

Eastern Mennonite University

Undergraduate Council

April 7, 2008

CC301/302

#10

Present: Beth Aracena, Kim Brenneman, Spencer Cowles, Vi Dutcher, Cathy Smeltzer Erb, Joan Griffing, Cyndi Gusler, Nancy Heisey, Elroy Miller, Doug Graber Neufeld, Gloria Rhodes, Deirdre Smeltzer, Mary Sprunger, Arlene Weins, Lester Zook

Absent: Patrick Reynolds, Lindsey Grosh

Guests: Dave Detrow & Amy Springer (for item #3)

1. Opening Prayer – Nancy read the words of the hymn “Eternal Light – shine in my heart” (HWB 518) and closed with prayer.
2. Approve Minutes: 17 March 2008

The minutes of 17 March 2008 were approved as recorded, but with the addition of “Community Learning is a pedagogical approach to learning” to the discussion of the action item “That we reduce the number of required CL courses to one for incoming students beginning Fall 2008”.

Announcements:

- o Joan announced a wind ensemble concert Tuesday night; and on Thursday at 12:30 a surprise party for Jennifer Cooper will be held.
 - o Kim announced the senior psychology majors will be presenting Monday morning of exam week. Three students will also be presenting at an association meeting.
 - o Vernon Jantzi’s retirement reception will be held April 17 from 3:45-5:00 pm.
3. Reporting:
 - o Fall 2008 Orientation Activities c/o David Detrow and Amy Springer
Dave distributed a draft of the schedule for Orientation beginning Sat., Aug. 23. He noted that changes made to the academic calendar (to include the Wed. before Thanksgiving and the Monday after Easter as school holidays) mandated that changes to the Orientation schedule be made. To accommodate the loss of a day from orientation, Dave is strongly encouraging depts. to be active in SOAR and getting as many first year students registered prior to the beginning of the school year as possible. He and Amy will also be working to register students who aren’t able to travel to SOAR, by making phone contacts with them. Notable changes to the schedule include:
 - ✓ First year students who have not registered for classes prior to arriving on campus will do so from 1:00 – 2:30 pm on Saturday.
 - ✓ The first meeting of the First Year Course will be sometime during the day on Sat. (tba).
 - ✓ In the past, faculty meeting with parents and students was held under the tent; this year it will be held in the gym during supper and academic displays will be moved to the upper level of Commons where dessert will be served.

- ✓ In the past faculty/staff have invited students to their homes for a meal, this year it will be dessert only on Sunday afternoon. It was suggested an activity or event be scheduled after this to prevent awkwardness as to when to leave the faculty member's home.
 - ✓ On Monday, it was suggested to consider allowing transfer students register with senior or juniors in order to help place them in available classes.
 - ✓ Dave emphasized strongly the point that with the changes, faculty should really be prepared for classes by Friday evening, because classes will begin Tuesday morning.
- New FY Writing Course c/o Vi Dutcher
Vi distributed information that will be helpful to faculty as they advise first year students. The First Year Seminar is being merged into a Writing Course with a "transitions" component. The First Year writing courses for transition will take the place of FYS and will have a 4th hour that will focus on transition to college. This "4th" hour will likely be staffed by Student Life personnel. The Language & Literature Department will continue to assume responsibility to appropriately place students in either Introductory Writing, College Writing, or Advanced Writing courses. For those students not requiring the transitions component (e.g. transfers or sophomores and above) sections of Introductory or College Writing will be available. It was clarified that students enrolled in the Introductory Writing course may only count this as elective credit as it will not satisfy the GVC writing requirement. Also, noted was that first year students who place high enough on the AP Writing exam will enroll in a 1 SH transitions course.
 - Department Chair Development Opportunity at Gordon College
Marie distributed information regarding a workshop held in June at Gordon College. She and Beryl agreed three department chairs will have the opportunity to go. Substitutes may be considered, if the three chair spots are not taken. Department chairs should get back to Marie ASAP if they are interested. The deadline for registration is April 30, 2008.
 - Library Reminder
Marie handed out a reminder about the periodical review. All depts. are encouraged to review all the titles, but look particularly at titles the library has electronic access to. Contact Audrey Shenk by May 5, 2008 with any changes.

