Minutes of the Meeting of January 22, 2008 held in Adelbert 352

Committee members in attendance:
John Blackwell, CSE Chair
Peter Lagerlof, CSE
Russ Borski, CAS
Gary Deming, CAS
Ken Singer, CAS
Vasu Ramanujam, WSOM
Patricia Underwood, SON
Robert Greene (ex. officio, CAS Ed. Programs Comm.)
Sree Sreenath, ex officio, Chair CSE Undergraduate Studies Committee
Tim Fogarty (ex. officio, Assoc. Dean for Undergraduate Education, WSOM)
Don Feke (ex. officio, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education)
Jeff Wolcowitz (ex. officio, Dean of Undergraduate Studies)
Emily Garvey (student)
Cynthia Pierce (student)

Committee members absent:
James Swain, SOM-Nutrition
Lynn Lotas (ex. officio, Assoc. Dean for Undergraduate Program, SON)

Regular guests:
Jill Korbin, Assoc. Dean, CAS
Peter Whiting, Associate Dean and Director, SAGES

Invited Guests:
William Siebenschuh, Chair, English Department
Randall Deike, Assoc. Vice President for Enrollment Management

1. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by J. Blackwell at 11:30 am
2. Minutes of December 13, 2007 were approved as circulated.
3. Consent Agenda:
   a. Course Actions – Group 1 (those affecting a single school; assumed to be approved)
      CAS ANTH 375: Human Evolution: The Fossil Evidence (change in pre-requisites)
      CAS BIOL 361: Building an Educational Website: Zebrafish in the Classroom (new course; SAGES capstone)
      CAS CHST 398C: Child Policy Externship and Capstone (new course; SAGES capstone)
      CAS COSI 345: Communication and Aging (new bulletin description; SAGES department seminar)
      CAS HSTY 234: France and Islam (new bulletin description; SAGES department seminar)
      CAS HSTY 332: European Diplomacy in an Age of Nationalism, 1789-1945 (new bulletin description; SAGES department seminar)
      SON NURS 320: Theoretical and Evidence Bases for Best Practice in Nursing (new title, bulletin description, course content; SAGES department seminar)
   b. Course Actions – Group 2 (those involving/affecting more than one school)
      CAS JDST 201: Introduction to Judaic Studies (new bulletin description; Global & Cultural Diversity)
c. Course Actions – Group 3 (SAGES First & University Seminars)

USSO 243: The Art of Fact (new title)

Motion: To accept the consent agenda. (passed)

4. CSE proposal for modification of SAGES requirements for engineering students: Continuation of discussion from Dec. 13, 2007

Procedure for Change: The process for approving major changes was reviewed by Chairman, Blackwell. The UUF CC may make a recommendation to the Senate, but the final recommendation for general education changes must come from the Senate.

Evidence of problem: The question arose as to what evidence of a problem on the part of the engineering students is quantifiable. It was reported that one ENG faculty member surveyed students in core courses and reported to engineering faculty that the majority are not in favor of the SAGES university seminar requirements. P. Whiting reported that course evaluations from the SAGES program seminars are favorable and there are no differences among students enrolled in different majors.

The problem was variously identified as:

- Lack of flexibility for engineering students to pursue a concentration/minor in another area if this interest is not identified close to matriculation. (It was recognized that if such an interest were identified early, the SAGES program requirements could accommodate it. If an interest were identified later, however, it would present a challenge for the student without having to take additional courses.)

- A lower than expected percent of first and university seminars taught by senior faculty. (There was some discussion by committee members of finding alternative solutions other than that proposed by CSE, if this was a central concern.) CSE faculty indicated that they had supported the SAGES program based on an assumption that senior professors would be doing the teaching and this has not materialized.

Requested additional information:

- W. Siebenschuh was present to answer the committee’s questions about the potential effect of the CSE proposal on students’ achievement of writing outcomes. He expressed the concern that if SAGES were optional for CSE students, a significant percentage of the students would have less formal opportunities to write. He further indicated that he had explored an option to enhance writing if CSE opted out of university seminars but any such changes would have to be approved by CAS and he is not certain of the outcome.

  J. Blackwell suggested that there is little writing in the departmental seminars and an engineering student mentioned that she does a lot of report writing.

- R. Deike talked about the uniqueness of a CWRU degree, what we value, and the role of SAGES. Anything we do to change what we do as a university will undermine what we market and the distinctiveness of the university. If more flexibility is needed, he suggested we talk about the program as a whole and not just one college’s need. He further suggested that it is critically important to send a message about the University and identify what is the common experience.
Affirmation: Committee members affirmed that our first responsibility is to our students. Committee members were also concerned about the needs of specific colleges.

Issues:
- Administrative issue: SAGES is just starting and has not yet graduated a cohort. Changing at this time might not be advisable before adequate evaluation can be completed.
- If the proposed change were implemented, a subset of students would satisfy the writing requirement in a very minimal way (P. Whiting). There would be no common degree requirements across the university.
- If the change were implemented, it could be a problem for CSE students who switch out of engineering in trying to meet university requirements (J. Wolcowitz).
- What are the costs to the students in decreasing the number of electives available to them?
- What are the costs to the faculty?

Questions:
- Is this an issue that UUF needs to address together? If so, we need to move expeditiously to present it to the university. If not, then we should consider the individual college’s proposal.
- Is there a substitute motion?

Motion: To continue the discussion at the next meeting and develop a motion specifying the issues in the context of "whereases". (passed)

5. Next Meeting: February 14, 2008 11:30-1:00 pm
6. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm