

**THE MEETING MINUTES OF THE COLLEGE COUNCIL
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS
March 20, 2012
3:30 pm
McKenna Hall**

ATTENDANCE

Deans: *Dean:* John McGreevy; *Associate Deans:* JoAnn DellaNeva, Maura Ryan, Mark Schurr, *Assistant Deans:* Paulette Curtis, Ava Preacher, Nicholas Russo, Joseph Stanfiel, Vicki Toumayan,

Chairpersons and Directors: Matthew Ashley, Susan Blum, Theodore Cachey, Jr., Jim Collins, Olivia Remie Constable, Patrick Griffin, Louis MacKenzie, Elizabeth Mazurek, Peter McQuillan, Robert Norton, Dayle Seidenspinner-Núñez

Elected Faculty: Tobias Boes, Denise Della Rossa, Richard Donnelly, Robert Dowd, Noreen Deane-Moran, Kevin Dreyer, Margot Fassler, Mary Frandsen, Karrie Fuller, Lionel Jensen, Siiri Scott, Marcus Stephens, Elliot Visconsi, Shauna Williams

Graduate Student Representative: Katie Bugyis

Undergraduate Student Representative: Mariel Lee

Regularly Invited Guests, Observers, and Resource People: Marie Blakey (Office of the Dean), Geraldine Meehan (Office of International Studies), Thomas Merluzzi (Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts), Matt Zyniewicz (Office of the Dean)

Excused: Michael Brownstein, Laura Carlson, Joshua Diehl, Erika Doss, Peter Holland, Richard Jensen, Essaka Joshua, William Krier, Nelson Mark, Maria McKenna, David Nickerson, Jessica Payne, Robin Rhodes, James Sullivan, Kristin Valentino

Dean John McGreevy called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the February 13, 2012 College Council meeting were approved with a minor correction.

COLLEGE BUSINESS

Undergraduate Enrollment

J. McGreevy introduced Donald Bishop, Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Enrollment. D. Bishop acknowledged that his office is currently making admissions and financial aid decisions and so it is timely to speak with the Arts and Letters College Council. He mentioned that this year again had an historic applicant pool of undergraduate applications with just under 17,000 applications and 5,500 of those were in the top 1% in the nation in their high school performance and/or their national test scores. About 3,800 will be accepted and about 1,995 will enroll in the fall. This year's group will be among the top-10 private national research university profiles in the country. The top five are usually

Harvard, Yale, Princeton, MIT, and Stanford. Notre Dame now competes well with the top six to fifteen schools.

One criticism that D. Bishop has of Notre Dame's admission system after a year in his position is that the Admissions Office does not have good information on the University's academic programs and the admissions staff are not trained to talk about the academic programs when they attempt to recruit students. D. Bishop's office will work with departments in the summer 2012 to gather better academic program information, such as: (1) What are the distinctive aspects of each program? (2) What knowledge and skills will students acquire in the majors? (3) What are the outcomes of the alumni of each major, five years out, twenty years out? What sorts of jobs/careers do graduates pursue? What is the long-term payout as well? D. Bishop's office will soon work with the deans, chairpersons, departments, and Alumni Office to collect such information. This will help the Admissions Office speak to prospective students about research, honors theses, and the intellectual drive and curiosity of Notre Dame students. D. Bishop's staff hope to visit departments and institutes at least twice a year to gather updates on what is happening in each program.

There has been a 17% increase in overall applications in the last two years, while applications to the business program have gone up 34% in applications in the last two years. The Mendoza School of Business and the College of Engineering have asked the Admissions Office to limit the number majors. D. Bishop's staff have attempted to do so. More prospective students, however, are beginning to apply as one type of major and change their minds when they arrive on campus. The Admissions Office will work with the colleges across campus to attempt to suppress such changes, especially by trying to ascertain the passion applicants have for certain subjects.

D. Bishop invited departments to inform his office of one or two faculty members who could serve as resources for the Admissions Office to contact if they have questions about prospective students and about recruiting students who might not typically apply to Notre Dame.

