Minutes of the CSBS Senate Meeting on 2/16/09

Present: Cindy Juby (Chair, Social Work), Gowri Betrabet-Gulwadi (DTGFS), Henry Owusu (Geography), Charlotte Wells (History), Taifa Yu (Political Science), Seth Brown (Psychology), Cyndi Dunn (Soc-Anth-Crim), John Johnson (Interim Dean), Brenda Bass (Associate Dean).

I. Approval of the minutes from 2/2/09

The minutes were approved as written.

II. Curriculum Review

A. Sociology, Anthropology and Criminology

SAC was represented by Kent Sandstrom and Richard Featherstone. Dr. Featherstone reviewed the proposed changes in the SAC curriculum.

One change to the sociology curriculum involves taking the current Certificate in Social Identities, Inequalities and Intersectionalities and dividing it into four separate certificates each focused on a particular area. After consultation with DTGFS, SAC has changed the title of the proposed “Certificate in Family and Aging” to “Certificate in Family and Life Course.”

Part of the purpose of the certificates is to provide something that will make students more marketable to employers. These certificates would be separate from the sociology major and minor, although many of the courses could “double-count” towards both the sociology major and a certificate. It would be possible for students to get more than one certificate if they took the appropriate courses, and certificates would not be limited only to sociology majors. The department hopes that these certificates will also be of interest to students with other majors who would like to add a focus on Inequality, Gender and Culture, etc.

Senator Yu noted that it has been traditional for departments to be asked not to add new courses unless they also drop existing courses. In this case, there are four “new courses” listed on the form, but two of them are not really new courses. 982:285 is a Readings course for individual study with a faculty member and thus does not add to the regularly scheduled teaching load. 990:120 Immigration and Transnationalism is already taught as a sociology course (980:120), and is now being cross-listed under the 990 number so that anthropology students can also count this course towards their major. So there are really only two new courses being proposed: Sociology of Gender (3 hours) and Proseminar in Criminology (1 hour). In practice, the department will be adding two new courses and dropping three (980:045, 980:176, and 980:148).

Dean Johnson asked how the budget impact of $2100 for the one-credit Proseminar course was calculated. Based on a standard teaching load of 12 hours per semester and an average 9-month salary of $50,000, one credit hour comes to $2,100. Dean Johnson recommended that a paragraph explaining this calculation be included somewhere on the form. The proseminar course will be taught on an overload basis. Once a faculty member has taught it for three years in a row, he or she would then receive a one-course release for the following semester.
Another change to the sociology program is that 800:072 (Statistics), which is offered by the Department of Mathematics, will no longer be acceptable for the sociology major. Instead, students will have to take the statistics course offered by Psychology (400:102) or Sociology (980:080). SAC has consulted with the Department of Mathematics which has no objection to the change.

One of the courses scheduled for automatic drop is 980:045 American Racial and Ethnic Minorities. This also affects students in Social Work. Dr. Sandstrom has discussed the matter with the head of Social Work who has no objections. It was noted that this is also an elective course in DTGFS.

The senate unanimously approved the changes to the SAC curriculum with the understanding that the Certificate in Family and Aging be renamed as Certificate in Family and Life Course and that a paragraph be added explaining the estimated $2100 budget impact.

Dean Johnson noted that he plans to wait until the college senate has reviewed and approved all curriculum packages before he will review and approve them as a group.

B. Psychology

Psychology was represented by Carolyn Hildebrandt and Seth Brown. Psychology did a major overhaul of their curriculum during the last curriculum cycle and hence had very few changes this year. Most of the changes involved restating when various courses would be offered in order to allow the department greater flexibility in scheduling. In general this type of change is not required to go through the curriculum approval process but can simply be made directly to the catalog. It was noted, however, that the revised scheduling might affect other departments who use psychology courses as required or elective courses for their majors. In this case, the impact analysis did not turn up any need for consultation. However, the computer often does a poor job of flagging courses which are cross-listed, used by other departments, and so forth. This is a systematic problem that needs to be addressed. Associate Dean Bass also warned that the registrar often complains if too many courses are listed in the catalog as “Variable.”

The other change involved stating that all courses with a 400 prefix could be counted as electives towards the major, rather than listing all the elective courses individually. This change was made on the advice of the Registrar’s Office.

The proposed changes to the Psychology curriculum were approved unanimously.

