

## Natural Sciences and Mathematics Council

Meeting Minutes for November 13, 2012

Wolfe Hall 1240 3:30 – 5:00 PM

Call to Order

Roll Call – Secretary Jon Bossenbroek

**Absent:** Cushing (excused) -

**Present:** James Anderson, Brian Ashburner, Bruce Bamber, John Bellizzi, Jon Bossenbroek, Rupali Chandar (in place of Mike Cushing), Fan Dong, Hans Gottgens, Xiche Hu, Edith Kippenhan, David Krantz, Nick Podraza, Tony Quinn, Joe Schmidt, Friedhelm Schwarz, JD Smith, Gerard Thompson, Sibylle Weck-Schwarz, Don White

### ***Motion to Approval of Minutes from October 16, 2012 Meeting***

Motion by Weck-Schwarz, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Schwarz, Vote – Unanimous

Announcement:

- Krantz – invited to meet with Dean to discuss Strategic Plan
- Letter in support of Dean Bjorkman was signed by Executive Committee and delivered to Provost Scarborough

Update from Curriculum Committee – Tony Quinn

- Discussion about General Science Degree
- Quinn – need more input.
  - What group are we targeting and what niche are we trying to fill?
    - Previously it was suggested that the committee not develop a program with a target population in mind. However, this makes the options wide open.
  - For example, what are the minimum number of courses necessary in each discipline?
  - Two potential formats
    1. Students take fundamental courses in several disciplines, chem, phys, math, and biological sciences to provide a strong and broad science background
      - a. (based on U. of Houston)
    2. Students take a minimum set of core courses
      - example Chem ½, Bio ½, Phys ½, Geology
      - The remainder would come from a set of menus from which the students could choose a focus or foci
    - 2 tailored with specificity.
  - Is it a “softer” path. Can speak language not hard core scientists.
  - Do you students need broad based?
- Krantz – Do we feel the need to cover all the sciences? or most? And in 1 area get more exposure?
- Quinn – If it is a BS we can add back science classes compared to a BA, which requires more social sciences & languages.
  - Again, who is going to use it?
- Krantz – Not much support for a BS in general science.

- The BA more appropriate for teacher, law.
- JD – Flexibility to tailor degree seems to fit a BS.
- Quinn – If retention is the goal, then we need to remove some hurdles and move away from the BS-flavor.
  - For example, what is the minimum for BA for Math?
    - Weck-Schwartz – Math for life sciences. Calc 1 & 2.
    - White – Statistics, a need.
  - For chem.?
- White – what is the population we are surveying, and what already exists for “design your major”? Our college does not have this.
  - Krantz – Is there a mechanism for cross disciplinary courses?
  - White - If someone achieved 3 minors... would that be sufficient?
  - Joe – A mix and match...
  - Quinn – Is there going to be a minimum?
  - Gottgens – 1) university requirement 32 3000+ hours, 2) 60 hours of science for general science, 3) Program structured, minimum 15 from each department.
- Double-dipping credit for double majors – No action taken by committee.
- New course proposal(s)
  - Coral Reef Ecology – EEES 2720 – John W. Turner.
    - DL course. Exploration of Coral Reef Environment
    - PreReq – Marine Biology
    - Hans – Turner/Bridgeman are working with a high school already.

**Motion to Approve Coral Reef Ecology EEES2729 by Quinn.**

- 2<sup>nd</sup>, Vote - Unanimous

Discussion of policy on missed classes – Don White and the Math & Stats caucus

- White – after conversation with Paul Hewitt.
  - Faculty and Administration have different interpretations, some fuzzy, some strict, and non-overlap.
  - Paul pursued this issue. If student pushed the issue, the Provost has ultimate authority (even though a Senate rule).
  - Is there a clear interpretation? Does the college have the right to make an interpretation?
  - Thompson – believes that Faculty must make accommodations if the excuse is valid.
  - Krantz – who has the ultimate authority?
  - White – Paul was told it goes to the Provost.
  - Thompson – should link this to policy on incompletes
  - Krantz will talk to Senate about whether we can have make Dept. elaborations.

Discussion of University policy on attendance and mid-term grades with Terry Romer, Interim Registrar

- Krantz – two reasons, retention and requirement.
- Romer – Summary of context of this policy.
  - What is being asked? What is critical is last date of attendance.

- Important dates, drop dates, mid-terms
- Why?
  - Federal government gives on money, through Pell Grants, Loans.
  - If a student fails a course, or fails all courses.
    - Their last day of attendance will be used to calculate how much money is owed the Feds by UT. And then the student owes UT.
    - Repayment of Title 4 funds.
- Why Mid-term grades?
  - Active participation – “Earned” F, compared to those that are not minimally actively participating.
  - Compared to an F for those that never show up.
- Why now?
  - UT is only starting to understand what regulators want and what we are going to do procedurally, if certain events happen.
- Quinn – how binding is mid-term grade?
  - Romer – no influence on final grade. Does not get transcribed into student record. Final grades are the only ones that are transcribed.
- White – Can others see midterms?
  - Romer – These are not official academic records. Other faculty should not be able to mid-terms... but may depend on level of access.
- Gottgens – What about putting in BB?
  - Romer – BB is not congruent with MyUT.
- Hu – What percent of students is this an issue for?
  - Romer – probably 10% of our freshmen have no academic progress. Have no GPA hours, historically. This does have a very large impact on the students.
    - Over 50% of freshmen are on Pell Grants.
- Anderson – what about those students that have withdrawn?
  - Romer – don’t do anything for those that have done a web-withdrawl.
- Friedhelm – Lots of problems with this...
- Romer – trying to balance value of giving information to students vs. meeting regulatory needs.

Schedule for next Council meeting

December 11 (during exam week)

Intend to invite Rob Bruno (in charge of instructional computing)

Any others to consider inviting in the future? Other issues for discussion?

No New Business from the floor

Announcements

WAC course proposals submitted by December 1

Flu shots available this week

Adjournment at at 5:00 PM