

**THE MEETING MINUTES OF THE COLLEGE COUNCIL
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS
April 26, 2011
3:30 pm
McKenna Hall Auditorium**

ATTENDANCE

Deans: *Dean:* John McGreevy; *Associate Deans:* Daniel Myers, Maura Ryan, Dayle Seidenspinner-Núñez, *Assistant Deans:* Paulette Curtis, Ava Preacher, Nicholas Russo, Joseph Stanfiel

Chairpersons and Directors: Matt Ashley, Charles Barber, Theodore Cachey, Olivia Remie Constable, Don Crafton, Li Guo, Richard Jensen, Louis MacKenzie, Peter McQuillan, Rory McVeigh, Thomas Noble, Robert Norton, Mark Schurr, John Sitter

Elected Faculty: Tobias Boes, Laura Carlson, Noreen Deane-Moran, Richard Donnelly, Joshua Diehl, Mary Frandsen, Liangyan Ge, Patrick Griffin, Sandra Gustafson, Susan Harris, Sean Kelly, Michael Pries, Alison Rice, James Sullivan, David Thomas, Julianne Turner, Kristin Valentino, John Welle

Graduate Student Representative: Brandon Bruning, Eleanor Pettus

Undergraduate Student Representative: Bridget Mullins

Regularly Invited Guests, Observers, and Resource People: Robert Becht (Office of the Dean), Marie Blakey (Office of the Dean), Matt Zyniewicz (Office of the Dean)

Excused: Richard Cross, Jo Ann DellaNeva, Margot Fassler, Robert Fishman, Agustín Fuentes, Richard Gray, Peter Holland, William Krier, Jessica Payne, Gretchen Reydam-Schils, Vickie Toumayan, Hannelore Weber, Shauna Williams

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dean McGreevy welcomed everyone to the April 26, 2011 College Council meeting.

The minutes from the March 30, 2011 College Council meeting were approved with one correction. Eleanor Pettus is a Graduate Student Representative, not an Elected Faculty Member.

COLLEGE BUSINESS

Interdisciplinary minor in Constitutional Studies

Dean McGreevy introduced Professors Michael Zuckert and Phillip Muñoz who, in turn, underscored a few aspects of the interdisciplinary minor in Constitutional Studies. M. Zuckert introduced the minor, talked about its origin and what he hopes it will accomplish. M. Zuckert explained that the impetus for the minor came from internal and external developments. As for the internal developments (within the University), the Department of Political Science introduced a new field for its graduate program, Constitutionalism, Law, and Politics which would be coordinated with the minor under discussion, as an undergraduate component of it. There is also a large demand among students for constitutional/law related course work. Further, the Law School has recently put together a program in Constitutional Structure and Design. The minor would also involve collaboration with the Law School. The external factors involve a grant from the Potenziani family to help fund the minor, including

the funding of a new faculty line in this field, an undergraduate essay contest, a lectureship, undergraduate internships, graduate stipend supplements, dissertation fellowships, and funds for library enhancement.

M. Zuckert elaborated that the minor itself consists of the standard requirements for a minor, five courses, one of which is to be a newly developed introductory course, which Phillip Muñoz will teach in 2011-12. Another course will be a capstone course (not on the books yet because there are not any students who at this point need a capstone course in the minor). The capstone course will have variable content. The remainder of the minor would be three courses to be chosen from a substantial number of options from around the University, including courses from with the College of Arts and Letters and courses in the Law School.

Dean McGreevy opened the floor for discussion.

Assistant Dean Ava Preacher noted a concern that undergraduates would take the course, Constitutional Criminal Procedure, which might be a little advanced for undergraduates to take along with the Law School students. She also asked who would direct the program. M. Zuckert pointed out that the minor proposal outlines the governance structure, but the designated director who would start next year would be P. Muñoz, and there would be a steering committee of five or six faculty. And, the list of the courses in the proposal was given to the authors of the proposal by the Law School who thought that undergraduates could handle the courses.

