

**THE MEETING MINUTES OF THE COLLEGE COUNCIL
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS
April 29, 2013, 3:30 pm
McKenna Hall Auditorium**

ATTENDANCE

Deans: *Acting Dean:* Maura Ryan; *Associate Deans:* JoAnn DellaNeve, Mark Schurr; *Assistant Deans:* Collin Meissner, Ava Preacher, Nicholas Russo, Joseph Stanfiel, Vicki Toumayan

Chairpersons and Directors: Matthew Ashley, Susan Blum, Theodore Cachey, Jim Collins, David Gasperetti, Richard Gray, Patrick Griffin, Louis MacKenzie, Peter McQuillan, Rory McVeigh, Valerie Sayers

Elected Faculty: Cindy Bergeman, Tobias Boes, Joshua Diehl, Richard Donnelly, Michael Driscoll, Kathleen Eberhard, Christopher Hamlin, Lionel Jensen, David Nickerson, Brian O'Conchubhair, Abby Palko, Carolyn Perez, Robin Rhodes, Alison Rice, Kristin Valentino, Henry Weinfield, Shauna Williams

Graduate Student Representative: Peter Campbell, Erin Drew

Undergraduate Student Representative: Arnav Dutt

Regularly Invited Guests, Observers, and Resource People: Marie Blakey (Office of the Dean), John Duffy (University Writing Program), Kathleen Opel (Office of International Studies), Matt Zyniewicz (Office of the Dean)

Excused: Michael Brownstein, William Carbonaro, Noreen Deane-Moran, Denise Della Rossa, Larissa Fast, Robert Fishman, Liangyan Ge, Peter Holland, Carlos Jauregui, Elizabeth Mazurek, Vittorio Montemaggi, James Sullivan, David Thomas, Julie Turner

Guest: Susannah Monta (Department of English)

Acting Dean Maura Ryan called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the March 26, 2013 College Council meeting were approved with one minor correction.

COLLEGE BUSINESS

Philosophy, Religion and Literature Minor

Acting Dean Maura Ryan asked Associate Dean JoAnn DellaNeva to introduce a proposed Philosophy, Religion and Literature Minor. J. DellaNeva recalled that there were two minors, one called "Religion and Literature," and the other called "Philosophy and Literature," and both have been on hiatus for some time. The proposal under consideration represented an attempt to combine some of the objectives of the two individual minors.

J. DellaNeva invited Henry Weinfield (Department of Philosophy) and Susannah Monta (Department of English)—two of the proposal's authors—to underscore some salient aspects of the written proposal that was distributed before the meeting. H. Weinfield noted that the purpose of the minor is to build bridges between disciplines and modes of thought that have traditionally been in dialogue with one another and historically at the heart of teaching at Notre Dame. He noted that there would be two parallel tracks, a Philosophy and Literature track and a Religion and Literature track, and each track will require students to complete 15 credit hours of approved course work. These 15 credit hours will normally comprise at least one three-credit gateway seminar, three three-credit electives and one three-credit capstone project. There will be one gateway seminar each for the Philosophy and Literature track and the Religion and Literature track. Students may take both gateway seminars and get credit for both of them; the purpose of the gateway seminars would be to provide rigorous introduction to philosophy and literature or religion and literature. The elective courses would draw from approved courses in the College relative to the minor. The minor's advisor would work directly and closely with Directors of Undergraduate Studies to identify courses appropriate for the minor and to provide advice to students to make sure students pursue a focused yet broad range of courses. Each student directly associated with the minor would write a research essay of approximately twenty pages as a capstone project. If students are already pursuing senior theses, and it is not realistic for such students to pursue a capstone project for the minor, then students in this sort of situation could substitute a three-credit elective course instead of the three-credit capstone course. Team teaching would be built into the minor if enrollment becomes high enough. The costs for the minor would be very minimal. H. Weinfield mentioned that he would serve as the director of the minor at least initially. Administrative assistance may be necessary if the minor grows to a size that warrants such additional assistance. Current Religion and Literature courses that are being offered show a growing interest in student participation. In fact courses for the fall 2013 might be capped soon. Further, the minor will be evaluated at years 3 and 6. If the minor is not successful, it would not continue. Markers of success would include the number and quality of students in the minor, as well as the quality of the capstone projects, number of students interested in post-graduate study, and the extent to which faculty remain enthusiastic about the minor.

