

## **Undergraduate Academic Council Minutes**

**Meeting:** UAC Meeting Wednesday, February 10th 2010. 9:30-10:30AM

Room: Terrace Lounge, Campus Center.

**Present:** Jeffrey Berman, Maria Brown, Gregory Denbeaux, Steven Doellefeld (staff), Martin Hildebrand, Sue Faerman (ex-officio), Sue Phillips(guest), Robert Keesee, Linda Kryzkowski, Winifred Kutchukian, Joanne Malatesta, Joan Savitt (Chair), Hany Shawky, Christy Smith, Greg Stevens (guest), Katherine Trent.

**Review of the minutes:** Minutes from 2/3 meeting were approved as amended.

### **Chair's Report:**

Martin Hildebrand, Robert Keesee and Joan Savitt have been nominated to represent UAC on the Task Force formed by the Senate to advise UAC about an immediate campus response to the approved GE changes. Sue Faerman will represent the office of the Provost. Faculty and staff from across the university will be also part of the Task Force. These appointments have not been approved yet, and the Chair will keep the Council abreast of further developments.

### **Old Business:**

1. The Council continued discussion regarding the changes to SUNY-wide Gen Eds. Some members questioned the rush in trying to make these changes since it is possible for the University at Albany to continue with the GEs as they are currently written. The Task Force will be charged with determining whether there would be significant benefits to UA from a rapid implementation (for Fall, 2010 entering students) or if UA would be better served by a process that would take more time.

2. Minors: The subcommittee consisting of Maria Brown, Joanne Malatesta and Christy Smith brought the results of collected data to add to UAC's continuing discussions of whether minors should be made optional or not.

"This Committee was charged with collecting data about the current state of minors at UAlbany including the number of current minors, exceptions to minor requirements, and level of student selection into multiple programs of study. Furthermore, given the concern expressed regarding upper level student participation in lower level courses we also explored the current state of upper classmen in lower level courses."

The reported included a Review of the UAlbany Minor Policies; Aggregate Level Examination of Minors; Review of Double/Triple Majors/Minors; List of Exceptions made to Minor Requirements in Fall 2009; Sampled Review of Upperclassmen (Juniors and Seniors) in Lower Level Courses by Major; Detailed List of Lower Level Courses Taken by Upperclassmen by Sampled Majors and Detailed List of Lower Level Courses Taken by Upperclassmen Across Sampled Majors.

Reviewing and discussion of this data led to the following conclusions:

(a) A significant number of students undertake work to complete minors that they are not required to complete, so that even if minors were optional, the data predict that many students would complete them nevertheless;

(b) Juniors and Seniors often take lower level courses that would fulfill GE requirements (although they may have already fulfilled them);

(c) Juniors and Seniors take more 200 level courses than 100 level courses. A significant number of these 200-level courses are applicable to majors.

(d) The market decides what is competitive. If our changes in the direction of rigor vs. flexibility are perceived as obstructions, the market will reflect that.

The subcommittee will continue to distill the available data to extract additional information, and they have asked the membership of the Council for guidance about the additional data they should review and questions they should be looking to answer. There will be more discussions regarding the minors in the weeks to come.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30AM