Associate Dean Dan Myers stated that we need to decide the amount of time for students to pursue the minor before the College assesses the minor and whether or not to continue to offer it. M. Zuckert acknowledged that the proposal does not explicitly state when it will be assessed, but the steering committee is charged with assessing the program, perhaps after three years. M. Zuckert expects, however, that the pattern of enrollment in courses related to the minor shows that the minor most likely will have a substantial student enrollment. D. Myers wondered if the proposal should adopt a lower-level number as a baseline for the steering committee to consider when they review the minor in three years? M. Zuckert mentioned that the proposal estimates about 200 students will pursue the minor in any given year; and, from his own perspective, he thought that 50 students would be ideal, and perhaps that number would be helpful for the steering committee's future assessment.

Dean McGreevy would like to see the following added to the proposal: That after three years, if there was not a minimum of 50 students pursuing the minor, we would reconsider whether or not to continue offering the minor.

Dean McGreevy further noted that the College currently has about 23 minors, and we need to put sunset clauses into all minors so that we remain attentive to them. We need to be cautious of overburdening the assistant deans and giving the students too many choices.

A. Preacher expressed concern that students might think of the minor as a pre-law path, and she would like the students not to have that impression. M. Zuckert agreed. He would like the minor to involve broader reflections about the political and philosophical meaning of law and constitutionalism. Indeed, the authors of the proposal would not want students to engage the minor exclusively as a track to law school and would try to discourage students from thinking about the minor in this way. P. Muñoz is also completely sympathetic with A. Preacher's point. He is actually on the Law School faculty. He has many students take his Constitutional Law class as undergraduates, thinking it will prepare them for law school. For that reason, he asks law students to come to class to explain what law school actually is.

John Sitter (Chairperson, Department of English) wondered if we could distinguish between the minor and the umbrella program in which it is housed. The College Council approves the minor, and the broader program will

carry the Potenziani name. J. McGreevy agreed; we do not name minors, and we will not vote on the program that came from the Potenziani benefaction.

Matt Ashley (Chairperson, Department of Theology) asked what makes the capstone course different from the other courses. M. Zuckert explained that the intent is to gather the students back together, after they have taken the introductory course and the three additional courses. It will be similar to the introductory course but at a different level to explore together some aspects of what the students learned in their four previous courses. There is not a blue print for the capstone course at this point. P. Muñoz shared what he hopes to do in the introductory course so that the Council members would have a better understanding of what the capstone course might cover. The introductory course will have three components. The first component will cover the philosophy of constitutionalism in classic texts on the defense of the rule of law, such as Aristotle's *Politics*, Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government*, and Montesquieu. The second component will cover American Constitutionalism in such texts as *The Federalist Papers*, Lincoln-Douglas debates, Woodrow Wilson and FDR, representing modern liberalism. The third component may have a comparative bent, comparative constitutionalism or perhaps on constitutional politics and more contemporary issues or cases.

P. Muñoz then observed that a capstone course will vary, depending on how many students will take the course. Ideally, the capstone courses would be small. A capstone course that P. Muñoz would like to teach is the topic Abraham Lincoln and the Constitution, in which students would be able to engage a subject in greater depth, and write a longer term paper. It would most likely be a course that would use an historical episode, or one that focuses on one constitution or one area of constitutional philosophy or history, and would pursue the topic more deeply.

