us back in the direction of some of those same problems because department labels are accompanied by department signoff, imposing a constraint not originally conceived of when the courses were approved. He said this could continue a tension between the CC and departments and might confuse students. He said generic labeling avoided these problems and "is more capacious and better for an interdisciplinary environment." He said he wanted to preserve the openness of the guidelines.

Bill Beardsley asked who would sign off on courses if generic labels were used. Barry responded that the CC would take direction from the faculty. He suggested departments would review the

courses but that the final sign-off would come from the CC. Beardsley responded that the CC does not have sign-off authority in any other area of the core and that he thought introducing it for the freshman seminars “would be very dangerous.”

Bill Breitenbach said there were important advantages to keeping generic course prefixes and suggested that a non-department group could be constituted to pass on matters of competency. Beardsley responded that the track record on these kinds of groups was mixed and that oversight seemed to diminish over time. He said, too, that he did not believe the CC should pass judgment on the freshman seminars. Breitenbach responded that he did not mean to imply that an oversight group would be permanent. Rather, the course proposer would constitute his or her own group to pass on the course proposal.

Chris Kline said she was concerned that we seemed to be favoring administrative structures rather than speaking to the student experience. She said that high school students enter college with unformed views of what disciplines are and that new freshmen are heavily influenced by “intellectual waves” that run through all the disciplines. She said she favors generic labels to help students understand that these boundaries are problematic and that courses can be “rich and wide.”

Doug Cannon agreed that students new to college probably do not have rigid preconceptions of disciplines, but argued that “disciplinary structure gives discipline to academic inquiry.” He argued that within a given discipline, faculty frequently teach courses with widely varying subject matter, and that “this is characteristic of what we call scholarly and creative inquiry in the academy.” He suggested that our interdisciplinary programs are ideal locations for some of the freshman seminars, giving them a department prefix. He said it would be better for the seminars to have department prefixes than generic prefixes on the student’s transcript.

David Tinsley said he didn’t understand the argument that the fact that departments are organized around a discipline is antithetical to liberal education. He said he was much more comfortable having the seminars evaluated by colleagues within one’s department and that this would not affect their interdisciplinary value. He said he opposed the motion.

Bill Barry said he didn’t think the motion implied that department prefixes were in fact antithetical to liberal education. He said the guidelines, particularly for the scholarly and creative inquiry seminars, were “extraordinarily open” and that there should be some kind of standard structure for implementing them.

Lisa Wood responded to what she said was Barry’s argument that the department “could put the kibosh on the interdisciplinary nature of the seminars.” She said we should create some way to avoid that; we need to create a “safe harbor” for these courses and that department colleagues should provide that.

Bill Haltom said he opposed the motion, declaring that he “likes openness, but dislikes dilettantism.” He argued that one’s faculty colleagues would know a great deal about the proposed courses and that it was good to compel course proposers to convince those who know them best that they’re capable of offering the courses. He said, “It is a piece of cake to snow the Curriculum Committee,” but not so easy to do the same with faculty colleagues.

Breitenbach said we seemed to be discussing two separate issues: what name we use for course prefixes, and who judges the courses. He said he did not care who judged the courses, but thought we would have a greater range of students entering the courses if they were generically described.

Keith Ward argued that approving the motion would provide a greater identity to the core. He asked whether this same issue would emerge later regarding the new Connections core

requirement. Dean Cooney suggested probably not, insofar as the faculty did not say the Connections courses could not fulfill the major, as they did mandate for freshman seminars.

David Droge said he hoped we would have enough volunteers to teach all of the seminar sections we will need. He said he thought it might be difficult to sustain enthusiasm over time and that it might be necessary "to dragoon" people to offer sections. He asked how we ensure that departments can staff their own offerings as well as these new seminars. Dean Cooney responded by saying that when the faculty votes to create something required of all students, we all have the responsibility to make sure students can take the courses. He said that departments have not been asked to offer more sections in the new core than they did in the old; that we have already sustained a core of more units than the new one. But he said that because the seminars in scholarly and creative inquiry (SCIS) will come "from across the board," they are "a new kettle of fish." He said this is a different situation from science in context, where guidelines were more specific. He said there are no specific disciplinary connections for SCIS, so it would be hard to make the case that we've created a need we shouldn't be able to fill with the faculty positions we already have. In other words, he said, there's not a shortage of faculty to staff the required number of sections.

Ted Taranovski said he was inclined to oppose the motion. He said we have to be concerned both about the new courses and the instructors proposing them. How, he asked, are we to decide the instructor is prepared to teach the course? He suggested that the department and those who know the proposer are better prepared to judge this than someone else. He said we shouldn't encourage instructors to propose courses outside their areas of expertise. He said that not all faculty would be involved in the freshman seminars and that in order to see who's teaching what we needed to use department prefixes.

Mott Greene M/ "to limit discussion and to take this up at the next meeting in order to get to the next item on the agenda." There was no second.

Hans Ostrom M/S/P to end debate. The motion to end debate appeared to pass on a voice vote. A hand vote was called for and the motion passed with the required two-thirds majority.

