

**THE MEETING MINUTES OF THE COLLEGE COUNCIL  
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS  
Tuesday, November 12, 2013  
McKenna Hall Auditorium**

**ATTENDANCE**

Deans: *Dean:* John McGreevy; *Associate Deans:* James Brockmole, Peter Holland, Maura Ryan, Mark Schurr; *Assistant Deans:* Nicholas Russo, Joseph Stanfiel, Vicki Toumayan

Chairpersons and Directors: Thomas Anderson, Matthew Ashley, Jim Collins, Agustín Fuentes, Richard Gray, Elizabeth Mazurek, Rory McVeigh, Thomas Merluzzi, Hugh Page, Valerie Sayers, Robert Schmuhl, Peter Smith

Elected Faculty: David Betson, Alessia Blad, Tobias Boes, Michael Brownstein, Meredith Chesson, Noreen Deane-Moran, Denise Della Rossa, Richard Donnelly, Kathleen Eberhard, Larissa Fast, Sabrina Ferri, Lionel Jensen, Encarnacion Juarez, Vittorio Montemaggi, David Nickerson, Brian O'Conchubhair, Abby Palko, Robin Rhodes, Alison Rice, Carmen Tellez, Julianne Turner, Hannelore Weber, Henry Weinfield, Shauna Williams, Michelle Wirth

Graduate Student Representatives: Hilary Davidson, John Joseph Shanley

Undergraduate Students Representatives: Meghan Thomassen

Regularly Invited Guests, Observers, and Resource People: Robert Becht (Dean's Office), Martin Bloomer (Ph.D. in Literature Program), Maria Di Pasquale (Director, Academic Advancement College of Arts and Letters), John Duffy (University Writing Program), Geraldine Meehan (Notre Dame International), Kathleen Opel (Office of International Studies), Matt Zyniewicz (Dean's Office)

Excused: Cindy Bergeman, William Carbonaro, Remie Constable, Richard Cross, Patrick Griffin, Collin Meissner, Briona NicDhiarmada, Deborah Rotman, Jason Ruiz

Guest: Robert Norton (Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research, Notre Dame International)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the September 25, 2013 College Council meeting were approved.

## COLLEGE BUSINESS

Dean John McGreevy briefly introduced Robert Norton, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research, Notre Dame International [NDI], who talked about Notre Dame International's recent accomplishments and challenges over the past two years. R. Norton spoke from three handouts (*see below*). He summarized the activities at NDI, referring to the Institute's ten goals; he underscored and elaborated on how NDI can serve as the first point of contact for faculty questions and international engagement, whether for research, teaching or community; he mentioned the NDI resources for faculty international activities; and, he described the London Global Gateway, one of six of Notre Dame's Global Gateways. The other gateways are located in Beijing, Chicago, Dublin, Jerusalem and Rome. He then asked for questions.

Agustín Fuentes (Chairperson, Department of Anthropology) asked if R. Norton could discuss the Asian Global Gateway? N. Norton observed that the Beijing Office is relatively small at this point in its development, but he anticipates that the University will soon have a greater institutional and academic presence in China. The Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies will play an increasingly significant role in that endeavor. J. McGreevy observed that the models of international programs in London, Rome, Dublin and Jerusalem, where there are centralized buildings, might not be appropriate for the Beijing Office or programs.

Assistant Dean Joseph Stanfiel asked about NDI's last goal as stated on the handout: "Develop strategic plans for Notre Dame in Africa and the Middle East." J. Stanfiel suggested that this goal might have some factors that are beyond Notre Dame's control. J. Stanfiel asked if there are some venues being considered for students who study Arabic. R. Norton said that the University at the moment did not have such venues at this point. The program in Cairo was recently closed, yet there are some students studying in Amman, Jordan. It has been difficult to find safe venues, and the University officials will discuss this matter very deliberately in the near future. J. McGreevy added that the Middle East is aspirational for the University in terms of academic programming. The College recently chartered a committee to develop an undergraduate major that would focus on the Middle East and Islamic Studies, capitalizing on the academic strengths that the College already has in these areas. The committee will report back to J. McGreevy in the Spring 2014.

