SAH College Committee

Minutes of Wednesday, 20 February 2013 (Cowley Hall Conference Room)

Present: Marty Allen (Computer Science), Colin Belby (Geography & Earth Science), Curt Czerwinski (Chemistry), Brian Gordon (Exercise & Sport Science), Susan Kelly (Math), Shelly Lesher (Physics), Dave Reineke (Math), Mark Sandheinrich (Biology), Michael Winfrey (Microbiology)

Excused: Seth King (Physics)

1. Meeting convened at 4:00 PM.


3. New business: Dr. Lesher presented LX Forms and related documents for a new Physics course, Going Nuclear: Navigating Nuclear Issues (PHY 142), that she wishes to offer as a new General Education course, under the Liberal Studies, Global and Multicultural Studies category (II.B.2), at the beginning level.

   • Dr. Lesher explained that Physics has no General Education offerings at the moment, beyond those introductory courses that count as a general Science credit. At Dean Riley’s request, the department wishes to expand their offerings, and she has designed a course that will address issues surrounding nuclear power, including military, civilian, and other uses. The course will cover the history and politics around nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. While Dr. Lesher has technical expertise in the area, the course itself is not designed to be highly technical, focusing instead on historical/political/social aspects of the subject, with the intent of preparing students to understand and assess contemporary and historical events, along with political and social dialogue on the subject.

   • Discussion involved the technical requirements for the course. Dr. Lesher responded that the course would be intended for the broadest possible audience, with no expectation of math or science background, and keeping technical content to levels suitable for students with majors across the University. She assured the committee that students would learn about nuclear weapons, but would not be frightened off by a math requirement.

   • In discussion, it was noted that documents received by the committee confirmed that the departments of Chemistry, Biochemistry, and Political Science had all confirmed that the course would not overlap with any of their current offerings, and offered support. Dr. Lesher also related her discussion with the department of Geology and Earth Science, who also had no conflicts; she planned to mention the course to the History department as well, particularly as majors in that field might find it an interesting one. (In discussion, a number of other departments, like Psychology, were also mentioned as places from which to draw interested students.)

   • M/S/P (1 abstention, none opposed): The committee recommends to Dean Riley and the College that the course be added as a new General Education offering.
4. **Old business:** Chair Sandheinrich noted Dean Riley’s approval of our previous motion (meeting of 23 January 2013), and establishment of a new committee on assessment. The chair has heard from all but a handful of departments in SAH as to the newly chosen members of that committee, and will be following up with remaining departments in the near future, with the expectation that the committee begin meeting soon, in keeping with the Dean's charge that it make substantial progress in the near term, with at least some large part of its initial work accomplished during this Spring 2013 semester.

5. Meeting adjourned at 4:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marty Allen