

Liberal Arts Council Meeting
October 18, 2011

Present: M. Aakhus, M. Dixon, T. Bordelon, K. Waters, E. Wasserman, S. Spencer, S. Rode, J. Evey, T. Hunt, I. Phillips, R. Gennaro, MT Hallock Morris, W. Rinks, C. York and B. Christie

I. Approval of Minutes from October 4, 2011

E. Wasserman moved to approve the minutes and W. Rinks seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

II. Anthropology Proposal – R. Priest

R. Priest presented the final proposal for the new major in anthropology.

It requires 33 to 39 hours, depending on whether or not the language courses (six hours) are taken to satisfy the core curriculum. The number of hours is based on current faculty resources and it is comparable with other programs nationally.

E. Wasserman moved to endorse the proposal and W. Rinks seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Questions arose regarding the guidelines for seeking initial approval to investigate a major/minor, as several new programs (Humanities major, Cognitive Science minor, Pre-Law and Legal Studies minors) are currently under consideration. R. Priest offered to share information that will help. The Long-Range Planning Committee will hold its fall meeting on October 31.

III. MALS Program in Liberal Arts – T. Bordelon

T. Bordelon distributed a handout regarding the review of and proposed changes to the MALS program. The outline suggested the sharing of responsibilities for the program between a department chair, the MALS director, and a designated faculty member. The council had a lengthy discussion on various ideas for making the program more effective and appealing for students while balancing the issues of faculty availability to teach courses within the MALS program. Suggestions included having an assistant dean or the director of Interdisciplinary Studies instead of a department chair serve in an administrative capacity for the MALS program. T. Bordelon additionally suggested that offering more online courses would benefit students within the program.

IV. Open Discussion Items for Chairs and Directors

Questions were raised regarding the timeline for the evaluation of tenure-track faculty.

Some concerns with the hiring procedure were also reported. Specifically, there have been lengthy delays in the appearance of position advertisements in discipline specific venues. Some departments requested authorization to place job ads approved by HR in discipline-specific venues affiliated with their programs. Delays with the implementation of PeopleAdmin account for many of these problems. M. Aakhus agreed that paperwork must be completed in the spring semester to fill vacancies due to retirements and other factors.

V. Academic Affairs – Assessment

Dr. Bennett met with the deans' council to discuss the assessment process and the collection of data, demonstrating how "the loop has been closed." OPRA does not have this data. Changes to curriculum need to be documented in writing and sent to OPRA. T. Hunt asked whether or not USI graduates' employment information is tracked. R. Priest and S. Spencer pointed out that the needed assessment data is already contained within each department's academic program review and assessment plan. Any relevant information (pertinent sections from academic program reviews, departmental assessment plans, etc.) should be forwarded to M. Aakhus by the end of the semester.

VI. Announcements

S. Rode announced the Columbus Day Concert with Salsa Rhythms will take place today (October 18) in Carter Hall, 4:30-5:30.

R. Priest announced that the SAC Club Field Day is on Friday October 21.

M. Dixon reminded chairs and program directors that this is a busy time of the semester for processing applications for graduation and that every effort should be made to complete paperwork in a timely manner.

J. Evey announced that the Psychology Club and Psi Chi are sponsoring their annual How to Get into Graduate School in Psychology talk on Wednesday, October 19 at 6:00 pm in LA 1004.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30