Ted Cachey (Chairperson, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures) wondered about the relationship to Political Science which has the most majors in the College; he more particularly asked about the demographic question within the College. The proposal indicates the minor will serve about 200 students, and that would most likely be the largest minor in the College. Dean McGreevy stated that Science, Technology, and Values has about 130 students, and Education, Schooling and Society also has about 130 students; so, the proposed minor in Constitutional Studies would be the largest minor in the College. T. Cachey asked if a secondary major was considered as opposed to a minor. And, have the unintended negative consequences on some of the other minors, particularly the language minors, been considered, given the fact that Political Science will have the largest major and the largest minor? M. Zuckert did not have solid evidence that the minor would attract 200 students, and actually hopes that the minor will be smaller than 200 students. Those who wrote the proposal did not have information about how many minors were in the College nor about the size of those minors. M. Zuckert does not think that the Constitutional Studies minor would draw students away from the language minors, because the minors attract different students with different interests. T. Cachey asked if M. Zuckert expects the Political Science majors to pursue the Constitutional Studies minor. M. Zuckert responded that some might.

A. Preacher observed that the capstone experience in all the other minors is a capstone essay. When the College defined minors, the minors were described as four courses and a capstone essay at the end. It may be easier if the Constitutional Studies minor replicates that description, because students would simply work with the particular faculty member in the particular area of interest.

Tom Noble (Chairperson, Department of History) asked if it was possible for a student to take a major and a minor in the same department. A. Preacher answered that a student could take a major in Spanish, for example, and a minor in Italian.

Dean McGreevy liked the proposal because it is the only minor that links a professional school with an undergraduate curriculum. The proposal, however, does not address the potential costs. What is the faculty cost of the minor; for example, how many sections of the introductory course would be needed?

Brandon Bruning (Graduate Student Representative) asked if many of the courses are already staffed. P. Muñoz confirmed that many of the courses are already offered, with some courses offered more often than others. Further, M. Zuckert recalled that the Potenziani grant offered one new line for a new faculty member to teach in the area of the program.

Dean McGreevy summarized the two friendly amendments: (1) establish before final approval a sunset clause with a rough minimum of fifty students after three years; (2) clarify how many courses would we anticipate offering for the minor.

A. Preacher moved to approve the minor with the friendly amendments. D. Myers seconded the motion. 41 Council members approved the minor, with no one opposed, and there were 5 abstentions.

English major concentration in Creative Writing

Dean McGreevy introduced Chris VandenBossche (Department of English) who, in turn, introduced the proposed concentration in Creative Writing. C. VandenBossche stated that the concentration addresses the student demand for a Creative Writing concentration. Further, when the department brought the new honors thesis in conformity with the two-semester requirement, they realized that they needed to regularize how they treat the Creative Writing thesis, because there have been questions about what qualifies a student to write a Creative Writing thesis. Normally students have taken courses in a major and have presumably learned the discipline, and therefore know what to do when it comes to writing a thesis. There has not been an explicit requirement that students have any training in Creative Writing in order to write a Creative Writing thesis. The concentration is a way to give rigor and preparation to students who will pursue an honors thesis in Creative Writing. Students will not be able to pursue a Creative Writing honors thesis unless they are in the Creative Writing concentration.

Dean McGreevy opened the floor for discussion.

A. Preacher is concerned about the faculty who will teach in the concentration, because the number of Creative Writing faculty is small. How is the department going to cover the concentration courses? C. VandenBossche replied that the department is already doing five or six theses this year, and that number will not increase much. Further, the department is already staffing the courses that will be in the concentration, and so the proposed concentration is simply formalizing what the department already does. Students must apply to be in the concentration; they cannot simply declare the concentration as they would a major. The students must demonstrate an ability or capacity to be successful in Creative Writing. The application process then enables the department to have some control over the number of students, and to prevent the concentration from getting too large.

Assistant Dean Joe Stanfiel moved to approve the proposed concentration in Creative Writing, and Joshua Diehl seconded the motion. 42 faculty voted to approve the concentration, with 1 opposed vote, and there were no abstentions.

Enrollments

Dean McGreevy invited Dean Hugh Page (First Year of Studies) [FYS] and Associate Dean Angie Chamblee (FYS) to the front of the room to discuss enrollment issues with regard to the Mendoza College of Business [MCOB].

