UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
April 12, 2012
Collaboration Room, Knight Library

PRESENT
Susan Anderson, Andrew Bonamici, Ron Bramhall, Kathie Carpenter, Dave Hubin, Karen McLaughlin, Ian McNeely, Ben Smood, Karen Sprague, Zachary Taylor, Tom Wheeler, and Paul Engelking,

ABSENT
Ashley Buchholz, Sue Eveland, Jennifer Joslin, Loren Kajikawa, Dean Livelybrooks, Josh Snodgrass, Michael Sugar, Li-Shan Chou, Stephen Frost, and Elizabeth Reis

AGENDA
I. Minutes from March 16, 2012 meeting

II. CAS Asian Studies proposal for South Asian Studies minor—Lamia Karim, Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology and Eric Pederson, Associate Professor, Department of Linguistics

ANNOUNCEMENTS
The Chair made several announcements about projects that the Council may discuss in future meetings:

- The Council will use the revised program proposal form to guide today’s discussion of the proposed South Asian Studies minor. At the next meeting, the Council will de-brief the usefulness of the form.

- A new software package, CourseLeaf, is being explored to assist in the course approval process. The Council will be asked to consider the software in the future.

- The Council may be discussing the use of an “H” (Honors) suffix for some General Education courses at a future meeting.

- Ken Doxsee, Associate Vice Provost, Office of Academic Affairs, will talk to the Council about assessment. To meet the concern of accreditors, more tools than just grading may need to be developed to assess student learning outcomes. Perhaps this can be connected with the Council’s ideas about General Education reform. Can we reinvigorate General Education and also satisfy accreditors?
MINUTES

I. MINUTES FROM MARCH 16, 2012 MEETING
The Chair called for any amendments to the minutes of the March 16, 2012 meeting. One was requested: change the phrase “Use of any UO resource (including Blackboard) for commercial purposes is illegal” to “Use of any UO resource….is prohibited.”

The motion was made to accept the minutes from the March 16, 2012 meeting as emended.

Moved: Karen McLaughlin
Seconded: Ron Bramhall

The motion to accept the emended minutes passed unanimously.

II. CAS PROPOSAL FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES MINOR
The Chair introduced Professors Lamia Karim, Department of Anthropology, and Eric Pederson, Department of Linguistics, to present the proposed minor in South Asian Studies.

Eric pointed out that South Asia is an important region of the world, consisting of one sixth of the world’s population and growing rapidly in economic, cultural, and political importance. The purpose of the minor is to serve students with an interest in South Asia. Although it is a well-defined geographical region, South Asia is very diverse. By comparison, Europe looks homogeneous. The challenge in creating this minor is that it is inherently interdisciplinary. Faculty teaching courses on South Asia are scattered among departments across the campus. Nonetheless, they want a collaborative connection in this area; students do, as well. This minor will introduce students to the broad array of cultures, religions, and societies in this interesting region.

Lamia recounted how the current broad view of South Asia has grown out of older courses (e.g. “Peoples of India”) that were based on a narrow colonial view of the region. The history of South Asia is 5000 years old and the region is currently undergoing rapid change. Mega cities of the future will be located in South Asia, and today’s students may well find themselves working for employers in South Asia. It is important for students to know this part of the world and understand its history. One reason the minor can be created now is that a newly hired historian will be available to teach several of the courses in it. The minor will help the scattered individuals with interests South Asian Studies build an academic community.
Discussion
The Council was enthusiastic about the proposal. A few questions were raised:

- The language requirement for the minor is confusing. Is proficiency at the 1-year or the 2-year level required? Is it possible to test out of the language requirement?
  Answer: South Asia is different from Europe because of colonialism. In urban areas of South Asia, English is the lingua franca. Therefore, there is less need of a second language to communicate in this part of the world. Proficiency at the 1-year level is probably sufficient. It is understood that in many cases, the recommended overseas study or internship experience will be an immersion in an unfamiliar culture, but not a second language. Moreover, there are multiple South Asian languages and 2nd-year course work is not readily available in all of them. More South Asian languages and 2nd-year course work will be offered on campus beginning in Fall 2013. Heritage students could test out of the language requirement and earn 12 credits through other courses in the minor.

