

Natural Sciences and Mathematics Council  
Meeting Minutes for December 13, 2016  
Student Union 2579 3:30 – 5:00 PM

**Call to Order**

- **Presiding:** – Tim Mueser
- **Present:** – William Taylor (acting secretary), Jim Anderson, Hans Gottgens, Yanfa Yan, Charles Odenthal, Kevin Gibbs, Kathy Shan, David Krantz, Alison Spongberg (substituting for in for Don Stierman), Michael Cushing, John Bellizzi,
- **Absent:** Deborah Vestal, Edith Kippenhan, Sibylle Weck-Schwarz, Brenda Leady, Sandip Janda (student representative - excused), Nadine Sarsour (student representative-excused)
- **Others Present:** Bruce Bamber (Past Chair, ex officio), John Plenefisch (ex-officio)

**Approval of Minutes and Unfinished Business.**

Tim: Motion to approve minutes from November 15 meeting, motion carried.

Tim: Any old business?

Mike: We discussed last participating in a potential amnesty for changing minimum grade from D- to a C. Physics is not interested as discussed in our faculty meeting.

John B: I would add chemistry curriculum committee. We are going through on a course-by-course basis to determine whether it is appropriate. Will take some time to sort out.

Bruce: In Biology, we are still looking into this.

David: In ES for in the intro courses we likely will make the change and possibly in our gateway course in both Earth Science and Ecology sides – still evaluating.

Tim: Amnesty would require ~50 courses,

John P: Yes, mostly. But it sounds like a handful of courses so they may have to be done one by one.

**Reports from Curriculum Committee (John Bellizzi)**

John B. We have four proposals, one new course in ES, two minor course modifications and one minor program modification PhD in math. New course: Science of Gardening EEES3810. 2hr class with 1hr lab:

John P. Question for ES. Is there still discussion of a plant biology program between both departments? As this is written it says to replace botany.

Hans: This course is separate from the potential program. This course is to increase experiential learning and increase lab courses. There is a demand. This course has been run twice and is popular. This is not to replace any collaboration.

John B: We have a course modification: NSM1000 change from 1 to 2 credit hours. There is more material that needs to be presented and the course will now meet twice as often.

John P: This is being proposed by the College

Bruce: Clarification – class will not meet twice as often per week, just will now extend the course through the entire semester – currently only meets half semester.

David: With respect to strategic planning – these orientation classes will probably become standardized across the University. Increases to 2 hours will help to accommodate the extra information.

Mike: Will this create issue with student scheduling since it is increasing required credit hours?

John P: Shouldn't be a problem.

Tim: Is this a core requirement?

John P: Yes, required for graduation.

Hans: Has it gone through departments?

John P: It had to go through a department – went through Biology. It is a College requirement, so the idea was that NSM curriculum committee would be the representatives of the departments. Also, it grew out of a discussion involving instructors of the NSM1000 instructors.

John B: Next modification is a title change BIOL4110 Human Genetics to Human Genetics and Genomics. Title is more consistent with course content. Next is program modification for the PhD in Math. Program currently states that out of the 90 credit hours for the degree between 18 and 36 need to be dissertation hours. They want to remove that last line so students do not have to register for a certain number of dissertation hours; gives more flexibility to take other courses.

John P: Question to Math, are you are OK with student taking 0 hours of dissertation hours?

Charles: Has to be cleared with advisor.

Mike: Could you get a PhD with no dissertation hours?

Charles: Student still needs to write a dissertation. That is what counts. There are also many required courses.

John B: Motion to accept courses changes as a block. Motion approved.

### **Reports from Faculty Senate (David Krantz):**

David: The 15 week semester is going forward. There is a committee being formed to implement the change. Will start beginning Fall 2017 so must be in place March 2017 so students can register.

Charles: Have they settled on the times for classes?

John P: 15 minutes between classes. There are number of issues that need to be resolved.

David: Being reviewed. There are the models for class times, i.e. 50 versus 55 minutes. This decision is independent of winter interim session. There will be a separate discussion about what to use that time for.

Charles: Are we trying to coordinate start and end dates with other campuses?

David: Yes, of 13 University System of Ohio Schools, all but 4 are on the 15 week semester.

John B: In our department, we discussed how this change will mostly affect lab courses scheduling.

David: Tom Kvale advocated that we review undergraduate course for research intensive designation. There was a discussion about State reimbursement. Students that get incomplete, if an IN does not change to a grade in mid September there is no state reimbursement. There is

a request from State to the University Administration to evaluate low enrollment or low quality programs. Discussion included development of regional programs, if low enrollment programs can be combined. State pushing 2+2 programs: students go to community college for Gen Ed requirements, then transfer to 4 year institution. We have agreements with Owens, Monroe, Terra, and Northwest – may not be finalized yet.