Matthew Ashley (Chairperson, Department of Theology) wondered how the partner relationships that faculty create with other universities strategically relate to the Global Gateways. One example might be the relationship with the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago Chile; how might that sort of relationship complement the Global Gateways efforts? R. Norton indicated that indeed there is a complex philosophical question about what ought to be the educational impact in the various Global Gateways. The Global Gateway in Rome, for example, needs to work out how to relate with other educational, cultural and international institutions in Rome. The Global Gateways can be catalysts to begin and maintain such relationships. J. McGreevy noted that some international agreements have been created that are more faculty-to-faculty based, mostly in science and engineering, and such agreements have normally been established almost independently of the Global Gateways.

Thomas Anderson (Chairperson, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures) asked if there are concrete plans for a Global Gateway in Latin America. R. Norton indicated that there are no plans at the moment. It does make sense to have a Gateway in Santiago, Chile. The University has expanded the Office there, and has added another staff member (now 3 staff members).

Meredith Chesson (Department of Anthropology) had questions about what NDI intends to suggest by the phrase, "Middle East"; does it mean places with Arab-speaking Muslims or could it also mean places like Turkey or Istanbul as potential Global Gateway venues? Why does not the University consider Istanbul, while also developing a program that would offer Turkish? She also wondered about the Tantarum Ecumenical Institute as a Global Gateway, located not in the heart of Jerusalem but on the city's outskirts. M. Chesson observed that the Tantarum area is very troubled, and she worries about the Notre Dame students studying in that region. R. Norton agreed that the site is problematic, but asked what site in the Middle East does not have such concerns. He also thought that a venue in Istanbul is worth greater consideration. J. McGreevy indicated that adding another language to the language curriculum poses some challenges, especially as the College tries to fill language courses.

Vittorio Montemaggi (Department of Romance Languages and Literatures) mentioned that he visited Tantarum during the summer 2013, and he had opportunities to interact with the undergraduates there. One could argue that precisely because of its location on the outskirts of Jerusalem, the venue offers opportunities and insights for understanding precisely because of the complexities and challenges of the location.

Associate Dean Peter Holland asked why Notre Dame does not seek a presence in India. It is a rapidly growing economy, and is a country that understands issues related to a faith-based University. It is also a country that many other large US universities or United Kingdom universities do not yet have presences. Notre Dame is well behind other institutions in terms of a presence in China, and Notre Dame will never catch up. Why not start a presence in India where we can have an immediate and substantial impact with fewer of the problems that we face when we try to establish an institutional presence in China. R. Norton reported that Nicholas Entrikin, Vice President and Associate Provost for Internationalization, has visited India once in the recent past and will visit again in the next couple of months. Notre Dame already has several prospects in view for future collaboration. Notre Dame is exploring more of an institutional presence in India, but does not have concrete plans in the meantime. J. McGreevy recalled that prominent scholars have advised Notre Dame to strive to have a presence in China even though Notre Dame is somewhat late to pursue educational opportunities there. The scholars also encouraged Notre Dame not to emulate efforts by other similar research universities with presences in China, but to engage in endeavors that would be unique to Notre Dame.

J. McGreevy thanked R. Norton for his presentation and discussion.

## Online Courses

J. McGreevy began the discussion about the transfer of credit policy with regard to online courses by reading from a letter addressed to him from Elliott Visconsi, Chief Academic Digital Officer and Associate Professor of English (*see below*).