Robert Norton (Chairperson, Department of German and Russian Languages and Literatures) stated that at the forefront of the College of Arts and Letters' concerns this year has been the higher number of students pursuing majors in business and the simultaneous flight of students from the College of Arts and Letters. Has the Admissions Office witnessed a qualitative difference in the applicants to the business school? And, what has the Admissions Office done to help alleviate the shift in majors from Arts and Letters to the business school once they have been admitted to Notre Dame? What mechanisms are being considered? D. Bishop replied that the profile for business majors shows students who are high achievers with high academic ability, and the profile is getting closer to the profile for the applications to the science and engineering programs in terms of the sheer numbers in national test score averages. He fears that there are some students who are pursuing Notre Dame business majors simply because of the Mendoza College of Business's number one ranking. The challenge is to identify such prospective students and decline their admittance because in the long term such students will not be productive peer learners for other students.

In terms of mechanisms to alleviate the situation, D. Bishop offered examples of what other institutions are doing. Wharton Business and Cornell University stress that it is difficult to transfer to other colleges within the University once accepted. Students then must be confident of their selection of college when they apply. This type of approach would be problematic at Notre Dame because of the First Year of Studies program. Yet, such a mechanism remains the only mechanism that D. Bishop would trust to help alleviate the large shifts in changes of colleges at Notre Dame.

J. McGreevy mentioned that the College has pursued soft-measures, such as the Business Economics minor, but the data so far have not shown much progress in alleviating the situation. In the end, the University will have to determine what the appropriate size of each college should be. And then pursue when students should decide on the college or major that they intend to pursue. The cleanest mechanism that would help alleviate the large shifts in colleges would be a mechanism at the time of admission to the University. Students could be admitted to Science, Engineering or Arts and Letters, allowing students to switch majors among those three, and, if a student was not admitted into Business at the time of admission, then the student could not switch into Business. Such a mechanism would be contrary to the understanding that students make better decisions about their respective majors the longer they are in school and contrary to the basic gestalt of the First Year of Studies which is premised on the idea that students explore different disciplines during their first year and make a choice for a college. D. Bishop observed that the Board of Trustees might not agree with faculty on this issue, the appropriate size of each college.

Elizabeth Mazurek (Chairperson, Department of Classics) asked if Notre Dame is losing prospective students to schools like Princeton, Stanford, and Harvard because the students view the first year curriculum at Notre Dame as too restrictive. D. Bishop mentioned that Notre Dame loses students to such institutions because the prospective students see those institutions as being more selective, and not because of any other specific reason. The prospective students think that there will be more students at those institutions like themselves. D. Bishop observed that First Year of Studies does not appear to be a negative attribute for Notre Dame prospective students, but in fact is viewed favorably. Parents think that their sons and daughters will receive good academic advice during the first year.

Margot Fassler (Departments of Theology and Music) mentioned that she has heard many faculty complain about Notre Dame undergraduate students, especially about the young women. There is a profile at Notre Dame of a woman student who lacks ambition for the life of the mind. M. Fassler reported that she now sees this sort of profile now, and would like the issue raised and discussed. D. Bishop recalled that there is a first-year student survey, the UCLA SERP survey that Notre Dame and other peer institutions use. He thought it might help to ask the Institutional Research Office to look at the data to see how Notre Dame women compare with their peers at other top-thirty institutions in terms of their career goals. J. McGreevy offered that a counter trend is that more and more women are winning national academic awards and honors, so much so that such awards are going disproportionately to women.

Elliot Visconci (Department of English) asked if Notre Dame is pursuing more students who are gifted in one or two areas, such that the courses could become groups of such students passionately pursuing what they are very interested in. D. Bishop confirmed that Notre Dame has been attempting to pursue such a student body and this sort of profile will become more pronounced under his leadership. Such students are very productive and intellectually active students. Notre Dame needs to encourage more of this type of student to apply.

