Academic Standards Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Members attending: David Van Buren, Beth Frieders, Laura Anderson, Kevin Haertzen, Shane Drefcinski, Frank Steck (Acting Chair).

Frank Steck called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM.

Agenda Item #1—Patrick Hagen, Rebecca Gottlieb and Laura Anderson presented the World Languages Report to the Committee. The report documents questions addressed by the World Languages Division of the Humanities Department at their meeting, Thursday, April 3, 2008. It was explained that the report addresses humanities standards more so than foreign language competencies.

Areas of perceived strength:
- Speaking (oral language skills) it was suggested that college students in general are reading less/speaking more.

Areas of perceived weakness:
- Reading in any language!

Patrick uses PowerPoint in World Language classes to make class more comfortable for students. Laura indicate the oral quizzes are also a part of every language class.

Frank Steck asked why two years of foreign language—with grade of C or better—is accepted for General Education requirements, when this is not the case for other areas. Patrick suggested that having every UWP undergraduate complete 2 years of world language would require a huge increase in resources, ie. Many more world language teachers.

Beth Frieders inquired about assessment of world languages? Laura Anderson indicated that 3000/4000 world language courses are generally not taken for general education. Patrick suggested that world languages questions could easily be tacked on to the Fine Arts questionnaire that’s distributed to world language students each semester.

Agenda Item #2—Dan Fairchild presented the report on Fine Arts.

Shane made reference to Learning Outcomes (pg. 28) in the University Catalog. Dan indicated that Wisconsin high schools have no requirement for fine arts. When students attend UWP, they pretty much get 3 credits of fine arts in one of three areas: Art, Theater, and Music.

Dan’s report suggests the following:
1. Fine Arts is blessed with good faculty.
2. Fine Arts has selected/used good textbooks that emphasize the arts.
3. The history of each fine art is covered in each F.A. course to “whet student’s appetites.”
4. Students in F.A. courses are required to attend/support campus activities:
   a. Theater performances whenever possible, however staffing is causing problems.
   b. Art—Harry Nohr Gallery is finally open
   c. Music—there are some new exciting course offerings

Shane asked what’s not working in F.A.? Dan suggested that class size continues to increase, frustrating F.A. faculty. Also, faculty would like to have classrooms with media capability (sound, projection systems) but are not always able to find these classrooms.

David asked if F.A. general education courses are pulling students into fine arts majors? Dan believed that music does not pull too many into the major—most music majors have pretty much committed before even taking F.A. course. Art & theater, however, do pull undecided students into majors. Art education and graphic design are two majors that have been able to pull students into the major after taking F.A. course.
Beth asked about F.A. assessment methods? Dan suggested that student evaluations are the primary means of assessment. Authentic assessment is demonstrated through music CD’s in music appreciation classes, group projects in Intro to Theater, and genre’s of painting in Art Survey.

Anecdotal evidence of assessment is difficult to accomplish since there are no follow-up surveys of F.A. students. As Dan reminded the Committee, most. students take only 3 credits of fine arts.

The discussion digressed to issues unrelated to the agenda. The Acting Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:11 PM.

Submitted by F.X. Steck