

CEPP meeting October 3, 2012

Minutes

In attendance: Josh Ness (acting Chair); Beau Breslin, Rochelle Calhoun, Hope Casto, Chris Kopec, Bill Lewis, Benjamin Bechard ('14), Emily Kowal ('13) and Peter von Allmen (scribe).

Guests: Karen Kellogg (Associate Dean of the Faculty), Kim Frederick (Chemistry) to discuss the science initiative; and Katie Hauser (Chair, CAS) and Corey Freeman-Gallant (Associate Dean of the Faculty) to discuss Committee on Academic Standing matters.

Introduction: Josh Ness introduced Hope Casto as a new member of the committee.

Announcements:

- 1) Sarah Goodwin will meet with IPPC to discuss the possibility of a new organizational relationship between the CEPP and the ASC.
- 2) Josh Ness noted that there were no objections from CEPP members related to the college's application for the George Alden Excellence in Career-Related Undergraduate Education Award for additional SEE-Beyond funding. The process will move ahead through the office of the Dean of Faculty.

Science Initiative

Karen Kellogg and Kim Frederick, shepherds of the science facilities task force, provided an update on the plans and actions for the new science facility. They will present an update to the Board of Trustees at their October meeting. They outlined the planning process and work to date; the guiding principles for the new facility; discussed which departments, programs and facilities will be most impacted; outlined the space requirements including a discussion of how existing and new square footage will meet this need; and discussed the financial parameters of the project.

Committee on Academic Standing

Katie Hauser (CAS Chair) and Corey Freeman-Gallant outlined a number of issues that are currently under consideration by CAS, seeking CEPP input. Those were:

- a. Transfer credits for courses lasting less than four weeks. This issue was discussed last year at a CEPP retreat. Many high quality institutions (such as the London School of Economics) offer courses that are less than four weeks in duration. Current rules prevent students from transferring these courses back to Skidmore. This policy is at odds with the majority of our peer and aspirant institutions and even with some of our own courses. CAS recommends eliminating this constraint and CEPP unanimously agreed to endorse its recommendation. A change in this policy does not require a faculty vote. To ensure that the community is fully informed of the

change, Beau Breslin proposed discussing the topic at a future meeting of department and program chairs.

- b. 300-level courses and breadth requirements. At issue here is that students cannot currently count 300-level courses toward their breadth requirements in the humanities and social sciences (they may do so in other divisions). Much of the discussion regarding a resolution of this inconsistency surrounded the definition of the term “breadth” (as provided by an earlier CEPP). Does breadth imply the acquisition of knowledge across a wide range of introductory material within a given discipline, or instead does it imply exposure to the various methods of inquiry employed across disciplines? Divisional roundtables may be a productive environment to increase faculty awareness of these inconsistencies and to discuss whether and how this inconsistency should be resolved (if it is deemed problematic).
- c. From which institutions should Skidmore accept transfer credit? Specifically, Skidmore could take a more restrictive stance (similar to that of our peer institutions) on accepting credit for on-line courses? In addition, should Skidmore make a distinction between not-for-profit institutions and proprietary institutions? Alternatively, courses could be vetted for transfer based on the content of the course rather than the mode of delivery or institutional form of the provider (as is current policy, based on a faculty vote in 2010). This matter was discussed at length with no resolution at time of adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter von Allmen