Patrick Griffin (Chairperson, Department of History) wondered how the Admissions Office balances all the different constituencies who have an interest in admission to Notre Dame. D. Bishop recognized that there are many different linear interests at Notre Dame, such as the athlete interests, alumni group interests, University Relations/Development interests, faculty interests, Holy Cross Order interests, who are pushing the Admissions Office on their own interests at the exclusion of others' interests. The Office simply tries to satisfy as many interests as possible recognizing that none of the interests will be satisfied all of the time. The University decided years ago that about 10% of an entering class will be alumni children; and, notably, a disproportionate number of the top applicants are alumni children.

In the end, D. Bishop will invite faculty to be amateur admissions officers this summer to better understand the process of admissions and to help advise the office, and his office will invite departments to submit names of faculty and students who could serve as resource persons for the Admissions Office so that the office has more opportunities to learn about different departments and programs.

J. McGreevy thanked D. Bishop for attending, and D. Bishop indicated that he would like to visit the College Council again soon to present and discuss a broader plan for the admissions process.

Language credit by examination

D. McGreevy invited Associate Dean JoAnn DellaNeve and Dayle Seidenspinner-Núñez (Chairperson, East Asian Languages and Literatures) to present the topic: How does the College recognize the language work that students have done at non-credit bearing institutions? D. Seidenspinner-Núñez discussed the salient points of the proposal for an exemption from the credit-by-exam policy passed previously by the College Council in 2003.

The proposal from the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures is that the Office of Undergraduate Studies waive up to 8 credits by examination for future participants in well-structured, non-credit bearing language programs (especially the Critical Language Scholarship program offered by the U.S. Department of State) with the following conditions:

1. The College Council approve to waive the injunction against the no-credit-by-examination policy;
2. Students receive departmental permission in advance of attending such a language program;
3. ACTFL testing must be done for the student by the Critical Language Scholarship Program (CLS) at the end of the period of study to ensure the use of a nationally respected test at no cost to Notre Dame or its students;
4. The Office of Undergraduate Studies will correlate the results of individual students' ACTFL tests with data already acquired regarding range of results at each level of Notre Dame course to ensure accuracy of placement and credit (the department is responsible for establishing cut-off points for credit amounts and providing this information to the Undergraduate Dean's Office and the Registrar's Office);
5. Students must successfully complete at least one semester of the next level of language study (when offered) in order for credit to be awarded; this ensures that the placement/credit level is accurate as well as provides a mechanism for more predictable and increased enrollments in higher levels of language instruction. The exact mechanism of this retroactive credit will be worked out with the Office of the Registrar and will be handled by the Office of the Undergraduate Dean.

Associate Dean Maura Ryan spoke in favor of the proposal. Part of the concern of the no-credit-by-exam policy passed in 2003 was to ensure that Notre Dame students were receiving a rigorous upper-level language experience and to protect enrollments in upper-level language courses at Notre Dame. This proposal addresses both of those concerns.

Assistant Dean Ava Preacher asked if there would be an end to such an exemption policy when, perhaps, students are able to take their language courses within Notre Dame's credit-bearing courses, either on the main campus or away from the main campus? D. Seidenspinner-Núñez projects that students will continue to pursue language courses at non-credit-bearing institutions, especially given that many

students begin to pursue languages in their sophomore years. Students are able to take what is essentially their third year of course work during the summer between their junior and senior years.

J. McGreevy was persuaded by the excellence of the CLS program. It is state of the art, and the government pays for most of the expenses.

R. Norton explained that he is also in favor of the proposal but does not think the College should restrict the exemption to the CLS program. There are other good programs for which such an exemption would be appropriate. J. McGreevy agreed, the exemption would be applied to other programs as well so that the College Council would not need to revisit the specific exemption for each program.

Denise Della Rossa (Department of German and Russian Languages and Literatures) noted a distinction between credit and courses. In the Chinese curriculum a course could be four credits, two whole courses.

