Senate Committee on Educational Policy  
Monday, November 4, 2013  
MINUTES  

Present: Gay Miller, Chair; Susan Curtis, Bettina Francis, Phillip Geil, Matthew Hill, Gary Kling, Randy McCarthy, Eric Meyer, Stephen Michael, Isabel Molina, Charles Roseman, Stephanie Sowl, Pratap Vanka  
ex officio: William Buttlar, Karen Carney, Brenda Clevenger, Kristi Kuntz, Faye Lesht  

Guests: Assistant Provost and Director of the Division of Management Information Amy Edwards; Director of Academic Programs and Policy in the Graduate College Mary Lowry  

Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures (USSP) members: H. George Friedman, Calvin Lear, William Maher, Anna-Maria Marshall, Dedra Williams  

A regular meeting of the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (EP) was called to order at 1:10pm on Monday, November 4, 2013 in room 232 English Building with Chair Gay Miller presiding.  

1. Introductions  
   Guests were introduced.  

2. Old Business  
   A. Revision to Standing Rule 13 – Formation, Termination, Separation, Transfer, Merger, Change in Status, or Renaming of Units  

   Chair Miller gave a brief history of previous discussions on Standing Rule 13. Discussions began when EP was made aware that an academic unit planned to reduce enrollment to zero, yet EP had not received any proposal. Decisions such as these can have tremendous impact. The materials from the Division of Management Information (DMI) distributed at the October 14, 2013 meeting were referenced and were made available to visiting members of USSP. The DMI documents showed sample data of undergraduate and graduate enrollment over the past several years.  

   Chair Miller then invited EP members to share with USSP members additional details of previous EP discussions. Clevenger gave her opinion that significant enrollment changes should be overseen, and that there should always be a conversation between stakeholders if it is going to dramatically affect another college’s enrollment.  

   Buttlar noted that in the Graduate College outside or online programs are on a five year review rotation. The Graduate College keeps a good deal of data on the health of graduate programs, and Lowry is the custodian of that data. Lowry stated that the data shows when enrollment increases or decreases, but the departments are in control of the enrollment. Meyer suggested that the question is of intent. Is there intent to close a program by starving enrollment?  

   McCarthy noted that he helped write the original Standing Rule (SR) 13, and added that it is difficult to legislate intent. Curtis agreed that legislating intent is difficult. Curtis added that there are changes/proposals that this committee reviews that are reputable, but there is impact that the proposer might not be aware of.  

   Hill partially chose this University to participate in the Civic Leadership Program (CLP). The CLP enrollment has been decreased to zero, yet there was no proposal submitted to EP. Even though CLP is small, they can have a large impact.
Molina shared her observation that in some cases, information that is shared at the dean’s level is not shared with the rest of the department which does not allow others within the department to be included in discussions that might lead to the closing of a program or decision to reduce enrollment to zero. Molina believes there needs to be some path to shared governance and knowing how to go the Senate about concerns or who in the administration should be made aware of these decisions.

Francis said that there are the departments making changes with good intentions and there are the disreputable changes. The practice to reduce enrollment to zero and decrease faculty numbers for a program, and then using the fact that no one has enrolled or the faculty numbers are low as the reason to close the program is the situations that should be monitored. Francis has no desire to make processes more difficult for those that are following the correct processes.

Geil mentioned his draft of a revised SR13 and noted that he believes EPC can ask about the intent. Kling supports revising SR13 and wants the departments to still be involved.

Carney returned the discussion to Hill’s comments regarding CLP. Carney feels that there is a need to respect the autonomy of the departments. CLP was not a program students initially enrolled into; a student must have been a current student to enroll. Carney trusts that closing enrollment to CLP was not underhanded. The department responsible for CLP asked the college if there were any processes that needed to be followed, and the college responded that the department did not need to do anything.

Friedman noted that a distinction needs to be made between programs of study and unit structure. SR13 comes into play when a department makes a formal proposal to change the structure. For example, several years ago Engineering purposefully reduced enrollment to zero in a particular program, and transitioned all those that would have enrolled to a new program. This proposal went to the full Senate for approval. The situations that do not go to the Senate are the ones that need monitoring. Friedman added that not only should enrollment be monitored, but also the number of faculty in a department.

Meyer noted that he served on an enrollment management committee that reviewed these types of situations. Kuntz suggested consultation with Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Innovation Charles Tucker and Assistant Provost for Enrollment Management Stacey Kostell regarding plans for campus-level enrollment management discussions.