Dean McGreevy summarized the informational topic to inform the Council members that we are in a new moment in the history of enrollment at Notre Dame. The enrollment in the College of Arts and Letters has declined significantly over the past three years, while the enrollment in MCOB has risen dramatically over the past three years. In the spring 2011, 34% of those who declared a major, chose to major in business, the highest percentage ever. We do not know what the future of this trend is. The number of Arts and Letters majors and the number of credit hours taught by Arts and Letters faculty have declined much more slowly than the number of first majors going to MCOB. The slow rate of decline of Arts and Letters majors is due to the number of second majors in the College of Arts and Letters from other colleges. A student can double major in an Arts and Letters major from MCOB, but one cannot do the reverse. Erin Hoffmann Harding and her office will pursue a more sophisticated study of what might be occurring.

The three biggest factors seem to be: (1) MCOB's number one ranking that MCOB received as an undergraduate business college. This does appear to be influencing students and their decisions about their majors; (2) the general economic crisis, relatively few of our elite private institutional peers have undergraduate business schools, and the closest is Wharton at the University of Pennsylvania. Dean McGreevy called the Dean there, and they have also witnessed an increased interest in Wharton undergraduate business school, because of the perception that undergraduate business school students will fare better in the job market. There is also some parental anxiety about spending a good deal of money on a college liberal arts education; (3) another smaller factor is students leaving engineering. The retention rate has improved at Notre Dame; it is above the national average. But those students who do leave engineering in the first and second years, almost uniformly go to business, as opposed to students who leave science and who go to a variety of different colleges, but a majority go to the College of Arts and Letters.

Dean McGreevy has chartered a small committee that is working on the enrollment issue, and the committee will generate some proposals about how to address the issue. There are many possibilities: (1) have a gate at the end of the first semester of first year, and students would apply to the business school after their first semester in their first year. Students would be admitted based on their grade point average and other dimensions of the applications; (2) have a gate at admissions; have students choose a college that they plan to enter when they apply to Notre Dame. This would be a fundamental restructuring of the undergraduate experience, and could not be done quickly. Most other elite colleges with business schools either have a gate at admissions or a gate at the end of the sophomore year.

Other options would include: (1) having the College's best instructors teach first-semester, first-year courses on a more regular basis. This is the time when students are making their decisions; (2) improving our first-year orientation activities; (3) informing parents and students better about the career opportunities for their undergraduate students; we need to alleviate anxiety by presenting data to parents about previous students' successes in landing positions after they graduate; (4) creating a four- or five-course minor program in business that would be housed in the College of Arts and Letters, similar to the business minor offered in the College of Science; (5) growing the Notre Dame economics department and course offerings, in order to attract more students to that major.

Dean McGreevy invited H. Page or A. Chamblee to add a few comments. H. Page offered some remarks from the perspective of the FYS: (1) the number one ranking of MCOB matters to parents and to students. It does have an impact on the choices that are made; (2) the business degree provides a greater amount of flexibility for exploration than does a degree in Arts and Letters. A student can use electives in the MCOB for majors in Arts and Letters or elsewhere. Students can also pursue areas of study with their electives that their parents view as frivolous; (3) students and parents are making decisions about career trajectories much earlier now than they did in the past; (4) parents are being more directive in their son's and/or daughter's curricular choices; (5) some parents want and even demand at times curricular mapping for the entire four years of their student's Notre

Dame career; (6) students respond very favorably to faculty accessibility and approachability. Regular office hours, informal conversations, and opportunities to visit faculty homes are quite favorably received.

Some suggestions about the enrollment issue are: (1) take advantage of the first-semester, first-year courses, to show students the richness of a liberal arts education; (2) tell the story about the College and a liberal arts education in a more compelling way, especially in a one-to-one basis, showing how a liberal arts education is significant and can make a difference in the world; (3) have sustained contact and involvement in the lives of first year students. Taking these steps may not trump parental involvement but may make a decision about a major more problematic.