Mariel Lee (Undergraduate Student Representative) mentioned that she is a senior majoring in Chinese. She started Chinese when she was a first-year student and Arabic when she was a sophomore. She unfortunately could not finish Arabic because of the credit loads. She opined that this exemption would be a great opportunity for students to be able to finish the requirements of certain language programs. In fact all students in the Chinese program should be encouraged to attend the CLS program. M. Lee expressed a concern that the College could monitor the native language student participation in the program.

J. DellaNeva suggested that the sentence on the second page of the proposal in the first second paragraph read: "The Office of Undergraduate Studies has agreed to award **up to** 8 credits by exam for future participants with the following conditions:" rather than "The Office of Undergraduate Studies has agreed to award 8 credits by exam for future participants with the following conditions:".

Assistant Dean Nick Russo asked if all the conditions would apply to each program. D. McGreevy noted that the Council is voting on the principle of allowing students to get credit by examination, and the exemption and credit can be applied on a case-by-case basis. In short, a student does not automatically receive credit if he or she takes and passes the appropriate language examination. Credit will be applied on a case-by-case basis.

J. McGreevy asked for a vote. There were 32 votes in favor of the proposal, 2 against, and 2 abstentions.

One-credit non-academic courses

J. DellaNeva together with Assistant Dean Paulette Curtis introduced the topic concerning one-credit, non-academic courses. The Office of Undergraduate Studies has recognized a proliferation of one-credit, non-academic courses, and such courses are listed on student transcripts. The Office would like to streamline the approval process for taking such courses and limit the type of courses that are listed on transcripts as opposed to a resume or curriculum vitae. P. Curtis reviewed the handout that outlined the proposal: "The Assistant Deans in the Office for Undergraduate Studies, who advise Arts and Letters students and also assess and apply the College's academic policies and procedures, propose that the matter of one-credit courses be reviewed by a subcommittee consisting of the Assistant Deans, several College Council faculty members, and the members of related units that most frequently offer one-credit courses to students in the College (i.e., the Center for Social Concerns and First Year of Studies). While many academic departments offer students the option of taking some courses for variable credits, including those for one credit, the courses that we propose be considered for review here are those that

are classified as activities (e.g., bands and other ensembles), experiential learning courses (e.g., Summer Service Learning Projects) and finally, seminars and other workshops that are offered by non-academic units that have traditionally, and somewhat perplexingly, awarded students credit (e.g., Business Boot Camp). Late-starting variable-credit courses may also be considered for review along with courses offered by other academic, though non-departmental units, like First Year of Studies.” The proposal suggests that the subcommittee begin review of this matter during the Spring 2012 term and provide a set or recommendations to the Council in Fall 2012. P. Curtis invited the Council members to email J. DellaNeva to indicate their interest in serving on the committee.

R. Norton would be against restricting the number of one-credit academic courses, because one-credit academic courses arise mostly to address a particular need, especially with regard to language courses. Sometimes faculty need to add a one-credit course to address grammatical issues, stylistic issues, or issues related to translation skills, for example.

D. Della Rossa agrees that the one-credit, non-academic courses should not be added to student transcripts and would be willing to serve on the subcommittee. As the Director of Undergraduate Studies for her department, she reviews transcripts and many students appear to have over ten courses a semester.

J. McGreevy summarized that a subcommittee will be formed to review the College policies concerning one-credit courses, especially with regard to student overload during a particular semester.

Utilization of the New Rome Facility

J. McGreevy shared some photographs of the newly acquired Notre Dame building in Rome, Italy, and explained that an Arts and Letters committee was formed to advise the Dean and the School of Architecture on how best the College of Arts and Letters could utilize the building. Theodore Cachey (Chairperson, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures) chaired the committee. The committee submitted a report to J. McGreevy and the Council members received a copy of that report. J. McGreevy invited Council members to begin to think about potential conferences or workshops that would utilize the space. Meanwhile, representatives of the College will continue to work with the School of Architecture to plan the curricular offerings and to think through issues such as the use and construction of space in the building and the creation of an onsite library. The building is projected to be ready for occupancy in the Fall 2013.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew C. Zyniewicz
Dean’s Executive Administrator