Minutes of the CSBS Senate Meeting on 4/20/09

Present: Cindy Juby (Chair, Social Work), Annette Lynch (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

The minutes of the 3/2/09 meeting were approved as written.

II. Curriculum Review

A. History

History was represented by Bob Martin and Jay Lees. In addition to dropping the American Studies major and Asian Studies major, the Department of History is adding two new courses, both of which have been taught before. The department also proposed an accelerated M.A. program which would allow undergraduate history majors with a minimum 3.5 GPA to take up to 12 credit hours of graduate-level history courses during their senior year. These courses would not count towards the undergraduate degree, but could be applied to an accelerated M.A. degree. This accelerated option was recommended by their most recent external review.

The senate unanimously approved the proposed changes to the history curriculum.

B. Geography

Geography was represented by Patrick Pease, Tom Fogarty, Alex Oberle, and Andrey Petrov. The department is proposing five new courses, many of which can be or already are being taught by existing faculty. They believe that it will be possible to cover these courses by alternating them with existing courses.

The Department of Geography is also proposing two new majors for approval by the Board of Regents. One is a B.S. in Geographic Information Systems (hereinafter GIS). The other is a B.A. in Geography with an emphasis in Urban and Regional Spatial Analysis (hereinafter URSA). Both of these changes were recommended in recent external reviews and are being developed in response to student demand. If both are accepted, the department would offer the following degrees: a general B.A. in Geography, a B.A. in Geography with an emphasis in URSA, a B.A. in Geography with an emphasis in GIS, and a B.S. in GIS. It has not yet been decided whether the B.A. in Geography with an emphasis in GIS would eventually be phased out.

GIS is a new field which combines geography, cartography, and computer science. The proposed major would allow UNI to take advantage of existing expertise to develop a program at the cutting edge of a field of growing technical demand. There are currently no universities in Iowa, and very few nation-wide that offer similar programs. This new program would also allow for better articulation with community college programs that offer training in GIS.
Some questions were raised about this being a B.S. rather than a B.A. degree. The proposed program meets the 58 hour requirement for a B.S. degree and also includes a research component (970:193). Questions have been raised about the fact that the major does not require calculus, but this is not a requirement for a B.S. degree.

The proposed B.A. in Geography with an URSA emphasis is a response to external reviews calling for a reorganization of the human geography component of the program as well as student demand for a more applied, career-oriented degree.

The senate unanimously approved the proposed changes to the geography curriculum.

III. Category V Review

Associate Dean Bass provided an update on the review of Category V of the Liberal Arts Core. The report will be submitted to the Liberal Arts Core Committee by May 1. The review committee recommends the development of a standing coordinating committee for Category V which would implement the review committee recommendations as well as provide on-going oversight of Category V. Such coordinating committees exist for most of the other LAC categories and are important for maintaining oversight and standards in the category.

The senate voted to recommend that the incoming dean create a coordinating committee for Category V.

IV. University Committee Elections

Chair Juby reported the results of the CSBS committee elections as follows:

Professional Development Assignment Committee - Dhirendra Vajpeyi (Political Science)
Student Appeals Board - Linda Walsh (Psychology)
Graduate Council - Marybeth Stalp (Sociology, Anthropology & Criminology)
Faculty Senate - Katherine van Wormer (Social Work)
Educational Policies Commission - Gayle Rhineberger-Dunn (Sociology, Anthropology & Criminology)
University Writing Committee - Jack Yates (Psychology)
Faculty Strategic Planning Committee - Charlotte Wells (History)

V. Election of Senate Officers

Senator Dunn agreed to serve again as secretary. Due to anticipated turnover in the Senate membership for next year, elections of President and Vice President were postponed to the start of the fall semester. The current chair will convene the first meeting in the fall.

VI. Comments from Interim Dean Johnson

The university has made cuts of approximately 9% for the upcoming fiscal year. Much of that has been absorbed centrally or by units other than Academic Affairs, so that the cuts for the
College of Social and Behavioral Sciences are around 3%. Further cuts may be necessary based on changes in state funding. The university is also developing incentives for early retirement which will be announced after approval by the Board of Regents.

The replacement of Baker Hall is at the top of UNI’s capital requests to the state legislature; it is the third priority item for the Regents Universities as a whole. Preliminary discussions of space needs are being conducted with Facilities Planning. Construction of Sabin is still on schedule with a plan to reopen in 14 months.

It is the dean’s understanding that Task Force II will provide preliminary recommendations on the Academic Program Assessment to the programs for their response prior to the end of the semester.

Despite the loss of adjuncts, the college is scheduled to provide an equivalent number of organized course sections for fall 2009 as we had for fall 2008. Admissions data for the fall are still uncertain, but it looks like we will have typical levels of enrollment.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cyndi Dunn