Minutes of the CSBS Senate Meeting on 4/4/11

Present: Tim Strauss (Chair, Geography), Carol Weisenberger (History), Taifa Yu (Political Science), Sunde Nesbit (Psychology), Cyndi Dunn(SAC), Annette Lynch (SAHS), Jim McCullagh (Social Work), Philip Mauceri (Dean)

I. Approval of the minutes from 3/28/11

The minutes from 3/28/11 were approved with no changes.

II. Curriculum Review: Social Work

There was one additional course title change for the Social Work curriculum. The Senate approved the change.

III. Curriculum Review: Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology

Carissa Froyum, Kent Sandstrom, Keith Crew and Lee Jian were present to represent SAC. Changes to the undergraduate programs in anthropology and criminology were discussed at the March 28 meeting.

In the undergraduate program in sociology, the course American Racial and Ethnic Minorities is being changed to a new, g-level course, Race, Ethnicity and Social Justice. Several courses that were formerly g-level courses have been shifted to the sophomore level to fill a gap in intermediate-level courses within the major. Changes were made to the prerequisites for Sociology of Culture, and hours were standardized for the Cooperative Education and Independent Study courses.

Several changes have been made to the B.A. program in Sociology. Two criminology courses and one anthropology course have been added as choices within the required four Core Areas of the major as well as to the certificate programs. Rather than requiring one anthropology course for the sociology major, students now have the option of taking up to one additional anthropology or criminology course as an elective for the major.

Overall the department is dropping ten courses and adding nine new ones, mostly in the graduate program.

The existing M.A. in Criminology and M.A. in Sociology are being combined into a single M.A. program in “Criminology and Sociology.” This program will have a set of core courses taken by all students with the choice of three tracks with an emphasis on applied, pedagogical, or traditional academic training. Students will continue to receive either an M.A. in Sociology or an M.A. in criminology. In essence, the program provides all of the M.A. students with a single set of core classes in theory and research in order to make better use of existing faculty resources. These changes were recommended in the department’s most recent external review and were created by a steering committee comprising representatives from each of the department’s three disciplines.
As a result of these changes, the department is eliminating six existing graduate-level courses that were more specific to either sociology or criminology. These courses are being replaced with six new graduate-level courses that will serve the new, combined program.

There was some discussion of the desirability of cooperation between the new M.A. program and the Center for Violence Prevention. Depending on student interests, applied action research could be an option for some students in the applied track.

The academic track requires a thesis and is oriented towards students intending to continue into a Ph.D. program. The pedagogical track provides training for those interested in teaching at the community college level. The applied track is intended for working professionals seeking advanced training.

One of the concerns about the existing programs is low numbers in each. By combining these into a single program with a core set of classes for all graduate students, the department will make better use of existing faculty resources. The department has been holding back on recruiting until decisions were made about what to do with the existing programs. They anticipate attracting 10-15 students per year. It was noted that it is difficult to expand the program with a limited number of graduate assistantships and that many of the department’s best undergraduates choose to enter other graduate programs where they can receive full funding. It was also noted that the department has over 300 majors in criminology with only seven criminology faculty. The department as a whole has over 500 majors in all three undergraduate programs combined. Thus, there is a limit to how many additional graduate students can be served without taking resources away from the undergraduate programs.

The Senate unanimously approved the proposed changes to the curricula of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology.

IV. Response to proposed revisions to the Liberal Arts Core

Chair Strauss presented for comments a draft statement summarizing concerns that members of our college have expressed about the proposed revisions to the Liberal Arts Core. He will incorporate suggested revisions and send the draft to the senators. The senate will vote on the statement at our April 18 meeting.

V. Comments from the Dean

Two departments have been going through academic program reviews this year. A draft of the report from the external reviewers has been received for the M.A. program in Public Policy; it has been sent back in need of several corrections. The external reviewers for the School of Applied Human Sciences will be visiting the campus soon.

Reviews of two department heads have been completed this year: Kent Sandstrom (Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology) and Patrick Pease (Geography). Phyllis Baker, Director of Women’s and Gender Studies, has also requested a review and Dean Mauceri is in the process of finishing that review letter.
The CSBS Strategic Planning Committee has been meeting the last two weeks to review progress on the Strategic Plan and make revisions to the goals and action steps for next year. The senate will review the Strategic Plan at the April 18 meeting.

Dean Mauceri has assembled ten members for an external Advisory Board for the college. He will probably add up to five additional members next fall. Their first meeting will be on April 22.

Faculty Activity Reports are due to department heads on April 15 and to the dean’s office by April 22.

There was further follow-up of issues raised at earlier meetings regarding providing faculty members with typed lists of student comments from the teaching evaluation forms. Dean Mauceri stated that he has informed department heads that faculty members must have access to the students’ written comments, but he has left it up to individual department heads to determine the best way to implement this. He does not require that department heads supply faculty members with typed comments. A university committee is currently working on developing a new system for teaching evaluations which may include on-line assessment forms.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cyndi Dunn