

Educational Policy and Governance (EPAG) Committee Meeting Minutes

December 7, 2009

Present: Kendrick Brown, Pete Ferderer, Terri Fishel, Chen Gu, Terry Krier, Carelton Macy, David Martyn (chair), Kathy Murray, Ann Minnick, Jayne Niemi, Michael Orr, Patrick Schmidt, Robert Strickling, Tom Varberg, Eric Wiertelak

- 1. Approval of Minutes** – minutes approved.
- 2. Academic Department Updates** – Jayne gave a report on the academic department updates. Nancy Mackenzie (Admissions) and Jan Shaw-Flamm (Communications and Public Relations) send out an email to department coordinators and department chairs around April 1 with a request to update the document by mid May. A bound copy resides in the admissions office, admissions counselors have them as individual sheets, and each department coordinator receives the copy that is ready by September 1. Individual sheets are sent to prospective students. A copy of the current year was passed around.
- 3. CDP** – David opened the floor for comments. Discussion included comments on the submitted proposals including connecting some of the individuals making proposals that seem related. It was suggested that the Environmental Studies requests could be collapsed. David mentioned using the five guiding principles. Themes emerged, but are these just the loudest voices versus what we should be doing? The writing program was highlighted because although we have some resources, addressing the concerns raised will be an economic issue. We couldn't just hire one person, and creating a writing program here without the resources of a graduate student population would be expensive. Ann M. and Adrienne are talking about first year program and writing. It was suggested that adding one person could help address faculty development program to improve the teaching of writing.

The matter of CDP curricular development plan versus allocation strategy was again raised. What should we do now, what should the process be, what should the document look like? What is it that the institution really needs? It was suggested that we should explore more creative innovations, such as create a position that every year two people get to create a couple of courses that stay in the curriculum for at least two or three years and provide course releases for team teaching. The Mellon New Directions grant that gives a faculty member a semester off to create something new was identified as an example of a positive program. The issue of the language programs was raised and the question of when to discuss what programs to retain or shrink in terms of these proposals.

Issue of discontinuance is something that Pete presented at the Faculty meeting last year, and a proposal is on paper. While the CDP is in the handbook, discontinuance is referred to in a variety of locations: bylaws, handbook, etc. This committee cannot make decisions on discontinuing a department. That decision rests with the Faculty. Present procedure EPAG recommends to the faculty, faculty votes. Revised procedure to

recommend to small body of faculty (5 members?).

Mac's majors, 10% are interdisciplinary – is this something we want to enhance or not? In terms of moving forward it was expressed that at this point the CDP should not be connected to any discussions of discontinuance. That should be a topic to follow the CDP.

For the faculty meeting, David outlined his plan to talk about CDP in the handbook, give examples, show Pete's chart, and present the open forum Moodle page with link to handbook. Pete suggested that everyone look at the proposals and give feedback in order to get broader input from everyone. Physics and HMCS still have something coming.

David then presented a possible method for evaluating the proposals using the five principles and a scale of 1-10. To reiterate here are the five principles:

- **Build on Strengths** – enhance the Macalester curriculum by investing in those areas of scholarship and teaching where the College already has an established record of high-quality and/or distinctive programming;
- **Fill in the Gaps** – increase the quality of the College's academic program by investing in crucial areas of the existing curriculum that are currently inadequately resourced;
- **Innovate with Links to the Mission** – enhance the College's academic program by investing in areas of study that will strengthen our ability to offer a high-quality liberal arts education known for “its high standards of scholarship and its special emphasis on internationalism, multiculturalism, and service to society;”
- **Diversify the Faculty** – enrich the College's academic program by investing in areas of study in ways that are more likely to attract faculty from under-represented communities;
- **Promote Equity** – improve the quality of the student academic experience by investing in areas of study in ways that will promote a more equitable student/faculty ratio across the curriculum.

We did a dry run on how our deliberations of each proposal might proceed, using the first two submissions as examples. We will begin actual deliberation next week.

4. **WGSS proposal** – The WGSS is an interdivisional program and majors are not divisional. WGSS is expressly humanities and social sciences and there is no explicit requirement to meet any divisional requirement.

Discussion:

The first comment was to note, “a lot of thought went into this.” Refocusing on historical aspects was seen as “good.” The group is generally supportive, but want to see catalog copy version of program changes. Additional language to include stipulation that 4 courses in any one department would be chosen in consultation with WGSS core faculty and advisor, and would be directed choices.

Adjournment 5:02

Respectfully submitted by Terri Fishel, Library Director