

Minutes of the LPWG

Friday January 25, 2008 – 3 p.m.

McNeill 109

In attendance: Stephanie Krauth, Kedron Bardwell, Lydia Sinapova, Sal Meyers, Bill Friedrichs, Jim Hayes, Cyd Dyer, Amy Doling, Sharon Wilkinson, Mike Hadden, Justin Nostrala, John Pauley, John Bolen

Kedron Bardwell and Amy Doling will co-lead this meeting.

Kedron Bardwell called the meeting of the LPWG to order and stated that the format would be to review the draft proposal to be presented to the EPCC. Items that might need revision or items that need clarification will be honed. Amy will take notes for the final working draft. Amy said that the Academic Dean was very clear that he wanted the committee to work at a time line that is comfortable to the committee, but that he also wanted us to draw the salient points out. The Dean is aware that the document could become 150 pages long, but he wishes that the group would make some decisions to keep it as clear and succinct as possible. With that said, the group was charged that they would make decisions toward completion of the proposal and the Academic Dean would also give input toward that end.

Bill Friedrichs noted that the language should refer to this document as “guidelines” as this is just a proposal and not policy.

Sal Meyers said that her Division wanted a 5th principle added and that was one of the goals is to reduce course load. Amy noted that this has been included in the summary, but she would make a note of this.

A discussion began regarding terms of clarity of the recommended hours for graduation. There was some feeling that the 32 requirement needed to be reworded or clarified for graduation. Bill Friedrichs noted that for clarity it should probably say 34 (32 + 2).

Jim Hayes that because this is a culture change that this would need to be clarified to students so that they could understand that this is a raising of the bar.

Lydia argued the point that it is very important that the number of courses need be reduced, not just the number of required courses if Simpson is to reduce the teaching load.

Bill Friedrichs said you could pass all this but you need to have a sense of what this would look like in a daily schedule. If you're telling people they are going to teach 4 hours a week for class

are you telling people that they are going to teach the same amount of time that they are now? It will make a huge difference for whether people support this or not.

Sal Meyers said if we move to 3 – 3 but we're still teaching a total 24 hours then we're not really gaining anything.

Amy Doling noted that no one is saying that we will be doing less work – the same amount of time will be spent.

Kedron added that there are many different ways to get at it.

John Bolen then stated that this proposal would allow faculty a little more leeway – a faculty could meet 2 X's a week for 2 or 2 ½ hour time slots or rather 4 X's for 50 minutes. However, he noted that it doesn't address the graphic need to see how this is going to appear.

Kedron said we should show a couple examples how this would work.

John said that this would be doable to put together a couple samples that persons could see.

Lydia noted that in John Epperson's response a concern was the idea of Wednesday free that students will go out drinking Tuesday night.

John Bolen countered that there would be 24 labs offered on that day. The idea with the Wednesday set up was that you could have others that you could teach as well – with the labs and regular courses you could have 70 offerings. He also said to the group, "And you don't think, you honestly don't think that there are several hundred students that only go to class on Tuesday and Thursday"?

Kedron said that it's really driven by the way faculty teach now and would like to teach in the future.

Amy said that there are 2 ways we can approach this. We can hold this until we get a sample daily schedule or we delay to allow faculty to feel comfortable to vote.

Kedron said that we did work our spread sheets and we can show schedules.

John Pauley questioned if we should show these to the faculty and EPCC.

Bill Friedrichs felt that we should send EPCC as much stuff as we can.

Sharon Wilkinson said that if we agree that this is what we want it's a fundamental driving force or recommendation to move forward. It's not easy to decide on these things without the later pieces of the puzzle.

Lydia commented that there's always the option that we change things later if a piece is not successful.

Lydia questioned who will determine if extra credit for labs under a 1 unit system.

John Pauley said that recommendations are to be by Dept., then EPCC, and then it will go to the whole faculty.

Bill Friedrichs said if we pass this whole thing we are not changing the procedures of the college, the way we do things. There's no reason to mention it. It was agreed to state in the proposal that is to be decided by existing procedure.

Kedron was thinking about John Epperson's memo regarding the idea that we now have a hard cap on the number of courses in a major. Maybe we can clarify.

