Senate

College of Liberal Arts

April 10, 2017

CC 3450

2:30-4:00pm

1. Approval of Agenda
   * Meeting called to order at 2:32pm
   * Agenda approved unanimously at 2:32pm
2. Approval of minutes from March 20th, 2017.
   * Objection raised over formation of group to examine capstone norms across departments, citing procedural issue. Discussion over formation of group. Moderator clarifies group meant for exploratory purposes only.
   * Minutes approved at 2:34
3. Moderator’s Report.
   * Moderator calls for recruitment for next year’s SEC and asks senators to check when terms finish and to notify NTT faculty of at-large positions available.
   * Library committee.
     + Member of this committee clarifies there was no intention to target specific departments in current library cuts; first databases to come up for renewal were first to be cut. Raises issue that Library Committee is dormant. Senators discuss how to obtain department input on what library keeps or cuts, and possibility of having senators survey own departments on their specific priorities.
   * Capstone
     + Senators discuss matter of dropping prerequisites for capstone courses and other upper level courses.
     + Senator suggests that a survey be conducted about departmental norms for capstones. Discussion ensues over whether an official committee should be formed, what it should be called, and potential for overlap with other standing committees. One senator suggests an ad hoc group
     + Motion to constitute Ad Hoc Curricular Concerns Committee approved with no abstentions or oppositions.
4. Dean’s Report
   * Emergency meeting on fall schedule with Provost held on 22nd March. Meeting addressed student to faculty ratio (UMB’s is low compared to sister campuses), and target number of cuts to move closer to ratio. Deal was that associate lecturers wouldn’t be repeated in the fall semester. Department chairs agreed they would do what they could with regards to staff and budget cuts. Problem lies in making cuts while fulfilling contracts and providing adequate coverage for majors. The only cancellations were ones chairs thought were acceptable (that the department “could live with”). Deans not involved in summer cancelations, except for CAPS deans. CAPS has notified Dean that all summer courses are now reinstated as long as pay is taken from July 1st. This was bargained with the union.
   * Report turned to recent articles in the local newspapers about UMB financial problems. Dean expresses disappointment over the simplification of the issues. A Senator raises concern over how articles will impact enrollment and how we met have more control over the narrative in the press. Dean agrees UMB should do more to control narrative and respond. Senators raises concern that students are quite aware of problem, that faculty feels cut out of conversation, and that lowest-paid employees (such as custodians) are ones being cut.
   * Report turned to curricular matters. Dean looks forward to findings of Ad Hoc Curricular Concerns Committee. Will also meet with Neal Bruss to discuss the Gen Ed revamp; capstone matters will factor into this. Dean raises issue of “double dipping” in major requirements. Dean reports that Ana Frega has expressed concerns that interdisciplinary programs are hurting students (that too many courses do not fulfill both majors) and that double dipping should be permitted more often. Discussion follows over policy on double-dipping, posting it on website, and concern that current policies create too many restrictions.
   * Discussion turns to Advising and YouDirect advising system. Senators express concerns about the Advising 4-yr plan. A Senator notes that students discover desire for certain majors through Gen Ed, not by coming in with idea of major right away. Dean clarifies UDirect comes from Registrar’s Office, not Advising; reason for program is to keep students on track; system may have soft opening over the summer.
   * Senators raise issue of the system pushing students to declare majors quickly, and being too inflexible to accommodate differences in progression of different majors. Concern also raised about its usefulness to transfer students, and problem of pushing students with jobs and/or families to take full-time course loads. Senators express concern that the system does not seem to account for UMB’s high enrolment of non-traditional students. Senators also raise issue of the credits awarded for courses; graduating on time would require 5 courses/yr with current credits per course. Dean notes that fault lies with NEASC evaluation.
   * Dean suggests the new Ad Hoc committee examine the program and the issues just raised.
5. Motion from the Academic Affairs Committee to approve the following new courses:
   * ANTH 356
     + Approved unanimously.
   * ENG 223
     + Senators raise concern over course’s potential overlap with courses in other departments. Motion to table discussion of course is approved.
     + Senators discuss question of overlapping courses in general: how to identify potential overlaps in curriculum; advocacy by departments for program or course in senate meetings; reconciling expertise of incoming faculty with current course offerings; listing of courses taught by faculty no longer at UMB.
   * MLLC French 122G
     + Unrevised syllabus accidentally uploaded to Xythos. Moderator will email latest version of syllabus to senators. Motion to review course online unanimously approved.
   * POLI SCI 406
     + Approved unanimously.
6. Course Changes
   * Motion to approve all changes in the following block approved unanimously.
     + MLLC GERMAN 365
     + THART 237
     + THART 360
7. Motions from Majors, Honors and Special Programs Committee to approve:
   * Political Science changes
     + Some discussion on prerequisites, and issue of students doing upper level courses out of proper or intended sequence.
     + Approved unanimously.
   * Approval for Sociology 1 changes
     + Approved unanimously
   * Approval for Sociology 2 changes
     + Approved unanimously
8. New Business
   * Moderator calls for volunteers for Ad Hoc Curricular Concerns Committee.
   * Discussion centers on role of Professional Advisors. Senators raise concerns over: separation between advising on Gen Ed matters and matters related to departments’ major or minor; problem of some Professional Advisors working with incorrect information resulting in misadvising; high turnover of Professional Advisors contributing to misinformation, discontinuity for students, and disconnect between advising and departments; how advising affects faculty-student relations, and personal rapport of student with an expert in the field itself.
   * Discussion turns to UDirect and the push for a four-year degree completion; concern expressed that this system pushes students to matriculate with major in mind, and damaging effect on the departments in which majors tend to declare later. Senators express concern over CLA First Program, the “professionalizing process” that encourages students to arrive at UMB with major and career in mind. Discussion over whether Professional Advisors are a position to consider cutting in the budget crisis. Call for Ana Frega to visit Senate meeting for clarification. Moderator notes that she will be invited to next meeting.
9. Meeting adjourned at 4:02