

**MINUTES OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FACULTY MEETING (v.2)
Thursday, 8 December 2011, 3:30 p.m. in the Nebraska Union**

Item 1. Approval of Minutes of the Spring Faculty Meeting on April 21, 2011.

David Watkins (*Geosciences*) moved to approve the minutes. **Dawn Braithwaite** (*Communications Studies*) seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Item II. Opening Comments and Administrative Matters

Dean Manderscheid thanked everyone for coming. He then announced the continued appointment of **Lloyd Ambrosius** (*History*) as Parliamentarian. He then suggested that **Anthony Starace** (*Physics and Astronomy*) be nominated for an additional term as Faculty Secretary. **David Watkins** (*Geosciences*) made this nomination, which passed unanimously.

Items III-XVII. College Curriculum and Advising Committee Recommendations.

These were presented by the Chair of the Committee, **Leen-Kiat Soh** (*Computer Science and Engineering*). Full details of each proposal are given in the Agenda for the Faculty Meeting. All passed without very much discussion. In brief,

- *Item III* called for a reduction in the number of credit hours required for graduation from 125 to 120 (in response to the Chancellor's goal that a higher percentage of students in the future will graduate in four years).
- *Item IV* clarified the requirements for students admitted with deficiencies to remove those deficiencies.
- *Item V* changed the listing of courses that are excluded by the College from being counted toward graduation requirements.
- *Items VI, VII, VIII, and IX* concerned, respectively, changes to the majors and/or minors in Chemistry, Geosciences, Environmental Studies, and Ethnic Studies.
- *Item X* concerned a proposed change in the name of the major in "International Studies" to "Global Studies." This change must be submitted next for approval by the UNL Academic Program Committee.
- *Items XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, and XVII* concerned, respectively, changes to the majors and/or minors in International Studies, Latin American Studies, Mathematics, Plant Biology, Political Science, Psychology, and Statistics.

Item XVIII(a). Discussion of College of Arts & Sciences Distribution Requirements (CDRs)

Assoc. Dean Deborah Minter (*English*) noted that the College Curriculum and Advising Committee (CCAC) was asked to look at distribution requirements at other Big 10 universities in view of the reduction of the College's required number of credit hours needed for graduation (from 125 to 120 credit hours). She noted that the CCAC had received a letter from the Chairs of the Social Science Departments about the changes to CDRs that were made in 2008. Currently

the CDRs amount to 19-25 credit hours, depending on a student's foreign language requirements. In addition, UNL's ACE requirements add 30 credit hours, although typically ACE requirements may only add 27 credit hours owing to courses that meet both the CDRs and the ACE requirements.

Dan Hoyt (*Sociology*) stated that the social sciences were not currently being treated equitably. He noted that the changes to the CDRs in 2008 reduced the social science course requirements. The results, he stated, were unbalanced between the disciplines and that the social sciences had been caught off guard by the changes. He asked why the social sciences had been targeted. **Dean Manderscheid** noted that the ACE requirements added social science course requirements. **Assoc. Dean Gregory Snow** (*Physics and Astronomy*) stated that a reduction of 3 credit hours in the CDRs were necessary in 2008 in view of the university-wide ACE requirements. The old College CDR requirements amounted to 22-28 credits hours, depending on a student's foreign language requirements. Considering those CDR requirements together with the new (in 2008) ACE requirements, it was discovered that students in some majors had very little room to take any elective courses. That is why the 3 credit hour reduction in CDR requirements to the current 19-25 credit hours were made (by means of a reduction in required social science courses from 6 credits to 3 credits). **Amelia Montes** (*English and Ethnic Studies*) and a number of other faculty spoke against the specific 2008 changes in College CDRs. **Dean Manderscheid** noted that the changes that were made took into account the ability of students to double count some courses for both the CDRs and the ACE requirements. **Michael Wagner** (*Political Science*), a member of the CCAC, said the CCAC is always interested in doing what is best for students. **Dawn Braithwaite** (*Communications Studies*) expressed the desire for the College Curriculum and Advising Committee (CCAC) to re-visit the issue of the CDRs in view of the current reduction of the number of credit hours required for graduation from 125 credit hours to 120 credit hours.

Item XVIII(b). Opportunity to Ask Questions of the Dean

Stephen Lahey (*Classics and Religious Studies*) brought up the issue of UNL's proposed "plus-one" benefit, whereby the university's benefits program would include an employee's partner. He noted that a faculty member in the College had sent an email to the Board of Regents in support of UNL's proposed "plus-one" benefit, and had received a rude email in return from one of the Regents. According to Lahey, Chancellor Harvey Perlman and SrVCAA Ellen Weissinger had discussed this email exchange. Lahey and others urged faculty to write in support of UNL's proposed "plus-one" benefit to UN President J.B. Milliken as well as to members of the Board of Regents. **Amelia Montes** (*English and Ethnic Studies*) noted that among the reservations expressed by some members of the Board of Regents were the potential cost of the new benefit and whether such a policy would violate Nebraska's Defense of Marriage Act, which prohibits same-sex marriage. She also noted that some Regents felt UNL would continue to be able to hire good people without this new benefit. Thus, perhaps these issues should be addressed in any letters or emails in support of the proposed "plus-one" benefit.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony F. Starace (*Physics and Astronomy*)
Faculty Secretary

10 April 2012