John Bolen said that the policy says that you "cannot have more than 42 hours in a department or major. There are very few departments on this campus that have a single department within it – history, philosophy, religion.....but Chemistry – you've got Physics,... Business Administration – you've got Accounting, Management, Economics, etc. The thing is you can look at any department that has multiple departments within it and for years not any of those departments has held to the cap. My point is that I don't understand the nature of the argument. Why do you think we cross list? It's a way to avoid the 42 credit crap. Econ 101 – what is that about? It gives me a headache frankly."

Kedron then noted that the committee had different views about the language of 1-3, 1-3, and 1-3.

John Bolen said "You know, I stood for years listening to Bruce Haddox speaking to parents and incoming students in summer orientation. He would say that our academic breakdown is 1/3 major, 1/3 cornerstone and 1/3 electives. I heard that for eight straight years. And now we're saying 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 – where's the problem? This is no different than the last eight years. This is the same academic set up we've had. It's a guideline before, it's a guideline here."

Sal said that the 42 credit limit doesn't have anything to do with the structure of the major. It has more to do with the gen ed curriculum.

John says that we have problems today that are almost insurmountable. Our concern is that the student has a broad educational experience. He agrees that we need to come up with something but it's not going to be perfect.

Sal said that what she was trying to say was that she doesn't think that the 42 credit limit doesn't need to be in this document at all. That's an issue that we haven't yet talked about as a general education issue. It's the next proposal that we'll come up with.

Bill said that people do need to be taking courses outside of general ed. Epperson's point is more important than is being considered.

John Bolen said that we do need to come up with some way to have students take so many courses in general education.

John Pauley commented that we really can't call ourselves a liberal arts college and allow students to take all their classes in one major.

The group moved on to proposal 4. There weren't a lot of comments from the open meetings regarding aligning spring break with the local public school spring break. The committee agreed that this would probably be positive.

The group then moved discussion to proposal 5. Kedron Bardwell suggested that the two ideas be divided and discussed separately. He asked how specific should we be on the break.

Lydia said there were varied opinions on this.

Stephanie asked Kedron what the students (who responded from student government) said about this. Kedron said that their concern was how it would be handled. They mentioned that they would not be happy to be sent home, but on the other hand, they felt that if the college remained open without classes that it could become a "drunk fest".

Bill Friedrichs noted that from a faculty perspective it makes sense to have a break. However, he felt that it would be a disaster to send students home for a week.

John Pauley asked if anyone knew what other colleges that also have May Term do.

Stephanie Krauth clarified that the college would have to have a break of 5 or 7 days to conceivably close.

Bill said if we're trying to get students from farther away than central Iowa, then sending them home would be a disaster.

Mike Hadden suggested a model that would reschedule finals to a Thursday, Friday, Monday, and Tuesday with Wednesday as a backup day. Then use the next Thursday and Friday as a break before May Term which would start on the following Monday, keeping May Term with the same schedule and graduation in the same position.

John Bolen noted that we're one of the few institutions that still actually give a diploma at the graduation ceremony.

On the issue changing graduation to an earlier date, John B. asked the faculty to imagine getting the grades in with one course (May Term) --- what would it be like getting in grades for 4 or 5 classes?

Kedron asked the group about keeping the idea of the break in the proposal. It's rather vague on number of days anyhow.

Bill said he thought it should be more specific so that they could say yes, no, or amend, etc.

John Pauley agreed and said we would need more input and should present it to EPCC and the rest of the faculty.

Kedron said, "How about stealing from Mike's idea and have finals shift starting on a Friday and do Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday?"

Bill then exclaimed, "I have an extra day for you. Kill Campus Day! (moment of stunned silence) Campus Day is a free day and we could use it during the break between Spring and May Term."

John Pauley agreed, "We don't have to have campus day. We could eliminate it and give it the axe. Oh, we've got service up the wazoo and don't need to continue this." (lots of laughter)

Kedron then said "Do you conceive this as workable?"

Kedron charged the committee for next Friday with discussing the other ½ of proposal 5 – the number of May Terms needed for graduation and proposal 6.

Amy and Sharon wished that the group could finish and send this off to the Academic Dean with revisions today.

However, others wanted to wait to complete next Friday February 1, 2008. Amy then asked if the group would make the commitment to finish by next Friday so that the document could be sent on to EPCC.

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelly Priebe