ACADEMIC PLANNING COUNCIL

MINUTES—22 OCTOBER 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jason Thrun, Kay Young, Christina Curras, Adam Stanley, Mark Meyers (chair), Carol Sue Butts (provost), Charles Cornett and Bernie Harris

GUESTS PRESENT: Shane Dreftinski and Mike Sharkey

Chair Mark Meyers called the meeting to order at 4:04 P.M.

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS—Provost Butts announced that Governor Doyle will be present at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Engineering Building opening, and he will also perform as the keynote speaker during the morning commencement ceremony on 13 December 2008.

2. APPROVE MINUTES—Curras made a motion—Meyers seconded the motion to approve the 23 April 2008 minutes with the condition that the correct date would be determined and recorded on the document. Motion passed.

Thrun moved—Stanley seconded—to approve the 25 September 2008 minutes. Motion passed.

Thrun moved—Stanley seconded—to approve the 8 October 2008 minutes with a correction. In section III. the minutes should now read, “… and faculty and staff should be commended for their efforts to keep the standards of the program high and for consistently enrolling more students. (Addition in italics) Motion passed as corrected.

3. NEW BUSINESS—Shane Dreftinski presented the highlights of the philosophy self study via a PowerPoint presentation.

✓ Philosophy courses serve both majors and non-majors
✓ Biggest roles of the mission of the program are to promote ethnic sensitivity and critical thinking for life after college.
✓ Some problems with philosophy assessment are that there is no outside assessment constructs, such as there are in engineering, et al. Therefore, philosophy must develop its own rubrics for research papers that are written by students and presented publicly.
✓ Majors and minors who are surveyed agreed they are meeting goals.
✓ There has been some turnover of faculty, but a significant concern surrounds Professor Lenzi who is currently on leave—what will happen if she doesn’t return? It is hoped that the tenure position will remain with philosophy in the event that she does not.
✓ Recruiting majors is a challenge for philosophy. However, Dreftinski feels as if double majors are not picked up by PeopleSoft, so their reported numbers may not be correct. Philosophy averages approximately five majors over the past few years.
✓ Dreftinski feels as if the insurance companies—in particular—are interested in liberal arts students; he plans to exploit that notion and will work toward placing interns with these types of industries. If this is successful, Dreftinski feels it will increase philosophy enrolments.
✓ Philosophy students are required to write papers and present the topics in class. These papers are eight to 10 pages. The presentations promote discussion and provide a forum for suggestions for modifications that forces precision before philosophy conferences—where students present their topics in a public—off campus arena.
NEW BUSINESS, CONT.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THAT WERE ASKED AND ANSWERED DURING SELF STUDY PRESENTATION:

- Cornett—Every semester the course PHIL 2540—Science, Technology and Ethics fills two sections—largely because it is now required of electrical engineering and tech. ed. majors. Can philosophy commit to continuing the two sections? Dreftsci fiesta feels it can.
- Curras—is there a rubric for student presentations as there is for written assignments in philosophy? Dreftsci fiesta reported that there isn’t; perhaps that is something the philosophy needs to develop.
- Meyers—is there an average that you expect from philosophy students with writing rubrics? Dreftsci fiesta stated that there are some problems with grammar, but that they shoot for three’s from juniors and four’s from seniors.
- Curras—is there any doubt that Professor Lenzi will return once her leave has ended? Dreftsci fiesta can’t say positively, but if she does not there should be no problem filling the vacancy.

COMMENTS PUT FORTH BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ONCE THE SELF STUDY PRESENTATION HAD ENDED:

- Curras—Perhaps the Gen. Ed. Review Committee will develop a tangible rubric that philosophy could adopt for their speaking assignments.
- Butts—The rubrics that philosophy has developed thus far are good. They do a great job of identifying student progress, and the average scores have improved.
- Curras—The philosophy program covers their five objectives well.
- Curras—The definite strength of philosophy is their service to gen. ed., and a limitation of it is too few full time faculty.
- Curras—Philosophy should develop a rubric for presentations.
- Thun—How stable will the department be in five years? Ten years? Provost Butts stated that we don’t recruit philosophy students and that their few majors are the result of faculty. Should we continue the major with so few numbers? Would that jeopardize their stability?
- Cornett—Upper level course numbers absorb GPR funds with such low enrollments. Perhaps better uses of funds could be pointed toward more than two sections of PHIL 2540—Science, Technology and Ethics. The 2000 level courses have decent enrollment—3000 and 4000—not so many.
- Butts—To get numbers up over the next ten years, perhaps we should recommend that philosophy recruits more aggressively. It seems difficult to support majors and minors when some courses have not been offered in six years, and in other cases courses are on a three or four semester rotation. Only two upper division courses have been offered since fall of 2004.
- Cornett—What about duplicity? Do other campuses with philosophy majors have the same situation? Should do an external duplicity review. What are we doing with GPR funds? TSI has no impact with philosophy.
- Butts—Wait until next meeting so that we can review data over ten years.
- Curras—What is the economics of having no major? If no major, will faculty only teach lower levels of classes?
NEW BUSINESS, CONT.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS, CONCLUSION:

- Meyers—Revamping 3000 level courses as 2nd course in Humanities general education requirement might be a good alternative.
- Curra—We should look at more data—ten year history of majors—before next meeting.

4. OLD BUSINESS—Meyers reported that he would compose a letter to D.W. Haskins—Director of Project Management—commending him for his efforts and making the revisions put forward by the APC.
5. ADJOURN—Meyers moved—Curra seconded—to adjourn at 5:14 P.M.

Composed by Bernie Harris