As the Chair of USSP, Maher noted that the discussion was useful. Maher requested that if EPC would like to request a change to the governing documents that a specific proposal be drafted and presented to USSP. Maher also suggested that EPC review the charge of the committee to see if there are updates needed. Maher does not think that authority should be giving to EPC in SR13, but rather in the committee’s charge. Maher gave one last suggestion to make sure that intention is not undermined by the words that are proposed.

Geil, Curtis, McCarthy, and Molina will collaborate on draft language for a revised version of SR13.

Chair Miller thanked USSP members for attending and sharing their opinions with EPC.
3. Approval of Minutes
The minutes from October 28, 2013 were approved as written.

4. Chair’s Remarks (G. Miller)
Chair Miller mentioned an article titled “Public’s input sought for university rating system” appearing in the October 31, 2013 issue of The News Gazette. The article discusses concerns about ratings and developing new methods to rate universities.

Chair Miller invited Lesht to report on the October 29, 2013 Center for Innovation, Teaching, and Learning (CITL) Summit on Online Education: Mainstreaming Innovation in Higher Education. The Summit included keynote speaker Harrison Keller, Vice Provost for Higher Education Policy and Research and Executive Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, The University of Texas at Austin; a faculty panel on “Innovative Practices in Teaching and Learning” with Illinois faculty and a guest Robert Christ from the University of Pennsylvania; a presentation over lunch about the Campus Vision by Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Ilesanmi Adesida; and also a student panel on “Student Experiences”. The student panel gave examples of how online education was beneficial and met the needs for various types of students. One example was a student with a disability that left him unable to leave his home for a long period of time, but was able to continue his education through high quality online programs. Miller added that no differentiation is made on the transcript between a course taken online or on-campus.

Chair Miller noted that she plans to distribute to EPC a short survey regarding housing courses and degrees outside of the department. The survey will be coming from a Graduate College Subcommittee examining the housing of programs in administrative units on which both she and Bill Buttlar are serving.

5. Office of the Provost Updates (K. Kuntz)
No updates.

6. Graduate College Updates (B. Buttlar)
No updates.

7. New Business
A. Subcommittee B: Phillip Geil, Chair; Brenda Clevenger, Susan Curtis, Sarah Halko, Stacey Kostell, Randy McCarthy, Charles Roseman, Stephanie Sowl
   i. EP.14.14 Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) to Revise the Undergraduate Minor in Portuguese

   Geil noted a few minor issues, but the proposal sponsor has resolved all issues. Geil moved approval of proposal EP.14.14. Discussion: Kling gave his opinion that there seemed to be a weakening of the language and writing requirements. Carney responded that those requirements are fulfilled by other course offerings.

   Proposal EP.14.14 was approved by voice with no opposition and no abstentions.

B. Subcommittee C: Steve Michael, Chair; Juan Bernal, Bill Buttlar, Matthew Hill, Kristi Kuntz, Isabel Molina, Jeremy Tyson, Michelle Wander
   i. EP.14.15 Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) to Establish an Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Minor in Medieval Studies

   There was one substantial question regarding a required course, English 202. Students are required to enroll in English 202, but if History 100 is offered with a focus on Medieval Studies,
this course would also fulfill the requirement. The reasoning is to give a gateway to history students. Michael moved approval of proposal EP.14.15.

Proposal EP.14.15 was approved by voice with no opposition and no abstentions.

ii. EP.14.16 Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) to Revise the Major in the Sciences and Letters Curriculum: BALAS in Interdisciplinary Studies, Medieval Studies Concentration

Michael noted that “advisor” should be changed to “faculty advisor” to be clearer that a faculty member needs to be the person aiding the student in making decisions. The course Medieval 490 does not currently exist, but is noted in the proposal. Michael moved approval of proposal EP.14.16. Discussion: Carney noted that the Medieval 490 course would meet at the same time as the 500 level course. It is more logical to have undergraduate students enroll in Medieval 490 rather than petitioning to enroll in a 500 level course. It allows easier enrollment in the course for undergraduates.

Geil moved approval of proposal EP.14.16 with the recommendation to clarify the Medieval 490 and 500 level course reasoning.

Proposal EP.14.16 was approved by voice with no opposition and no abstentions.

8. Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 2:15pm.

Jenny Roether
Clerk of the Senate