Based on some statistics gathered before the meeting, A. Chamblee observed that women may play a role in the thinking about the enrollment issue. Ten years ago 52% of women who were here at the University were in the College of Arts and Letters; today it is 36%. Women are now retained more in some of the other Colleges. There has been a shift in women's interests. Further, A. Chamblee reviewed statistics about enrollment patterns among international students. Last year 38% of students who were international students declared Arts and Letters as their first major, compared to 23% who declared business as their first major. This year 55% of the international students declared an Arts and Letters first major, compared to 22% who declared business as their first major. The data indicate then that the enrollment issue is not about the international student population.

Dean McGreevy opened the floor for discussion, adding that MCOB also wants to reduce its number of majors. MCOB is not structured in a way that can handle such a large number of majors. MCOB would like to reduce the number of its students by about 130 students per year.

J. Sitter commented on how the College of Arts and Letters markets itself. The current ND website had a feature on some undergraduate students, and what they pursued in their studies. There were not any students from the humanities included. In the profiles themselves there was much emphasis on dorm life, the gym, volunteerism, but not much on academics.

J. Stanfield took up the issue of the number one ranking of MCOB's undergraduate program. *The Bloomberg Business Weekly* ranked the program number one, and it turns out to be a highly idiosyncratic ranking, based on surveys of student satisfaction and recruiters' opinions. MCOB is not in the top ten in any other ranking. Dean McGreevy agreed that we could critique the rankings, but to be fair, every time the College of Arts and Letters has a highly ranked program, we talk and boast about it. In short, the ranking is influencing and shaping perceptions of parents and students.

Remie Constable (Director, Medieval Institute) wondered if MCOB could have a lottery because they have only a certain number of seats. Students would then get into MCOB completely by chance. And we could also have a business minor, as was mentioned earlier, to see if it does help us out.

Agustín Fuentes (Director, Institute for the Study of the Liberal Arts) wondered if we could ask MCOB if Arts and Letters students could double major in the business school. Further, could we speak with MCOB to see if they would be open to a second language requirement? Dean McGreevy is not convinced that a second language requirement would greatly impact the enrollment issue, but the College should look into both options.

Daniel Lapsley (Chairperson, Department of Psychology) wondered if the advisors in the First Year of Studies have internalized the concerns of parents. H. Page responded that the advisors have not internalized the concerns. The First Year of Studies has generated specific learning objectives targeted to increase discernment, to help slow students from making rash judgments about college intent decisions, and to encourage them to look at their options in an intellectual, spiritual and emotional way, and to send the students into the curriculum with an open mind to explore various disciplines. The advisors also strongly encourage the students to pursue a

mid-year and an end-of-the-term self-assessment in the first year that involves answering a series of questions most of which are focused on the learning objectives that the FYS articulated for the students. FYS wants to encourage the students to think clearly about the decisions that they are in the process of making. Dean McGreevy observed that the enrollment issue is not simply an Arts and Letters problem, or a business problem; it is a University problem. The University is moving out of scale, given the faculty resources in Arts and Letters and in MCOB. In that sense, Admissions and FYS will and must be evaluated on their ability to help the colleges resolve this issue.

T. Noble had two questions. Compared to our aspirational peers, many have Arts and Sciences as a unit, and we have Arts and Letters as a unit. It seems that if we had one unit of Arts and Sciences students, and they all had a common foundation in liberal arts courses, that might change the enrollment patterns in an interesting way. Has anyone thought about that possibility? Further, one predicament that we face here is that given University Seminars, Philosophy, Theology, History, and Literature core courses, Arts and Letters faculty have from two to five chances to influence every First Year student. Why are we not keeping more students? H. Page responded that the FYS does a quality control survey at the end of every academic year. One of the questions is: On a four-point scale, how would you rate the classes that you have taken in the first-year curriculum? In the past two years, the answers have ranged from 2.89 to 2.98 out of 4.0. Some students report that the classes that they take in the first year are often not that different from the ones that they have taken in high school or are not sufficiently challenging in a way that causes them to be fully engaged; this includes all first-year courses, social sciences, humanities, the arts, and the sciences. What would a curriculum that does not closely mirror high school curricula look like? As a faculty, we need to reflect on that question.