- How does study abroad or an internship abroad fulfill the 12 credits of “Experiencing South Asia”?
  Answer: This will be determined by individual advising with the student.

- How will completion of the minor be certified?
  Answer: Completion will be certified through the program director and the registrar. Council members noted that many of the courses that can count toward the minor have experimental course numbers. These courses should be re-labeled as Topics courses that can count in thematic areas. The courses included under a particular topic can be certified by the program director. The availability of experimental courses cannot be guaranteed; hence, they cannot be required for fulfillment of program requirements. Topics courses, on the other hand, have permanent numbers that can be tracked by the degree audit system.

- Who will be advising students in the minor?
  Answer: Advisors will be drawn from the core faculty teaching courses in the minor. The program designers want to give flexibility to students to go to faculty they know, since they will have come to the minor through courses in different fields. Eric noted that the Linguistics Department has a requirement that students must meet with an advisor to be approved to pursue a minor. Maybe this should apply to the South Asian Studies minor, too.

- In the “Experiencing South Asia” portion of the program: Does the ten-week length apply to the internship?
  Answer: Yes.

- Does the reflective/research paper apply just to the internship experience, or to each of the three options?
  Answer: The paper is not required for the 12 credits of language, but it does apply to the study abroad option and to the internship option.
– Would credits earned during study abroad count as UO courses that fulfill the UO’s residency requirement?
   
   Answer: There are many courses in UO-sponsored overseas programs that do count toward the UO residency requirement. The student would need to consult with an academic advisor and International Affairs staff about this.

– What is the significance of the thematic areas specified in the minor?
   
   Answer: These are the major cultural elements that define South Asia: religion and philosophy; contemporary issues; and media and culture.

The presenters noted that the program is not perfect, but is a work in progress. The shape of the minor will be influenced by the faculty and the specific areas in which they teach. The presenters expressed appreciation for the Council’s attention and suggestions.

When the presenters had left the Council meeting, the Chair summarized the recommendations that should be transmitted to the South Asia Studies core faculty:

• Per University policy, specify that 24 credit hours of coursework are required for this minor. Clarify the “Experiencing South Asia” requirement, particularly since the language proficiency testing and the internship don’t necessarily fill out the required credits.

• Clarify the paragraph on the three ways to fulfill the “Experiencing South Asia” requirement, including any writing requirements for the options:
  
  i. One year’s demonstrated mastery of a South Asian language (whether by language exam or coursework);

  ii. One 10-week term of study abroad with a research/reflective paper on the experience;

  iii. An internship involving an equivalent number of contact hours with a research/reflective paper on the experience.

• Clarify the language requirement for the minor and make it consistent. Required proficiency should be at the 1-year or 2-year level for everyone – heritage and non-heritage speakers. The criteria for testing out of the language requirement should be specified. Also, specify that the language requirement should measure first-year proficiency and not be set at an exact number of credits, since some students may possess some language proficiency at the outset.

• Make explicit the requirement that students in the minor meet with an advisor at some point in their program, and in particular if they intend to study abroad or do an internship in South Asia.

• Require at least one credit of upper-division reading (e.g. ANTH 405) for students who opt to write a research paper/reflective assessment on any South Asia internship or study abroad
experience. This will allow the advisor to set expectations for the paper and grade it appropriately. The number of credits for the writing project could be variable, depending on the nature of the paper.

- Articulate the dream/vision/rationale for the South Asian Studies minor overall—as the presenters did so effectively for the Council. Include that rationale in the Summary section of the proposal form. Also, provide a brief rationale for each of the three thematic areas within the minor, considering how to address student confusion about why particular courses may fall into a particular theme.
- Try to establish topics courses to regularize experimental/one-off offerings. Keep in mind the logistics of tracking which courses count and don’t count for advising purposes.

**The Council moved to endorse the CAS proposal for South Asian Studies minor with the incorporation of the points listed by the Chair.**

 Moved: Tom Wheeler  
 Seconded: Susan Anderson

The motion passed unanimously.

A copy of the finalized proposal will be sent to the Council for its records.

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*The next UGC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 26, 2012, at 2:00 pm in the Collaboration Room of the Knight Library.*