

Faculty Senate Minutes
April 19, 1999

Senators present: B. Beardsley, M. Birnbaum, D. Bowe, N. Bristow, T. Cooney, Connie Hale, B. Haltom, D. Hulbert, K. Hummel-Berry, R. Steiner, G. Tomlin, P. Valentine, A. Wood

Visitors present: E. Campbell, C. Thomas, E. Wester

The Senate was called to order at 4:05 when a quorum was reached. Minutes of the April 5 Senate meeting were distributed. These minutes will be considered for approval at the May 3 Senate meeting.

Announcements:

Haltom reminded those present of the upcoming Daedalus meeting. The deadline for registration for the meeting is noon, Tuesday, April 20.

The next full faculty meeting for consideration of the core is Tuesday, April 20 at 4:00. Haltom urged all senators to attend.

Diversity in the Core:

Erin Campbell, Christy Thomas, and Erin Wester introduced themselves as students concerned about the need for the inclusion of diversity in the core. Thomas indicated that they sought to address the Senate because they as students feel strongly that issues of diversity need to be included in the consideration of the revised core. They expressed that in their perception there did not appear to be a commitment to assuring that diversity will be a part of the revised core. They acknowledged that they were not representative of all students, but said that their views are held by many UPS students. They cited the recent ASUPS survey in which 59% of the students felt that there should be a multicultural component in the new core. They felt there is need for students to be brought out of their comfort zones and to be aligned with the University of Puget Sound statement of Mission of the University.

They supported a larger core than the recently approved seven units if this would assure that diversity is included in the core.

The suggested two means to include diversity in the core:

- 1) establish a distinct diversity core rubric with specific diversity courses.
- 2) use an overlay approach in which courses which have a diversity focus would fulfill a diversity (multiple perspectives) requirement. They suggested that many current courses would fulfill this goal. Courses would be starred (asterisk) so students would know these approach course content through multiple perspectives.

Tomlin questioned whether a course which focused on a particular perspective would be approved to fulfill the core for all students; for example, must a course have a different perspective from that of a student for it to be acceptable for fulfilling a requirement. Would a course to help males better understand women's perspective be an acceptable core course for women.

Connie Hale said yes, that after teaching women's studies courses she finds that the female students gain much from these courses. Hummel-Berry expressed the view that we need to trust students to select courses which will stretch them even if they are familiar with the content, and having students in courses with different perspectives is most valuable.

Bowe asked for clarification on how the requirement would be fulfilled. For example, if there is a seven core requirement and a students must have a starred course to fulfill the diversity requirement, isn't this really an eighth core?

Hummel-Berry asked why courses used to fulfill a diversity requirement would have to be within a core. Departments would star (designate) courses which approach the content through multiple perspectives and that students could take any starred course to fulfill a diversity requirement. Bowe pointed out that with starred courses you have created another core. The point was made that for some majors, fulfillment of the requirement would be easy and not require an additional core course, whereas in other majors, perhaps mathematics or science where starred course would be less likely, this would be like adding another core requirement for these students.

The students visitors reiterated, that regardless of how it is accomplished, they were there to urge that diversity be a component of the revised core since the core is the foundation of a Liberal Arts Education.

Cooney and Tomlin both referred back to the faculty discussion of 1991 in which the issue of whether diversity should be addressed through courses in US pluralism or international studies was debated. Birnbaum expressed the view that courses, whether domestic or international could have a cultural pluralism focus. There are many courses which now do this.

The students felt that the faculty could modify many current classes to better reflect diversity to expand the current selection of courses offering multiple perspectives. Cooney simply added that faculty members can and do what they want in most cases.

Birnbaum added the problem was not simply a matter of wanting to make changes to better reflect multiple perspectives, but that many faculty members do not have sufficient training to offer courses with this perspective and there would be a need for training of faculty. Concern was expressed that the requirement would fall to a limited number of faculty who had this background and would restrict her/his ability to offer other courses in her/his department.

Beardsley pointed out the need to assure that courses reflect multiple perspectives so that the University did not end up with courses slanted toward a single perspective.

Haltom thanked the students for their input and assured them that the Senate would consider their input and convey their views to the full faculty.

Curriculum Discussion:

Anticipating the full faculty meeting on Tuesday, the Senate turned to a discussion of the core deliberations.

Tomlin expressed his concern how difficult it will be to get a unified proposal passed that is built from piecemeal deliberations.

Valentine reiterated his view that the Senate should produce a core proposal. Haltom stated that the Senate has no mandate to do this and he felt that the faculty would resent the Senate suddenly coming in with another proposal since the Senate already established a process for the faculty to follow in core considerations. Valentine suggested that the Senate should still submit a proposal. Haltom indicated that just as anyone could submit proposal the Senate could submit a proposal but it would hold no more status than any other proposal submitted by a faculty member.

Tomlin said he is not suggesting a Senate proposal, but that the Senate should help the faculty see possible outcomes of various actions. Several senators pointed out that this sounded much like the discussion of the last meeting and referred the senators to a summarized discussion (next to the last paragraph) in the Senate minutes of April 5th. Tomlin said that there are five or six proposals being circulated and it is not clear how they relate to each other. Does the passage of one proposal prejudice consideration of another proposal?

Several senators expressed the concern that faculty may not understand what aspect of the Taranoski proposal is being considered. Several senators suggested that Haltom review this before full faculty deliberations commence at the meeting, April 20th.

Haltom stated that when Phase III is completed, Tomlin's motion for Connections comes to the floor. If Taranoski wants his full proposal considered he must move to substitute his proposal for Tomlin's.

Bowe referred back the previous diversity discussion and how this would be included in core deliberation. Haltom stated that phase IV of the process allows consideration of different options including an overlay or expansion of the core.

Cooney pointed out that this is the inherent tension which the faculty faces when considering the core. Overlays are an attempt to do what we want without expanding the core.

Discussion shifted to the political nature of core considerations and whether faculty would vote for proposals based on an inherent belief of what is best. Beardsley pointed out that as soon as a vote is taken on what we should require of students, it is political.

The discussion came back to what is fundamental. Cooney pointed out that mathematics currently stands as the only separate core area. How do we balance what we expect all students to take while at the same time limiting the size of the core. With a limited core should mathematics be a single core area?

We have to face the issue that with a limited core, only certain common courses/experiences are possible. The faculty needs to come to some consensus as to which the courses/experiences should be for all students.

Bowe again expressed his concern that he wants to ensure that the issue of diversity will not be swept aside to keep a smaller core. He was again assured that this issue could be considered in phase IV. Cooney suggested that someone could move to add it as a requirement at the next faculty meeting.

Hummel-Berry indicated that an overlay approach does allow for more flexibility and seems easier to staff than a separate core.

Cooney pointed out that the administration would do its best to staff whatever core is passed, but added that there are consequences for any decision. Overall they may not be bad, but the faculty needs to be aware of possible consequences. For example when the SCXT core was created class size was a problem and was the most frequent criticism in student evaluations. A similar thing could happen if a diversity or pluralism core is created.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30

Respectively submitted,

Robert L. Steiner