Assistant Dean Collin Meissner asked if there would be opportunities for Ph.D. In Religion and Literature students to teach courses appropriate for the minor? S. Monta stated that she and Vittorio Montemaggi (Department of Romance Languages and Literatures) have spoken with Joseph Buttigieg (Department of English) about the possibility of a Ph.D. minor in Religion and Literature, with the possibility of a teaching component, perhaps as assisting with one of the gateway courses or teaching one of the electives. Such a minor remains in the developing stages at this point.

Lionel Jensen (Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures) noted with regard to Appendix A in the proposal that many of the faculty who taught the listed courses are no longer teaching at the University. S. Monta observed that V. Montemaggi's teaching is contractually one-half in Religion and Literature which would give some stability to that gateway course and to some elective courses. L. Jensen noted that a couple of courses in East Asian Languages and Literatures could also be offered in the Religion and Literature track.

Matthew Ashley (Chairperson, Department of Theology) asked how the two tracks might integrate within the minor. Would there be certain basic issues similarly covered in both gateway courses, so that instructors in elective courses could presume that students have been exposed to certain material? H. Weinfield stated that students in one track should take at least one course in the other track, because such a requirement is built into the minor. S. Monta mentioned that one concern for the committee who developed the proposal was for the student who returns from a study abroad experience and joins the minor relatively late in his or her college career. How might the gateway courses be structured to allow for the most flexibility? The committee thought that the proposal as it is written provides a great deal of flexibility for the students by providing them with intellectual content and skills that would serve them well in future. The instructors of the electives, however, may need to be somewhat flexible in terms of what knowledge and skills the students bring to the elective courses. M. Ryan suggested that it might be possible for the gateway courses to have an overlapping set of core concerns, giving the integrative goal of the minor.

Rory McVeigh (Chairperson, Department of Sociology) asked how large a minor needs to become to acquire additional administrative support? Further, how common is it to have a capstone project for a minor? J. DellaNeva stated that a capstone project is required for interdisciplinary minors. If a student's senior thesis, however, overlaps with the area for a capstone project in the minor, there is no point in having the student pursue the thesis and the capstone project. The student could pursue the senior thesis, and take another elective course in the minor instead of completing a capstone project for the minor. At the very least, someone pursuing an interdisciplinary minor is expected to do some sort of capstone experience, either as a senior thesis more broadly or as a capstone essay. Further, J. DellaNeva reported that there are not instances as of yet where a minor has become so large that it requires additional administrative support.

Associate Dean Mark Schurr asked if the proposal was approved, would the other two minors—minor in Philosophy and Literature, and the minor in Religion and Literature—be removed from the possible list of minors? J. DellaNeva confirmed that the other two minors are already inactive. Further, M. Schurr asked how big an interdisciplinary minor must become to be eligible for additional administrative support, because most minors are housed in departments with their own administrative structures. J. DellaNeva mentioned that the interdisciplinary minors have not had an issue with administering the programs; the directors have been able to negotiate department resources. M. Schurr thought that if the interdisciplinary minor becomes very large, perhaps the College could identify an administrative assistant who could assist in administering the program.

Marie Blakey (Office of the Dean) asked why the Religion and Literature and Philosophy and Literature programs were discontinued. H. Weinfield explained that the programs were discontinued for two different reasons. There was not a director to administer the Religion and Literature minor, and the Philosophy and Literature minor had been directed by David O'Connor and then H. Weinfield took it over. The number of students in the Philosophy and Literature minor were low, prompting discussions about merging the two programs.

