

EPAG Minutes

September 19, 2013

3:00-4:30 Campus Center 214

June Ban, Terry Boychuk, Kendrick Brown, Darcy Burgund, Merita Bushi, Susan Fox, Geoff Gorham, Ann Minnick, Jayne Niemi, Jaine Strauss, Joelle Vitiello (Chair), Harry Waters, Jr. Guest: Adrienne Christiansen

Adrienne visited to increase our excitement about Faculty Academic Initiatives Retreat, aka FAIR. She also was seeking EPAG volunteers to serve as scribes. Saturday is where conversation will happen, with intro and summaries, then 2 rounds of faculty conversations – first a set of heterogeneous groups, where scribing will be necessary to capture the key reactions, opinions, and ideas. There are instructions provided so that we collect information about three key points: support, support with revisions or amendments, and no support. Paul Dosh will summarize verbally so the attendees can know what other tables are reporting. Laptops are required for scribes. Then the faculty will regroup as disciplines, and scribes will be there too. Please come to the FAIR and participate! On Friday night, Jill Gladstein will speak after an opening reception. Please email Adrienne to volunteer.

1. Approval of minutes: The minutes from September 12, 2013 were approved.
2. We reviewed the representation for the various Board of Trustee meetings.
3. Second Language Proficiency Requirement Task Force Report: Approximately 32 faculty attended the meeting (on Sept 18th) and Ann and Susan scribed. Basically everyone was supportive of the initiative. The questions that arose were not unexpected – grading options for requirement courses, why four semesters, and how to assess cultural proficiency, and does ASL meet requirement. There were also some questions about how assessment works in general. Joelle remembered that assessment for the GERs happened first and then a new requirement was crafted for approval. So, is the language group working in the wrong order? Not necessarily, said Kendrick, since we started at a different place with language. That is not to say that assessment hasn't happened in the languages – there have been efforts within and around the departments, but not as much about the graduation requirement overall. Some of the language of the rationale was questioned – maybe the first sentence could be deleted. If the pending motion fails, it doesn't mean the requirement goes away, it means the current requirement stays. But we would hope that we would have broad buy-in before any vote. What's next? Should we re-work the language, add some rationale about why four semesters is the standard for us before we send it out? That seems appropriate, so Joelle will edit the document, send it out with an explanation, then schedule a town hall and an on-line forum. For student input, we would recommend some sort of open meeting that works for students' schedules. Sometime in October – maybe Joelle could speak at the October faculty meeting, unless the FAIR needs to be discussed there. Joelle will prepare some documents for next week.
4. CDP and FACT discussion: Kendrick distributed a list of new tenure-track hires since 2010. Joelle summarized two years of how new hires meshed with the various sections of the CDP, based on browsing past class schedules. Global Cities was the hardest to find, and even to define just what it meant. She also noted a small cohort of courses that seem deliberately to deal with “civic engagement” and yet there is no formal concentration. There is the link to Mac's urban location, which offers opportunities in the community, broadly speaking. Is this the moment to give up on Global Cities as a category, and maybe go back to what might be called “linking to the city, community engagement, whatever it's named.” Some of us engage critically with the community, but in other spaces or cities. One of the roles of the CDP is to build on our strengths, but first we have to recognize the strengths exist. FACT grant: Jayne shared the enrollment numbers, which were healthy. Kendrick reported on the money involved. Even if the FACT grant goes away and

is restored to a line for a tenure-track faculty position, the College could still provide some team-teaching support for 2 or 3 initiatives a year, even 3 or 4 courses. He would still seek advice from EPAG about who should be awarded such funding. It sounds like we are moving to elimination of the FACT Grant through a faculty line and restoring that line to the pool. June brought up that the discussion has been centered around the allocation process, and not the student experience. What are the possibilities that these courses, if successful, could continue so other students could benefit? Kendrick pointed out that FACT fund states that repeat requests can be made, but there would be a higher bar. We are seeing reports of collaborations that may continue already. What can we do to sustain the enthusiasm?

5. Number of Instructional Days: Kendrick distributed a document to answer why we should increase the number of instruction days, and the memo from the student government from last year's student representatives. This document reviewed what we have heard from students and families have said and the national conversation about the credit hour, by accreditation agencies, governmental bodies, and other colleges. He distributed a more refined comparison graph and the 1992 document that delineates what was passed by the faculty. The discussion began and will continue.

Adjourned at 4:33.

Respectfully submitted by Jayne Niemi, Registrar