

EPAG Minutes

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

3:00-4:30

Campus Center 214

Kendrick Brown, Max Cady, Pete Ferderer, Terri Fishel, Gerbrand Hoogvliet, Terry Krier, Carleton Macy, David Martyn, Ann Minnick, Kathy Murray, Jayne Niemi, Patrick Schmidt, Tom Varberg, Eric Wiertelak

Guests: Patty Anderson, Frederick Green, Satoko Suzuki, Xin Yang

1. Satoko gave a brief history of the Asian Studies department and proposal for a Chinese major. She answered our three main questions. The first was about the overlap between the proposed major and the Asian Studies major. They feel that these are distinct majors – the interdisciplinary Asian Studies and the disciplinary Chinese. Asian Studies majors may choose to focus in China, but that six course focus would not count language courses. So five courses rather than nine would be the possible overlap. She clarified that the capstone requirement for Asian Studies is usually an independent study. David asked that Satoko correct the chart he used, which is a worst-case scenario of overlap. She described the future staffing of Chinese courses, reminding us that the new faculty members have taught topics courses that will be submitted as new courses soon. Methodology courses will come from other departments, such as HMCS and English. They were asked how a literary analysis course would help the department. Some background in any literary analysis would help; this is probably also true in cinema, for example. They are mainly dealing with 20th century works. An off the cuff question: Are three majors offered by a department with four tenure-line faculty really the best way to go? Satoko reminds us that Asian Studies is really interdisciplinary, and the housing of it is not necessarily more than symbolic. Asian Studies is appealing to those students who are interested in the political aspects, in anthropological studies of Asia, often China or Japan, but possibly India. How likely is it that a student will attempt both Asian Studies and Chinese majors? Are they interested in limiting students to doing only one of the three majors? If the Japanese major is any indication, there are very few, if any who do both Japanese and Asian Studies. What about the stability of history courses as part of the major? Hoping that History Dept continues to support their major, but they also would like to plan a new Chinese course that would cover the historical and cultural background. It was noted that Classical Chinese is a requirement for the major at Grinnell. They would love to offer pre-modern Chinese, and they do have background to teach some of it.
2. Minutes: David corrected some items and reviewed them for us, and thus they were approved.
3. The Allocations memo adjustments were described. David will send the corrected version to Kathy, and she will write her letter that accompanies it.

4. Discussion of Chinese major proposal: There is a lot of enthusiasm and resources for Chinese. Are the staffing resources enough to do this, and Asian Studies? Should we ask for a spreadsheet describing the staffing into the future? Terri is concerned about library resources and support, especially since the original foray into this was grant-supported, and the grant is no longer funded. Back to overlap question: we'll formally request the spreadsheet about overlap so the percentage of overlap is clearer to us. We will also ask for staffing plan, and what the catalog copy would look like. We would also like it to be clear in Asian Studies what may count towards the focus (and what doesn't count).
5. We reviewed prior discussions about teaching evaluations. The Provost with EPAG's encouragement will require that every instructor carry out some sort of course evaluation for every course. The course evaluation will be provided to the chair, and they can use it in the annual evaluation. Faculty will put on their addenda what type of evaluation they are using and the impact of that feedback on future teaching. Pete took a stab at the language, and in general it was found delightful, with a tiny tweak. He was curious about the whether the use of the IDEA form had increased or decreased, and Kendrick will follow up with Cheryl Browne. EPAG recommends to the Provost and the faculty that she go forward with this plan. Pete's language is approved.

Adjourned at 4:32

Respectfully submitted,
Jayne Niemi, Registrar