John P: There are pathways put together at advising level.

Bruce: Can it go in reverse?

David: Relevant to that point, included in discussion of open enrollment, one proposal is to find under prepared students, send them to Community College first. The state legislature is pushing to use state funding to fund the western governors university (a for profit) competency online school. There is an inter-university council pushing back against this. Next, Amanda Bryant-Friedrich put out a request for proposals (RFP) for new innovative cross-disciplinary graduate programs. She also says our grad students need to enroll on time. Tony Quinn and Barbara Schneider have a limited bridge program for underprepared students. They are expanding to hundreds of students.

John P: There will be 2 bridge programs. One is a 6-week summer semester classes in math, English comp Emerging scholars program. It is expensive but revenue positive.

Provost Hsu interested in an early arrival program. Students arrive early into learning communities early with fixed schedules. Have some courses in common and then courses for each specific learning community, hopefully to improve retention. Will pilot this coming summer.

Kevin: further to the 6 week program students come in 6 weeks summer 2, they stay in the dorms, take eng comp, anthropology, service learning, math camp. They stick together as a cohort. We have had 30 students that last two summers. They take the courses for credit.

### **Graduate Council Report (John Plenefisch).**

John P: Further to the RFP, the idea is to hopefully also to generate funding in these areas. Also, RFP comes out in January due in March as a pre-proposal and will be vetted by the Graduate School. Graduate School will help with all paperwork to get through the State (need State approval – not easy). Help of Graduate school is important in this step. Also will be vetted by a council of Associate Deans from all Colleges. These are degree programs.

David: Are there constraints on funding for these programs? They are looking for advantages to obtain external funding, but no comment on internal funding.

John P: The idea is to grow the graduate population. Build the program to attract students.

### **Reports from NSM Chairs' meeting: Tim Mueser**

Tim: Kelly Walsh intern from Owens designing updated website in part to enhance alumni spotlights.

John P: If there are problems in the the NSM webpage, talk to me or Kathleen Walsh if it is on the front UT page.

Tim: Dean went to the Provost meeting, they want to keep better track of placement of graduating students; what is their first placement and what is their current placement. Tony Quinn updated strategic planning. We have emerging themes each with goals and objectives. Will merge into 5 mega-themes putting 30 committee members on mega-themes. He mentioned that we do not promote ourselves. For example, our entering students are 4<sup>th</sup> highest in state for

ACT scores. This is related to our broad curriculum offering, which is not well publicized. Work on website will address this. Also we have Carnegie designation, for community engagement.

John P: This is uncommon and sought after.

Tim: Also has not been well publicized, but will be addressed.

### **Reports from NSM committees**

Tim: Nothing to report on the standings committee. Brenda took the lead on the book committee.

Kathy: The book committee met supposed to poll departments regarding what our textbooks costs and what we do to reduce cost. We will generate a report.

### **New Business**

Tim: One last issue. Where do we stand with students that challenge science when it overlaps with politicized topics? As a College do we have a view on how to address these students?

Kathy: This is a consistent but not a large number of students.

David: This will be part of ongoing discussion. For some students you if it is difficult to change their minds with factual information.

Hans: This occasionally occurs in discussions of evolution.

Mike: There has to be a motivation for the student to want to see a different point of view.

John B: One idea that has crept in is that we are implicated in have an agenda when we are present scientific evidence, if the evidence disagrees with their point of view.

Tim: Do we have a role as a College?

John: We have the idea of a "great ideas in science course". Maybe we need a course to address the scientific method with specific examples.

Charles: We need to keep the truth in the air.

Tim: We have a science in society course in Chemistry.

John B: It is a non-science majors course.

Tim: As a College should we discuss if there is something to do?

Allison: We have a non-majors class with ~600/ year. The course is designed around issues that at some point were controversial. We discuss smoking for which there was early evidenced linking to cancer. But took many years to take hold in society.

David: I think we should discuss and pursue this idea.

Hans: What is the problem?

David: Do fact matter?

Hans: The students that are not convinced are some of your best students. I am not saying students should be disrespectful, but it just means you need to present the evidence.

David: For some students, evidence is not sufficient.

Jim: Cross listing some of these ideas, for example some of these issues have financial costs, so some collaboration with economics. Maybe this would be a good use for intercession.

**Meeting adjourned (5:00pm)**