

CEPP Minutes, Wednesday, April 20, 2011, 8.30-9.40am

In attendance: Michael Arnush, Rochelle Calhoun, Rubén Graciani, Mimi Hellman, Chris Kopec, Josh Ness, Muriel Poston, Bob Turner (chair)

Guest: Corey Freeman-Galant

1. Minutes from March 30, April 6 and April 13 approved.
2. Approval of ACOP proposal to initiate a three-year pilot program for study abroad in China run by IES in Beijing and Shanghai, China. The proposal, with one track for students with previous language study (Beijing) and one with no Chinese language prerequisite (Shanghai), but required language study at both, comes with the endorsement of ACOP and Tim Harper, the chair of the Department of Management & Business. CEPP recommended that OCSE work with IES to establish standards for the assessment of student work by the non-Skidmore faculty that are consonant with the standards of Skidmore faculty. CEPP will announce this pilot program at the April 29th faculty meeting.
3. Discussion of the open forum held on April 15th on the "Transition and Transformation" draft. Faculty in attendance raised a variety of issues of varying concern:
 - the allocation of scarce resources to administrative staff instead of faculty lines
 - process leading to the current draft and the role of faculty governance in that process; what portions of the draft should come before the faculty for a vote, and whether those portions should be disaggregated from the remainder of the proposal
 - the vision that resulted in the draft derives from the Strategic Renewal document, which was never discussed at a faculty meeting
 - the participation of untenured faculty in the forum
 - the draft represents an institutional paradigm shift, from, as one faculty articulated, "mind and hand" to "mind and hand-holding"
 - the impact of the marketplace on the curriculum
 - faculty workload and a perceived increase in faculty responsibilities
 - implications for the faculty personnel process and a lack of consultation with CAPT
 - the value of credit-bearing internships
 - the language, and meaning, of "High Impact" practices, and whether that term, coined by George Kuh, suggests a "crisis of relevance"
 - the subordination of a liberal arts education to vocational education
 - whether a problem exists that necessitates this proposal, and what data support this programmatically

CEPP discussed the value of this open forum, in particular the merits of a discussion of a proposal that cuts across all areas of the college, and that asks the faculty to respond to a draft based on scholarly literature, and that includes other constituencies – alumni, parents, donors, etc. The committee also considered whether disaggregation of the proposals parts made sense, and what portions constitute curricular, educational policy. CEPP discussed viewing this proposal as outlining two of three phases of a policy proposal: the first would be to move the support for pre-professional programs forward; the second, on the role of the faculty in supporting the students in experiential learning; and the third, in the context of the recent receipt of a grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, on responsible citizenship. An upcoming meeting with Muriel Poston, Paty Rubio, Rochelle Calhoun, Corey Freeman-Galant, Bob Turner, and Reg Lilly (chair of FEC) will attempt to outline next steps, especially how to constitute a working group that can move this proposal forward.

4. Discussion of the CEPP-CAPT subcommittee's draft for a new student rating short-form. Some associate and full professors have volunteered to implement the form in a pilot study at the end of the Spring '11 semester; a total of 1000 students in their courses will use the form. CEPP and CAPT plan to launch focus groups next fall to review the results; CEPP recommended focus groups of different student levels, and of faculty in different academic divisions. Bob offered to share the latest revision with CEPP.
5. Culture-Centered Inquiry: Michael shared the draft authored by the CEPP subcommittee and data provided by the Office of the Registrar on the curricular needs if a new, second requirement on "Exploring Difference" would be implemented. One member of the subcommittee expressed reservations about the draft, which will be discussed at the April 27th CEPP meeting.
6. CEPP's agenda for the last meeting will include the CCI draft; the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation grant; the results of the group headed by Mark Hofmann working on a scientific literacy requirement; and the chair of CEPP for AY 2011-2012.
7. CEPP discussed whether to downsize the number of faculty on the committee and decided to inform FEC that it intends to retain the current composition of six elected faculty.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Arnush