UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
May 20, 2010
Collaboration Room, Knight Library

Present:
Susan Anderson, Andrew Bonamici, Sue Eveland, Dave Hubin, Jennifer Joslin, Karen McLaughlin, Ian McNeely, Ron Severson, Josh Snodgrass, Karen Sprague, Drew Terhune, and Matt Villeneuve

Absent:
Eric Carlson, Kathie Carpenter, Jordynn Didlick, Paul Engelking, Amy Goeser Kolb, Dean Livelybrooks, Caleb Owen, Josh Roering (on leave), Kiwako Sakamoto, Caleb Southworth, Jim Tice, Tom Wheeler (on leave), Morgan Williamson, and Elizabeth Reis

Guests:
Scott Coltrane, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Larry Singell, Associate Dean-Social Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences

The Chair announced that Herb Chereck and Rich Troxel would attend the June 3 meeting to discuss a proposal for the synchronization of add/drop deadlines.

The Chair also said that two report are due to the UO Senate:
1. The Annual Report from the Undergraduate Council due May 26;

Drafts of the two reports will be circulated to the Council members for review before they are submitted.

Minutes:
The Chair asked for any amendments to the minutes of the May 6 meeting. There were no corrections noted.

The motion was made to accept the minutes from the May 6, 2010 meeting.

Moved: Karen McLaughlin
Seconded: Drew Terhune

The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously.

Introductions:
The Chair introduced Scott Coltrane, Dean of CAS and Larry Singell, Associate Dean of CAS Social Sciences. They presented responses to prior concerns raised by the Council regarding a proposed major in General Social Sciences.
**Agenda**

**Proposed Major in General Social Sciences**

[See: General Social Science Response to UGC
General Social Science Proposal Comparison 2/4/2010 - 5/14/2010
General Social Science Course Matrix]

Scott Coltrane presented background on the development of the General Social Sciences Major, explaining that talks within CAS to establish the major began over two years ago. The program had last been offered at UO in Eugene in the 1970’s. He reported that the Provost has said that the proposed program did not need to seek OUS approval since the program had been previously offered.

A driving factor in promoting the proposal is that CAS has the challenge of increased numbers of students accepted and enrolled at UO without a clear degree goal. The proposal to offer the General Social Sciences major is in response to this enrollment pressure. General Social Sciences is an applied major designed to appeal to the huge overload of students who cannot manage the mathematical - theoretical emphasis of the Economics major, or have other reasons to seek more applied social science-based programs. Scott noted that all department heads in CAS social sciences have had opportunity to participate in discussions on the revived program. The proposal for the General Social Sciences major is a dean’s level administrative structure; no one in an academic field owns the program, but if it is approved, then the dean will begin looking for academic faculty to be responsible for it. Larry Singell added that the courses for the General Social Sciences major were selected to fit between the already established majors in Sociology, Political Science, and Economics.

The Council membership asked a number of questions of Deans Coltrane and Singell:

- Does this major move the CAS more toward vocational education? Ans: this did not come up in discussions because the courses in this proposed major already exist. This is a cafeteria-style major; there is a methodology requirement. The major will be closely monitored.

- Doesn’t this major remove an in depth anchorage for a field? Ans: The pressure will be on advisors that students acquire depth and don’t just take easy courses.

- How does this major interact with a minor? Ans: This proposal may help with student retention. It is not a vocational program, but a multi-disciplinary major.

- Although the idea of “multi-disciplinary” is good, there are no clearly stated requirements in the proposal that structures linked concentrations in the proposal.

- Where does the money for this proposed major go under the new finance model? Ans: the money goes to CAS; the proposal is generally budget-neutral. However, money for the Business courses will flow to the Business School.
The deans closed their presentation to the Council by pointing that this proposed major is already in existence at the Bend campus. The goal is to get students out with a degree within four years.

- **Discussion**
  The Undergraduate Council discussed concerns with the proposed General Social Sciences major:
  - there is no apparent meaningful coherence or structure in the concentration tracks in this major;
  - there is a great deal being put off, e.g. dedicated faculty to oversee the major or clear advising responsibilities;
  - there is not enough clarity and definition within the tracks;
  - there is an admitted problem with business college rejects going into economics, but this proposal may not be the right solution.

The Council summed up its concerns in several recommendations to be relayed to CAS:
  1) To lend coherence and provide structure to the major, the proposal should specifically lay out sample concentration tracks.
  2) There needs to be the identification of a faculty advising board for this major.

  3) Specify who is doing advising for the major and how this will work.

  4) Consider ways to strengthen this major with either core classes or capstone classes.

The Chair will relay the Council’s recommendation to Deans Coltrane and Singell and consult further.
The meeting was adjourned.

**The next UGC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 3, 2010, 12:30pm at Johnson Hall Conference Room.**