

MINUTES
Liberal Arts Core Committee
October 12, 2007
Student Involvement and Activities Center Meeting Room,
Plaza level, Maucker Union

Present: Maria Basom, Ken Baughman, Adam Bentley, Jerry Caswell, Nadene Davidson, Donna Hoffman, Siobahn Morgan, Jean Neibauer, Ron O'Meara, Frank Thompson, Lori VanHooreweghe

Guests: Interim Provost Jim Lubker
Associate Provost Bev Kopper

I. Call to Order:

Morgan called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M.

II. Visit from Interim Provost Lubker and Associate Provost Bev Kopper

Interim Provost Lubker provided some remarks about the LAC and the important work of the LAC Committee. He stressed the need for us to continue to find ways to improve the LAC, both in how we describe it and in how we inspire our students to be excited about the LAC. This is not easy, since students don't view the world, or the LAC in the same way that we view it (possibly our brains are wired a bit different). Generally, students aren't aware of the importance of LAC courses such as Humanities to their educational growth.

Lubker mentioned three goals that we should consider working on. The first goal would be to find a way or ways to better integrate the LAC with majors, so they can see the value of LAC courses on their majors. The second goal would be to create a good first year experience for incoming students. The third goal would be to award students who complete the LAC here in some way, possibly by awarding them an LAC "major", or at least a dual major with their current major.

Thompson mentioned that many students may not see a commitment to the LAC on this campus. In CBA they are considering hiring specialists to deal with communication issues for CBA majors. These students should be gaining these skills from the LAC and the CBA should not have to hire high-priced faculty to teach these core skills. Would it not be better to put money into hiring faculty for the core courses and not having the colleges create their own special LAC positions? Lubker responded that this would not be a good use of resources, and the LAC should be viewed as a bridge between the various colleges and majors. Thompson then asked why LAC faculty aren't provided incentives to teach in the LAC, since it is not a very easy task. Lubker agreed with this, and noted that this year we have some extra funds. This year UNI can request \$2 million for salaries, but was restricted to the types of positions they could fill. Lubker has asked for new faculty lines as well as support funds. The new lines should free up more faculty to teach in the LAC.

Bentley remarked that as an entering freshman he didn't feel strongly about the LAC, and basically took LAC courses as part of the regular routine. He has the sense that some faculty have a poor attitude about the LAC, as something that has to be "gotten out of the way". Such attitudes do influence students. Thompson mentioned that some good teachers are also

demanding of their students and tend not to be assigned LAC courses (since they may be viewed by students as too difficult). The question is can we encourage those good faculty to teach in the LAC, or will we end up with our students fulfilling their LAC requirements elsewhere. It might be a very difficult task to get the faculty to develop a deeper appreciation for the LAC. (Later discussion addressed ways of gaining respect for the LAC from the faculty, which can be fostered by showing our work at critically examining the LAC and working to improve it. Another way could be through improving communication about the LAC to both students and faculty. This could be through advising, syllabi statements, program planning, etc. There was a question about why the LAC Coordinator wasn't a member of the AAC if the LAC is viewed as an important part of our student's education. Hoffman mentioned that the LAC is valued by some departments, particularly as a recruiting tool.)

There was discussion of the various resources needed to meet the demand in the various parts of the LAC. (Later discussion dealt with the possibility of factoring in the LAC into the budget off the top, not just depending upon the college budgets to support it.)

III. Approval of October 5, 2007 Minutes

Thompson moved and Basom seconded the approval of minutes for the October 5, 2007 meeting. With a minor correction, the minutes were approved.

IV. Announcements

- A. Morgan reported on the number of the Capstone sections that will be offered in spring 2008. There are over 1000 available seats.
- B. The UCC is continuing its work. More of the "g" notations are vanishing.
- C. Morgan will be attending the AAC meeting next Tuesday to discuss the LAC with the Deans.

V. New Business

- A. With the reshuffling of various faculty assignments, there is now an opening on the Provost's Curriculum Taskforce for a member of the LACC. Currently Morgan and Davidson are on the Taskforce as LAC representatives. Neibauer and Vinton are also on the Taskforce as representatives of their division. Thompson agreed to serve on the Curriculum Taskforce.

V. Old Business

- A. CSBS Curriculum Package
 - i. *Creativity and the Evolution of Culture* – Davidson moved to approve the course for inclusion into the Capstone category, Hoffman seconded. Discussion followed. The costs of the course were discussed, and in the department that this course is offered in (DTGFS) there are staffing issues that have arisen recently. There was discussion of the use of a single resource, but other resources were pointed out. Motion passed with 1 abstention.
 - ii. *Building Communities: Developing Intentional Family Spaces* – Davidson moved to approve the course for inclusion into the Capstone category, Hoffman seconded. Discussion followed. Motion passed unanimously.

- iii. *Greece: From the "Cradle of Democracy" to Today* – Basom moved to approve the course for inclusion into the Capstone category, Baughman seconded. Discussion followed. Motion passed with 1 abstention.
- iv. *Being National* – Basom moved to approve the course for inclusion into the Capstone category, Davidson seconded. Discussion followed. Motion passed unanimously.
- v. The remaining courses will need to be evaluated at a later meeting. There was also the need to get further information about some of the courses since not all documents were included in the PDF files.

VI. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the session was made by Bentley, and seconded by Hoffman. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Next Meeting – 8:00 AM, October 19, 2007 – in the SIAC meeting room.

Respectfully submitted,
Siobahn Morgan
LAC website: <http://www.uni.edu/vpaa/lac/index.shtml>