Theodore Cachey (Chairperson, Romance Languages and Literatures) recommended that after consideration of the proposal for a Philosophy, Religion and Literature minor the College Council have a moratorium on minors, especially interdisciplinary minors, in the College until the impact of the proliferation of minors is analyzed and discussed. J. DellaNeva reported that the Office of Undergraduate Studies has been studying the impact of minors in the College, and she noted that a report will be completed sometime in the summer 2013.

M. Ryan called for a vote to approve the proposed interdisciplinary minor, Philosophy, Religion, and Literature. The minor was approved, with 33 votes to approve the minor, and 5 abstentions.

One-credit Courses

M. Ryan asked J. DellaNeva to introduce the agenda item on one-credit courses. J. DellaNeva then asked C. Meissner to summarize issues in the previously distributed report on one-credit courses in the College. C. Meissner explained that the College offers over 200 one-credit courses in any given year, serving about 3,000 students. Two years ago the College limited the number of activity-related one-credit courses (e.g., band, mock trial) to three courses that can be applied to the 120-credit total for an Arts and Letters degree. Presently, however, there is not a limited on the number of one-credit courses termed, “academic,” that can be applied to the 120-credit total. A student could come to the College with 30 AP credit hours, do the major requirements which are usually 30 credit hours, finish the University required courses, and take only one-credit courses for the rest of their undergraduate career. The Office of Undergraduate Studies would like to limit the number of one-credit “academic” courses to three-courses that students could apply toward their degree credit-hour total. Students could still take as many one-credit hour courses, but only three of such courses would be applied to their 120-credit-hour total for their degree. The proposal suggests a limit of 3 one-credit activity courses, 3 one-credit academic courses, and a total of six credits for Center for Social Concerns courses or internship courses, for a total of 12-credits from such courses.

H. Weinfield asked how many credit hours do students in the College accumulate on average during the course of their undergraduate careers. C. Meissner recalled that the minimum number of credit hours is 120, but the average number of credit hours was not available at the time.

M. Ryan asked if a student pursued one-credit courses related to an interdisciplinary minor, such as a one-credit course in the Catholic Social Tradition program, would the limits apply to those courses as well. C. Meissner stated that one-credit courses generally are not applied to majors or minors.

R. McVeigh wondered how such limits would affect such programs as Music performance that has many one-credit courses for music recital or studio courses. C. Meissner observed that there is a rationale for such courses in the respective majors and those courses would not be restricted. J. DellaNeva mentioned that the proposal targets elective, one-credit courses that are taken outside of majors or minors and that are not attached to any type of program of study. Some students pursue such one-credit courses in lieu of taking a semester-long three-credit course. Assistant Dean Ava Preacher commented that some students load up their schedules with up to twenty-one credit courses. C. Meissner wonders if every one-credit course meets for 750 minutes in the classroom, and requires 1500 minutes of effort outside the classroom, at least according to the Carnegie Unit.

Cindy Bergeman (Department of Psychology) asked how the limit would affect variable-credit courses, especially the types of courses that the Department of Psychology offers. C. Meissner indicated that variable-credit courses introduce complications, because if a limit is imposed on a certain type of one-credit courses, then departments could increase the work and increase the number of credits in order to avoid the limit.

M. Schurr wondered why academic one-credit courses would not be graded with letter grades rather than “satisfactory/unsatisfactory”? C. Meissner replied that the content of the course would determine whether or not the course could be graded with letter grades. J. DellaNeva mentioned that there has not been much discrimination in terms of grading one-credit courses when applying letter grades. Most students receive an “A” for one-credit courses if they use letter grades. Why not, then, simply grade the courses as “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”? Exceptions would be allowed, but the faculty member would have to make a case for offering letter grades for one-credit courses.

Chris Hamlin (Department of History) asked how the limit of three one-credit courses was developed. The Department of History has a “History Outside the Classroom” course that is one-credit. Would those types of courses be limited? C. Meissner responded that students could continue to take such courses, but only three,

one-credit courses would be applied to their 120-credit-hour requirement for their degree. If one-credit courses are very important to a department, then the department could count them toward the major, and then the one-credit courses affiliated with the major would not be subjected to the limit of 3. Three one-credit courses, however, would need to be bundled together to be incorporated in a major.