Sandra Gustafson (Department of English) asked if a majority of minority students gravitate toward the MCOB. Dean McGreevy mentioned that a disproportionate number of minority students and first-generation college students do gravitate toward MCOB but not a majority of them.

Agustín Fuentes (Director, Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts) wondered if there was a correlation at all between the faculty taught courses and the graduate student taught courses. H. Page stated that FYS has not subdivided the data in that way. Dean McGreevy noted that the first year experience could include the University Seminar (taught by T & R faculty)—something we should take advantage of in a very tactical way to illustrate career possibilities with an Arts and Letters degree—and philosophy and theology courses (often taught by graduate students who can be good or bad instructors). In the end, we need very good instructors teaching the first-year courses.

Noreen Deane-Moran (Department of English) observed that business students on average graduate and earn \$50,000 a year with their first job. This is striking, and we should not disregard that fact. Further, why cannot Arts and Letters students double major in business? Dean McGreevy stated that the safe decision for any wavering student is to declare a business major and second major in a discipline of choice. This is a structural issue that we need to address. In terms of salary, the average salary for Arts and Letters students who pursue full-time employment is \$47,000, and the business student on average earns about \$8,000 more. Arts and Letters students, however, do better in compensation over the long term. The College needs to inform parents of these facts. H. Page agreed that we need to focus on educating parents about these matters.

Susan Harris (Department of English) asked if the College engages in any direct marketing to parents. Dean McGreevy indicated that parents receive letters from the Department Chairpersons and a letter from the Dean, but we can do better than what we are currently doing. We have plans to improve our communications with parents.

T. Cachey mentioned that the enrollment issue is a national problem in higher education. We need to educate not only the parents but also the general public about the value of a liberal arts education. We need to articulate better the importance of our research and teaching. We can improve collectively how we articulate what we study to the broader community. H. Page agreed that we need to be careful with our rhetoric. We also need to remember that first year students are very gifted, but there is much that they do not know about a university or disciplinary constructs. For example, they do not know the difference between a small college and a research university. In some cases, they do not know what “electives” are.

Louis MacKenzie (Chairperson, Department of Music) recalled that the Dean’s Office hosted a spring meeting for the Advisory Council in Chicago, and he wondered what was learned. Dean McGreevy stated that the Advisory Council heard from six recent Notre Dame graduates from the College of Arts and Letters who work in business. They all had a passion for the liberal arts, and majored in art, French literature, history, economics, etc. We learned that the College does not prepare students well for their entry into the job market. For example, the College could better prepare students with basic skills such as preparing for interviews. The College also does not encourage students to pursue careers in business. In the end, however, the panelists were very encouraging about the virtues and benefits of an Arts and Letters education. We need to produce a more consistent message about how Arts and Letters students use their knowledge, dispositions and skills when they leave Notre Dame.

Robert Norton (Chairperson, Department of German and Russian Languages and Literatures) observed that the valuing of the humanities is also an international problem. The humanities are under a massive assault in the United Kingdom, for example. In terms of our solutions, we do not wish to diminish MCOB in terms of the meaning of rankings, but we are seeing what MCOB does well, marketing, and in this case it is of themselves. Do we need a coordinator about how we in Arts and Letters think about ourselves and market ourselves internally and externally?

Olivia Remie Constable (Director, Medieval Institute) suggested that we need to make more readily available the kind of data collected on what our graduates end up doing coming out of Arts and Letters and the kind of successes that they have. This would help faculty who are advising students a great deal if the data were available on the websites, for example.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew C. Zyniewicz
Dean’s Executive Administrator