Minutes of the Meeting of April 1, 2004

Members Present: Kevin Callahan, Judy Clarence, Susan Gubernat, Jiansheng Guo, Vish Hegde, Chris Lubwama, Gloria M. Rodriguez, Michael Strait (Chair), Gale Young, Helen Zong

Members Absent: Janet Patterson

Guests: Carl Bellone, Tom Acord, Tom Hird, Jay Emeh

Chair Strait called the meeting to order at 2:09 p.m.

1. Approval of the Agenda
   The Agenda was accepted (2nd draft).

2. Approval of the Minutes of March 4.
   The Minutes of the March 4 meeting were approved. It was noted that Judy Clarence agreed to continue as Secretary for Spring Quarter.

3. Report of the Chair
   Strait reviewed the fact that the Taxation program is covered in the College of Business’ accreditation process, so does not require a separate review.
   The motion made at an earlier meeting (vote took place via email) concerning the Library budget report failed. Strait will email to the Secretary the exact breakdown of votes, for inclusion in the Minutes.
   Chair Strait will miss the April 15 meeting; Secretary Clarence will serve as acting chair.
   Callahan volunteered to take minutes.
   The next meeting’s agenda will include a review of the Dept of Communication. Gubernat offered to serve as Lead Reviewer.

4. Report of the Presidential appointee
   Because Young’s report, which will include comments from Provost Clark concerning CAPR’s role in tenure track allocations, is a long one, it will be postponed.

5. Special Majors Five-Year Review
   Carl Bellone attended the meeting to respond to questions concerning this program. He feels Special Majors is not analogous to Liberal Studies, since Liberal Studies is a generalized program whereas Special Majors is more closely akin to an Independent Study. Examples are Dance Therapy and Forensic Science; clearly, the curriculum changes with each major, so to create a generalized syllabus would be impossible. Approval of each program goes through several levels, including the deans of the colleges involved. Concerning the lack of external reviewers: Bellone stated that the only solution would be to ask someone in an analogous position to his at another CSU campus to review our program. Bellone also agreed that the outcomes assessments currently in place could be improved: looking at student satisfaction isn’t really adequate. He suggested that when the committees get together to design students’ programs they might create specific learning objectives for the special major, along with the student, then design the program and courses around those objectives.
Gubernat suggested that an external reviewer should actually speak to students in the program. Strait has approved the idea that comparison with other campuses would substitute for external review in this case, and stated that it’s up to CAPR to decide if an external reviewer is appropriate. We might attempt to find other campuses that have similar, lively programs and ask for specific points of comparison. Or we could ask for an extended exit interview process in which someone from another campus would interview students in a Special Majors program, then report back. CAPR could formulate the procedures for this process.

Bellone stated that in the two previous reviews of this program emphasis has always been placed on procedures rather than outcomes. At present, each outgoing student is given an exit questionnaire and it’s always positive, which is to be expected since the University is doing students a favor in allowing them to pursue a special course of study. Faculty response is low, but those that do respond are positive. If we bring in someone from the outside, would it be an administrator, or a faculty member who’s taught in such a program? Probably we’d have to pay someone.

Guo observed that the examples given don’t give much information about the substance of these programs, such as goals and objectives for each individual program. Which courses are required, and why? He would like to see the learning outcomes for each individual student’s program written down.

According to Bellone, Special Majors fall into two areas—those programs that are available on other campuses, but not here, and those programs that are unique to the individual student, such as “Administration of Daycare Provision”. Faculty expertise in the subject area must be available on campus, and appropriate courses, which may be taken along with a few independent study courses, must already exist in the curriculum.

All agreed that the creation of specific learning outcomes for each Special Major is vital. There was brief discussion of postponing this review until outcomes assessments are available, but the group decided, instead, to include in the current review a recommendation for future learning outcomes, along with a procedure for evaluating these outcomes in the future.

Concerning the suggestion that more substance be given the report, Bellone invited the CAPR member writing the draft of the review to come to the Special Majors office and examine the files.

Strait felt that we will in the future need an outside assessor, not necessarily a Special Majors expert, to look at individual student’s contracts and assess outcomes. Thus, as part of the current CAPR process, we will recommend a greater elaboration of a plan for outcomes assessment, and a plan for future an external reviewer.

6. Workgroup Updates

In the interests of time, this item was postponed to a later meeting.

7. Discontinuance of the Arts Administration program

(At its Jan 15 meeting CAPR considered a request to discontinue the Arts Administration program. At that time the committee considered the larger implications for the demise of an interdisciplinary program such as this, and expressed concern for current students who might be caught somewhere mid-stream. We agreed to continue discussion at a later meeting attended by relevant faculty members.)

Guests invited to participate in the discussion were Tom Hird (Dept. of Theatre and Dance), Jay Emeh (Dept. of Public Administration), and Tom Acord (Dept. of Music and Associate Dean of ALSS).

Hird began by explaining that faculty resources were no longer available, in part because one of the key faculty members who designed the program retired. Courses were listed in the catalog, but were not really being taught—thus students who were attracted by the major were ultimately
unable to complete it. Promotion of the program was also a problem, though attempts were made to advertise it in the community and to enlist local experts to teach courses. Only three students are actually progressing through the program at present, although more appear on the roster. All three are willing to pay extra to finish their degree, taking courses as they come up, here or at Berkeley extension, in special workshops, etc.

Gubernat asked if there had been attempts to include the Creative Writing program in the project. Hird replied that they hadn’t thought of Creative Writing, although they did consider Anthropology, and maybe History, as two disciplines which might be interested in a museum studies option, but that never happened.

Gubernat further questioned the University’s level of commitment to an interdisciplinary program of this sort. According to Hird, the frequent turnover of ALSS deans has been a problem, along with the costs. He agreed that we don’t have a very good system for deciding which programs should go and which ones should stay. But obviously, if the University lacks faculty to teach the program, it’s time to call it quits.

Strait wondered what this experience tells us about our process for approving new programs. Emeh stressed that there is nothing wrong with having good ideas; the important issue is how those ideas are put into reality.

Bellone advised that only if we were able to redesign the program to draw upon existing courses could we make it fly with a small number of students. If later 30-40 students enrolled we could introduce new courses. In the meantime, the online catalog will indicate that no new students are being accepted in 2004/05.

Young asked about considering continuation of the program, with changes, and wondered if Hird would be willing to pursue this. Considering the current conditions on campus, Hird feels he could not take on a revision of this program.

Strait stated that, for some of us, this is the kind of program that is our mission—a career-oriented program in the arts, which could and should be part of what we do. He reminded the group of the current call for funding proposals—if we discontinue the program, we can’t fundraise for it.

Guo then moved to approve the discontinuation of the Arts Administration program. The motion was seconded by Hegde. The motion passed with 9 in favor, and one abstention.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Judy Clarence, Secretary