III. University Faculty Senate Response to Academic Program Assessment

Senator Dunn invited Julie Lowell, our college’s representative to the University Faculty Senate, to come and update the college senate on what has been happening at that level in terms of response to the Academic Program Assessment project.
At the December meeting of the University Faculty Senate, Senator Soneson made the following motion:

“Motion that the UNI Faculty Senate endorse the Academic Program Assessment Prioritization Project under two conditions; first, that monies from the Academic budget that have been given to athletics and the Wellness/Recreation Center (WRC) be returned to the academic budget; and secondly, that any proposed changes in academic programs be sent to the Faculty Senate for discussion and approval before said changes take place.”

At the January 26 meeting, this motion was divided into two parts. The University Faculty Senate voted in favor of the following:

“That the UNI Faculty Senate endorse the Academic Program Assessment Prioritization Project under the condition that any proposed changes in academic programs be sent to the UNI Faculty Senate for discussion and its approval before said changes take place.”

The other part of the motion regarding the budget was revised as follows:

“The UNI Faculty Senate resolves that the allocation of General Education Funds to Auxiliary Enterprise operations at UNI be limited to no more than a three percent of the General Education Fund, and that the savings generated by cutting Auxiliary Enterprise spending be used to maintain to the academic integrity of the university.”

This motion was tabled and may be discussed by the University Faculty Senate later in the semester after consultation with various people including the athletic director and the vice president for administration and finance.

IV. Resolution on the APA process from the Department of History

The Department of History passed the following resolution on December 17, 2008:

“All units in the University, including but not limited to Athletics and Administration, should be subject to the same scrutiny to which the Academic Programs are currently subject.”

Senator Wells brought this resolution to the college senate for discussion.

There was some discussion about the increases in spending on athletics and various considerations about what the appropriate level of spending would be. The senate also discussed the fact that spending has increased rapidly on various sorts of student services ranging from advising and the Career Center to amenities in the dorms and the Wellness Center. All of these things have meant increased spending in areas not directly related to classroom instruction, and yet they may also be necessary to attract and serve students.

Dean Johnson noted that Academic Affairs makes up the largest portion of the university budget (approximately 75%). Given the level of budget cuts that the university is currently facing, it is
inevitable that Academic Affairs will face cuts. He expects those cuts to be proportionally lower than those to other areas of the university, even if the total dollar amounts are higher.

The senate voted to endorse the following resolution to be sent directly to President Allen and Interim Provost Lubker and also to be forwarded to the University Faculty Senate for their approval: All units in the University, including but not limited to Athletics and Administration, should be subject to the same scrutiny to which the Academic Programs are currently subject.

The motion passed with five in favor and one abstention.

V. Comments from Interim Dean Johnson

Because of budget uncertainties, the deadline for submitting the fall 2009 schedule to the registrar has been pushed back to March 11. Departments must submit their schedules to the dean by March 2. He expects we will have some firmer numbers on next year’s budget by early March, and he will report to the senate at the next meeting.

For the remainder of FY2009 (until the end of June 2009), President Allen has declared a freeze on out of state travel by UNI faculty and staff. However, division vice presidents have been authorized to make reasonable exceptions to this policy. In Academic Affairs, Provost Lubker has delegated to the deans the responsibility of reviewing requests and granting exceptions. In CSBS, Interim Dean Johnson stated that he would consider the following as examples of reasons to grant exceptions to the freeze on out of state travel: 1) where the out of state travel involves the presentation of a paper or another key role at the meeting (as opposed to merely attending a conference); 2) where financial commitments had been made prior to the announced freeze on travel (such as having paid conference registrations or booking non-refundable plane tickets); or 3) the travel is being funded by grants or other non-general fund sources. Dean Johnson, thus, will be signing off on all requests for out of state travel until June 30, 2009. In the coming FY2010 (beginning July 1, 2009) there will likely be different travel policies and restrictions.

Chair Juby pointed out that the current shifts towards less funding for travel, heavier teaching loads, etc. put a particularly strong burden on tenure-track faculty who need to publish and present papers in order to achieve tenure. Dean Johnson said that if travel funds have to be limited, his philosophy is that junior faculty should generally receive priority.

In terms of increased teaching loads, there is variation across the university. Within CSBS, faculty in the Department of Psychology have been required to shift from a 2-3 teaching load to a 3-3 load. Dean Johnson also noted that in terms of distributing limited funds for adjuncts, he will give priority to departments that have had searches frozen.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55.

Respectfully submitted,

Cyndi Dunn