M. Ryan summarized the discussion by indicating that there were still a few open questions about the one-credit courses, such as the grading, how the limit would affect courses in the arts, and variable credit. She suggested, then, that the Council table the proposal until the fall 2013, at which time the Office of Undergraduate Studies would submit a formal proposal, based on the report and the discussion.

AP Credit Issues

M. Ryan invited J. DellaNeva to introduce the agenda item concerning AP credit. The current policy for AP credit is that the College allows up to 30 credits (basically a full year at Notre Dame, with 15 credit hours per semester) from AP courses to be applied to the total number of credits for a degree program. The cutoff grade for the credit to be accepted is determined by the respective departments, for example, a student must have a mark of 5 on the AP test in order for the credits to be accepted for Math. Some departments have considered eliminating the practice of accepting AP credit all together. The Office of Undergraduate Studies would like to request that the College Council reflect on the matter. In terms of some arguments for retaining AP credits:

- The Admissions Office considers a generous AP policy to work in the University's favor over peer institutions, in terms of attracting top students.
- Further, with more AP credits, a student might be able to reduce his or her time at Notre Dame, and so reduce the financial burden of the student and the student's family.
- The University has many core course requirements, and reducing the number of AP credits would make it more challenging for students to finish the core requirements.

Students coming into the University with AP credits, however, are not for the most part taking more challenging courses or pursuing senior theses. They are simply graduating earlier than they would have without AP credit.

Susan Blum (Chairperson, Department of Anthropology) noted that there is an equity issue related to AP credit. Some students in high school have access to AP courses and some do not. Students with more privileged and advantaged backgrounds usually have access to such higher-level courses. Further, AP exams are commercial exams, coming from the College Board. The exams do not test necessarily on what University professors want students to learn. The AP exams tend to focus exclusively on facts rather than on other skills or dispositions. Further, S. Blum would like the University to reconsider the core requirements at some point. Meanwhile, she stated that, aside from the competition with the University's peer institutions, the University does not gain much by providing AP credit.

Patrick Griffin (Chairperson, Department of History) mentioned that his department voted to do away with AP credit. The AP courses and exams do not teach what history courses offer at the University level. Further, if students test out of the history survey courses, then the Department does not have an opportunity to see the students and attempt to recruit them as majors.

Richard Gray (Chairperson, Department of Art, Art History, and Design) asked how Notre Dame compares with institutional peers on this matter. J. DellaNeva responded that Notre Dame does not compare very well, because, for the most part, Notre Dame gives more credit for AP courses. Some of Notre Dame's aspirational

peers do not provide any credit for AP courses, and there is a trend among institutions to offer fewer credits for such course work.

Assistant Dean Ava Preacher recalled that AP courses were used to help gauge student ability and place students in upper-level courses rather than allow students to use the courses for credit to replace courses. Princeton and Harvard, for example, use the courses to help place students in courses rather than give them credit for the AP work.

David Gasperetti (Chairperson, Department of German and Russian Languages and Literatures) indicated that AP credit may allow students to pursue combinations of majors, such as a language plus another major. He suggested that we should think about how the reduction of AP credits may impact the language departments, for example. Or perhaps think about the core requirements while also considering AP credit. The burden of the numerous core requirements and the acceptance of AP credit are related issues.

M. Ryan thanked J. DellaNeva and the Office of Undergraduate Studies for their analysis and fruitful discussion.

Predatory Open Access Journals

M. Ryan invited Associate Dean Mark Schurr to introduce the agenda item about predatory open access journals. M. Schurr summarized the two articles that were distributed to the Council members before the meeting. He then displayed a website that gives guidelines about how to evaluate whether an open access journal is predatory or not. There are open access journals that are schemes to make money in a predatory fashion. Two faculty in the College have been victimized by such journals to varying degrees. M. Schurr agreed to write a paragraph or two to help explain what predatory open access journals are, so that department chairpersons can inform their respective faculty. M. Ryan thanked M. Schurr for his presentation and discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew C. Zyniewicz
Dean's Executive Administrator