Associate Dean Maura Ryan asked if the proposal had been vetted by the College of Arts and Letters Undergraduate Studies Committee. J. McGreevy noted that the proposal had not been vetted by the Undergraduate Studies Committee because the central administration thought that the Council could act quickly on the proposal without the Committee's input. Further, Semester Online is already in the books, and this proposal would allow the very few students who took those courses to get credit for them. Valerie Sayers (Chairperson, Department of English) argued strongly that the Undergraduate Studies Committee vet the proposal so that a broader array of faculty has a say in online learning initiatives. Her department recently had a bracing discussion about online learning and possible pitfalls ahead. Going through the normal channels of approval would provide faculty with opportunities to fully debate the merits of online learning. M. Ashley seconded V. Sayers point, indicating that there are scarce opportunities for faculty to consider collectively online learning at Notre Dame.

Denise Della Rossa (Department of German and Russian Languages and Literature) asked what the phrase "other partnerships" refers to in the letter from E. Visconsi or what could the phrase refer to. J. McGreevy noted that the phrase does not refer to any other concrete partnerships at the moment.

Lionel Jensen (East Asian Languages and Cultures) asked if the College Council is supposed to vote on the proposal during the meeting. J. McGreevy imagined two options: (1) remand it to the Undergraduate Committee; or (2) approve it now. Other options might arise in the discussion. L. Jensen thought that the wording of the proposal in terms of "partnerships" could extend to other universities, perhaps even Chinese universities, which could become problematic because Notre Dame might have difficulty approving courses from certain Chinese institutions. L. Jensen considered such language as "certain approved partnerships" rather than a blanket approval.

Henry Weinfield (Program of Liberal Studies) asserted that online learning makes sense if an institution does not have particular courses, such as Peter Holland's online Shakespeare course. Yet even in those cases, online learning is problematic because institutions that use the online courses would not need to hire scholars with particular expertise. Further, why does Notre Dame need online courses? Perhaps the Undergraduate Studies Committee should study in greater detail the issues with regard to online learning.

Tobias Boes (Department of German and Russian Languages and Literatures) suggested that the Council add a clause to the proposal that stipulates that even with regard to University-approved partnerships, the faculty/department reserves the right to reject particular online courses under certain circumstances, such as in instances when the courses do not meet the departmental standards. J. McGreevy thought that the proposal's language indicated that faculty are free to reject particular online courses for credit, but the proposal requests that the College remove the categorical ban which now exists for any online courses. P. Holland agreed that it is essential that departments have the ability to

reject particular online courses for credit and are under no circumstances obliged to approve any online courses for credit. Currently, however, there is no option or possibility for departments to accept transferred credit for online courses in general. The current proposal requests that the absolute ban on accepting transferred credit for online courses be altered only in the case of a course proposed under a University approved partnership.

Associate Dean Jim Brockmole asked how the other colleges in the University handle transfer of credit for online courses. J. McGreevy recalled that none of the other colleges had a ban on accepting such credit. E. Visconsi came to the College of Arts and Letters because the College had an explicit ban on such transfers.

M. Ryan had concerns about how broad the language is in the proposal. Should the proposal simply recognize the possibility of accepting Semester Online courses and not include broader University “partnerships”?

J. Stanfiel recalled that according to current College policy, every transfer of credit course is currently vetted by the departments and by the College. The College does not have to accept any course from any university. Assistant Dean Nicholas Russo indicated that the College does accept transfer of credit for Semester Online courses from other schools in the consortium as long as the request for transfer goes through the normal preapproval processes. Functionally, then, the College already accepts the online credit, but the current proposal is requesting a change in the wording of the formal policy concerning online courses. It was the understanding of those in the Undergraduate Studies Office that because the University had already engaged in the Semester Online consortium agreement, and as long as the online courses from that agreement were approved through the normal approval processes for transfer of credit, the particular online courses would be acceptable and the transfer of credit approved. Directors of Undergraduate Studies from the respective departments had to approve the courses as well.

J. McGreevy remanded the proposal to the Undergraduate Studies Committee for further consideration and clarification.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Dean McGreevy adjourned the meeting at 5:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew C. Zyniewicz  
Dean’s Executive Administrator