We then voted on the main Barry motion. A written ballot was called for. The motion then failed with 14 in favor, 31 opposed, and 3 abstentions.

We then turned to the other item on the agenda, the motion passed March 8, 2000, "that it is the sense of the faculty that the registrar be directed to describe and to prepare a timetable for a system in which registration for all 100 level courses (and 200 level courses that are the first step in a sequence i.e., the 'entry' or 'gateway' courses that are prerequisites to programs) be closed to juniors and seniors until all freshmen registration is complete." This policy, implemented August 2000, was to have governed spring 2003 course selection for the first time, but was postponed by the Registrar in response to the November 4, 2002 request by the Faculty Senate.

Dean Cooney gave a brief background on the issue and said the Registrar's Office and faculty advisors need to know what the faculty wants to do. Do we want the policy implemented or not?

Cooney M/S/ "that the faculty direct the Registrar to implement the policy spring 2003." Tinsley asked if this included the exceptions for 100-level foreign language courses and Cooney replied yes, the motion was to proceed just as registration would have gone forward this month, had the Faculty Senate not requested the delay.

Kathie Hummel-Berry said the Academic Standards Committee (ASC) was concerned that perhaps some of the problems students would face had not been anticipated. She said that in the physical therapy program, for example, there is a lengthy list of 100-level prerequisite courses PT students need to take to get into the program. If they decide in their junior year they're interested

in PT they then would need to go back to the 100-level for these courses. She said that even if students plan ahead it is inappropriate for pre-PT students to put their entire focus on 100-level courses their first two years.

Carol Merz, ASC chair, said that the ASC did not debate the merit of the policy. The committee looked only at its implementation. In particular there were some 100-level courses in which seniors tended to cluster. She said it seemed to be a fairly self-contained problem. She said the process for exceptions the ASC put into place would have worked.

Cooney reported spring 2002 data showing that 59% of 100-level courses had seats remaining in them after everyone had registered. He reminded us that the new policy did not prohibit seniors from taking 100-level courses. He said that there might be a few courses where there were issues, but that seniors would be able to register for the majority of 100-level courses even with the new policy in place.

Hummel-Berry said that the issue for seniors was schedule-building. She said that seniors have less time to finish their degrees and that they do not have flexibility to take whichever section may happen still to be open. She said that if seniors register for 100-level courses last they would not have the flexibility they needed to build their schedules.

Nick Kontogeorgopoulos asked under what circumstances a department can designate a course to be for freshman only. He suggested that this is something departments could do if they're concerned about course composition. Dean Cooney pointed out that John McCuiston does not want his ceramics courses full of seniors, so for spring 2002 he reserved ten spots for lower division students.

Greene said that he is the one who made the motion March 2000 about the registration priority. He said the motion was intended to protect incoming freshmen who find they cannot get what they want. He said that seniors do sometimes have difficulties, but those are the situations that should be resolved by petition and saving certain seats. He said he preferred to have a policy that protects freshmen coming in, saving some seats for seniors as needed.

Tinsley said Mott spoke to a real problem, but that he (Tinsley) preferred an alternative approach. He said he did not like the "one-size-fits-all" approach to be applied across the board. He suggested that we determine for which courses this is a problem and that departments work with "the excellent staff" in the Registrar's Office to address them. Taranovski said that Tinsley had taken the words right out of his mouth.

Eric Orlin proposed as a friendly amendment that each department could designate certain 100-level and 200-level courses in consultation with the registrar that would be off limits to juniors and seniors. Dean Cooney declined to accept this as a friendly amendment, saying he preferred that faculty devise an alternative if there needs to be one, rather than tacking it onto the current motion.

Haltom said there is no policy in existence because no policy was ever put before us for approval. He said, with regard to Dean Cooney's motion, that "there is no policy to move forward with." Dean Cooney responded that at the March 2000 meeting the faculty did direct the Registrar's Office to act and that there was an expectation that the Registrar's Office was to work out the details once faculty had expressed a clear intent. He added that no one has objected within last two years to the plan publicized in summer 2000.

Greene M/S/ "to table the motion until the next meeting." He said we needed time to move toward a compromise position, such as Tinsley's.

Martin Jackson argued that somebody should draft the policy and that "we shouldn't do it in a faculty meeting." David Droge suggested that, as the executive committee of the faculty, the

Faculty Senate could take this up between now and the next meeting. Dean Cooney agreed that we needed to resolve this well before next spring's registration for fall term.

Orlin said students at the November 4 Faculty Senate meeting felt disempowered and that "we should consider this and be aware of a lot of anger filtering around in the senior class." He said we should engage students in the discussion.

Droge M/S/ "to end debate on the motion to table the main motion until the next meeting." The motion to end debate passed on a voice vote. The motion to table the motion then passed on a voice vote.

Droge rose to a point of general privilege and asked if President Pierce, as chair of the meeting, wished to request that the Faculty Senate and its standing committees prepare a proposal related to this issue to bring forward at the next meeting of the full faculty. President Pierce agreed and did make the request, on the condition that the Faculty Senate or its designated committee work in consultation with the Registrar's Office.
We adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Finney
Secretary of the Faculty