4. Discussion Item: Undergraduate Curricular Decision Making

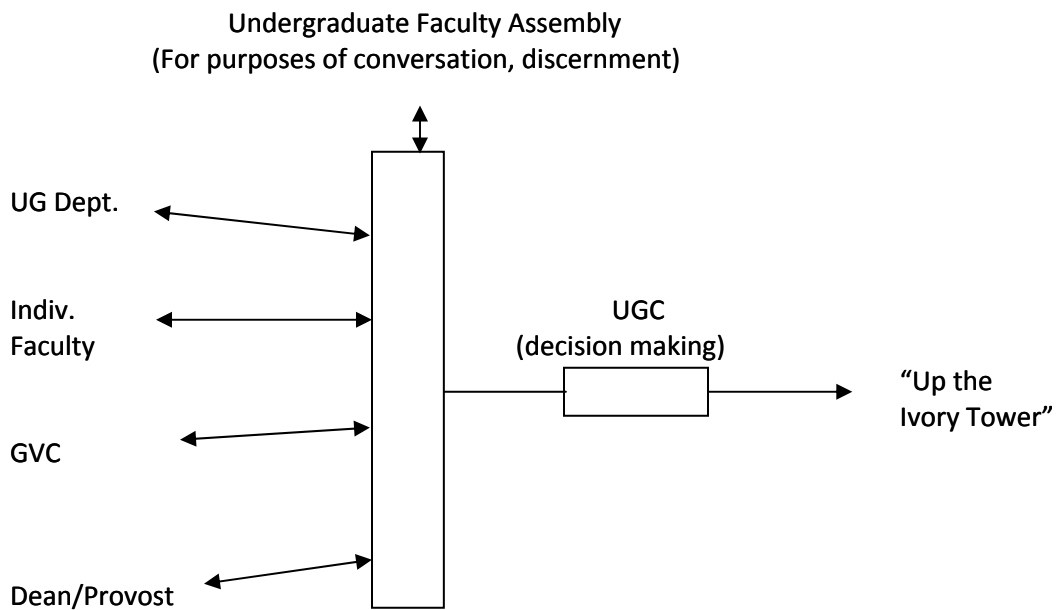
In light of the positive Faculty Senate vote acknowledging the Senate as the decision-making body for faculty issues, discussion was held on how undergraduate curricular matters will be discussed and acted upon beginning next year.

Nancy began the discussion by reviewing the current model of decision making and noting the challenges. It is cumbersome and requires decisions to go through six committees before it makes it to the Board of Trustees. An advantage with continuing with status quo is the process is familiar and all faculty have an equal opportunity to vote. A representation model would mean UGC would function as a representative decision-making body. This would streamline the process, and while all faculty would have opportunity for input by participating in dedicated UG faculty meetings, the "decision makers" would be those most familiar with data and critical constraints. Disadvantages may be that dept. chairs are not elected and additional meetings may need to be added for dedicated UG faculty meetings. Discussion points included:

- It was made clear that Faculty Senate does not make decisions regarding curriculum.

- The current approval percentage required makes it nearly impossible to pass anything quickly and easily. Rather than requiring 80% approval perhaps this should be dropped to 66%.
- Currently, a majority vote must approve an issue; instead, perhaps we should require a majority vote to reject an issue.
- Quorum issues should be examined.
- A dedicated undergraduate faculty assembly is very much favored in order to discuss issues and make connections. This time could be beneficial for floating ideas. If an idea is not well received the act of processing through numerous committees could be eliminated. This may be possible with the potential of dropping the campus wide chapel that is held twice each semester. The agenda for Undergraduate Faculty Assembly should be set by the UGC.
- Undergraduate faculty assembly should be involved earlier in the decision making process.
- A decision should be made without going through six committees.
- Can the Dean’s Committee be eliminated through the process? Perhaps the committee should be re-examined in an effort to streamline the process. Or, does Dean’s Committee function similar to the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate?
- How do clusters fit into this?
- What subgroup are GVC and Cross-cultural a part of?

Lester demonstrated that a new process which would involve all faculty in consultation over proposals, and then hand decision-making to the UGC, could work with the diagram below:



Motion: That the Dean's Committee prepare a conversation piece on UG curriculum decision making for the Monday, April 14 Faculty Assembly Meeting.

Motion approved.

5. Other?

Marie invited counsel from UGC members on how best to close out this academic year and move forward on a positive note with issues still not resolved. Due to time constraints of the meeting, there was no discussion. Everyone was encouraged to send ideas to Marie for Dean's Committee on Thursday.

6. Dean's Committee Election

Deirdre Smeltzer was chosen from the Sciences and Lester Zook was chosen from the professions to serve a two-year term on the Dean's Committee beginning in the fall of 2008.

See you next year. Have a great summer!!!

Respectively,
Cheryl Doss