UNDERRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
April 22, 2010
Collaboration Room, Knight Library

Present:
Susan Anderson, Andrew Bonamici, Kathie Carpenter, Amy Goeser Kolb, Jennifer Joslin, Dean Livelybrooks, Karen McLaughlin, Ian McNeely, Caleb Owen, Ron Severson, Josh Snodgrass, and Matt Villeneuve

Absent:
Eric Carlson, Jordynn Didlick, Paul Engelking, Sue Eveland, Dave Hubin, Josh Roering, Kiwako Sakamoto, Karen Sprague, Drew Terhune, Jim Tice, Tom Wheeler (on leave), Morgan Williamson, and Elizabeth Reis

Guests:
Karen Ford, Professor, English Department and Director, Creative Writing Program

Due to time constraints, the Chair switched items in the posted agenda and opened the meeting with a program proposal. He introduced Karen Ford, Professor of English and Director of the MFA Creative Writing Program.

CAS Proposal for a Creative Writing Program Minor
[See: Creative Writing Minor Proposal]
Karen explained that the request for a minor in Creative Writing is actually initiated by students requesting either a Creative Writing major or minor. The proposed program is small with only six faculty and class size limited to no more than 15 students. The minor would consist of 24 credit hours total with six required courses spread among three levels: 2 classes at the beginning level; 2 classes at the intermediate level; and 2 classes at the advanced level. These courses are already in use in the Creative Writing department. Many are highly competitive for admission. The minimum grade for courses in the minor is “B-” for the introductory 200-level courses and “B” for the others. Students currently enrolled in the program do not receive any recognition on their transcripts for their work. The award of a minor in Creative Writing enhances student transcripts for application to MFA programs in Creative Writing.

Another attraction of the minor is that it would be open to any student. The minor was designed to complement any major.

The Council asked Karen several questions about the minor program:
- How are students admitted into the minor? They self-select through the competitiveness of being admitted into courses in the program.
• Who would advise and oversee authorization of completion of the minor? This would be the responsibility of the Program Director.
• When would students declare for the minor? They could declare at any point while taking courses.
• Courses in a minor should not overlap or double-up courses toward the major. What is the overlap between English and Creative Writing courses? English and Creative Writing are regarded as two distinct areas. English accepts 3rd term courses from the Kidd Tutorial Program as electives toward the English major. However, the maximum overlap of courses would only be 2 out of 6.
• What is the rationale for a “B” as a minimum grade to qualify for the minor? The requirement of the “B” reflects the competitiveness and rigor of the program.
• Who would handle the official advising for the Program? The Program Director would serve as the official advisor for the program.

Karen closed her remarks by pointing out that there is no plan for evolving the program into a Creative Writing major. A Creative Writing minor with a strong academic degree is very appealing to most MFA programs throughout the country.

Discussion
The Council discussed two points of concern in the proposal:

1. There was some need for clarification of the interrelation of the different levels of courses within the different tracks of study.
2. There needed to be greater clarification of prerequisites as students moved from beginning, to intermediate, to advanced levels of study in the minor.
3. The responsibility of the Program Director as advisor for the minor needed to be stated more clearly in the proposal.

The Council was generally in favor of the proposal. The Chair called for a motion.

The motion was made that the Undergraduate Council endorse the CAS proposal for a Creative Writing minor with the clarifications of prerequisites and advising.

Moved: Kathie Carpenter
Seconded: Amy Goeser-Kolb
The motion passed 11 to 1.

The Chair will contact Karen Ford to inform her of the Council’s endorsement and the recommendation for the clarifications to the proposal before she submits it to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies for review.
**Minutes:**
The Chair called for a review and a vote on the minutes for the March 10 and April 8 meetings.

The motion was made to accept the minutes from the March 10, 2010 meeting.

Moved: Ron Severson  
Seconded: Karen McLaughlin  
The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously.

The motion was made to accept the minutes from the April 8, 2010 meeting, with a correction to the list of members attending the meeting and agreement to accept the Chair’s synthesis of the Council’s consideration of the CAS proposal of a General Social Studies Major into the minutes.

Moved: Dean Livelybrooks  
Seconded: Josh Snodgrass  
The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously.

The Council briefly discussed the GSS proposal but decided it best to wait until the proposal was re-submitted for a new review before addressing the proposal any further.

**Debrief of 4/20 Town Hall Meeting on Grading Culture**
The Chair and members of the Council debriefed the April 20 Town Hall Meeting held on Grading Culture. Three faculty guests attended the meeting, in addition to Undergraduate Council representatives. One of the guests, Nathan Tublitz, president of the University Senate, voiced a number of objections that faculty members had confided in him regarding the Council’s grade culture proposals. He said faculty felt threatened by the issue and feared that the Council was preparing to issue edicts that would limit academic freedom and harm students. There is also a perception that the whole issue is administration-driven.

The Council agreed to proceed with the second Town Hall meeting. It will work on clarifying its message so that concerns are assuaged. The Council expressed strong approval for proceeding with the discussion of its proposals.

The meeting was adjourned.
The next UGC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 6, 2010, 12:30pm at the Collaboration Room, Rm 122, the Knight Library.