

## CEPP minutes, Friday, October 17, 2003: 9:00 AM

Present: Michael Arnush, Megan Fair, Hugh Foley, David Peterson (scribe), Ray Rodriguez, Paty Rubio, Gordon Thompson (Chair); guest: Sarah Goodwin (Associate DoF)

- 1) Minutes for the meeting of October 3 will be amended to include the committee's discussion re. splitting the Global Skidmore sub-committee into two groups (*Diversity* and *Study Abroad*). Approval of the minutes for the meeting of October 10 will be postponed.
- 2) GT offered a brief report on recent work of the Retention Committee and 7:00 am meeting with BoT: the "first-year experience"/advising were specifically identified as important issues in discussions on retention and attrition.
- 3) MA reported on meeting (Monday) of *Global Skidmore* sub-com. The sub-com considered the question of splitting into two groups ("diversity" and "study abroad") in order to better focus their work. Members agreed that this may be desirable but that both groups would still benefit from remaining under a single umbrella. The sub-com also worked to clarify terminology. MA asked CEPP members if they had objections to making the sub-com minutes publicly available on the website. They committee had no objections. The sub-com will meet again Monday, Oct. 20.  
HF questioned whether the senior-year residency requirement complicated the goal of strengthening study abroad opportunities. Discussion included: the value of capstone/culminating work performed in residence during the senior year, and concern over students (in particular, sophomores) studying abroad before they had a sufficient foundation and/or had identified a major. This was recognized to be a CEPP issue, and MA agreed to take it up with his sub-com at some point in the future.
- 4) Discussion of Hugh's notes on last Friday's ViSTA Forum will be postponed until the 10/24 meeting.
- 5) SG: At the request of CAPT, Sarah queried CEPP on the idea of piloting an "online" student evaluation form (first suggested by the 2002-2003 CAPT). SG provided background on the recent problems encountered after the college began *out-sourcing* the scanning process, as well as longer standing problems related to using traditional paper forms. The current CAPT has expressed some concern about the possible lack of consistency, and the possibility of "contamination", in the proposed online process.  
HF argued in favor of decoupling the *faculty development* and *personnel* aspects of the evaluations.  
PR remarked that her department provides a formal text to accompany the evaluation forms, stating exactly how the results are used.  
MF stated that she felt it was unlikely that students would be frivolous or unfair in completing an online form, although she questioned how the college would encourage (force?) students to complete the forms; "would their grades really be withheld?" Good question.  
DP proposed the elimination of all student evaluations.

GT stated that there seemed to be innumerable concerns with the entire evaluation process, let alone the proposal to develop an online version. PR suggested that, should the pilot study be launched, only “protected” faculty (i.e. Full-Professors) should participate. Both she and Hugh agreed to participate if the pilot study went forward.

DP urged that, should the pilot study go forward, CAPT also gather data re. the time, date, and (if possible) location from which each evaluation was completed. SG reported that her office intends to reverse the current policy of not providing evaluation forms to classes of five or fewer students. It is believed that this policy creates inequities by not including feedback from students in smaller, advanced level courses.

RR questioned whether it made sense to spend time and energy exploring ways of improving the current evaluation process when such serious concerns exist regarding the validity of the evaluations in general.

Ultimately, CEPP members had no objection to CAPT initiating the online pilot study, but felt that this was a topic very much in CEPP’s purview and agreed to revisit it in the near future. SG said she would be happy to attend those discussions.

Note: GT will query absent CEPP members on their availability next Friday before scheduling the next meeting.