CLA Senate Meeting Minutes: Monday, May 15, 2017

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

Unanimously approved

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Unanimously approved

**3. Moderator’s Report**

New senators welcomed. New meeting schedule posted to website already; double-check meeting locations – some meetings moving to the integrated science building. Thanks to senators for hard work this year, especially those who are departing. Special thanks to Kelly Ahern who is leaving.

**4. Dean’s Report**

Fiona O’Brien from Academic Support has replaced Shanna in the Dean’s office. No news on the budget. Barry Mills is preparing to conduct program reviews across campus – Deans are meeting to discuss criteria for excellence for this evaluation process. All personnel cases and hiring is done –no failed searches. Senator asks for more details about the program review. Dean thinks it will focus on graduate programs first, then centers and institutes. Hasn’t heard anything about the review applying to departments – we have AQUAD for this.

**5. Motions from the Academic Affairs Committee to approve the following New/Changes courses:**

CLSICS 122G: New

Discussion: One form issue – Diversity box on front of one-form isn’t checked off (only distribution). Seems to be an oversight – Gen Ed committee will pick this up.

Vote: Course unanimously approved.

ECON 396: New

Discussion: Economics department has a focus on economics of inequality but no intermediate course in this area. Proposed course has been taught twice successfully as a special topics course. Suggestion from senator to apply for diversity credit to help improve enrollment.

Vote: Course unanimously approved.

ENGL 223: New

Discussion: Course tabled from last meeting because of concerns about overlap with course in Latin American and Iberian Studies. English department feels there isn’t a conflict: is an American literature course (deals only with American texts written in English; not a translation course); engages with questions of how Latin American literature engages with the larger US literary cannon and thus fits into the American literature track in the English department; English department has new hire in this field with a PhD in English in this area; Latin American literature is of vital interest to English students and will help to develop links to the Latino studies program; won’t conflict with Latin American and Iberian Studies because the English course is introductory (200-level) – LAIS course is an upper-level; English course could potentially be a benefit as the introductory course could funnel students into the upper level course after initial exposure; course cannot be cross-listed because of this difference in level. Senator points out that LAIS course is taught in Spanish; English course is taught in English so no major conflict. Senator speaks on behalf of the Latino studies program; Latino studies students want Latino literatures courses; new course will help students to understand the difference (and links) between the Latino studies and Latin American and Iberian Studies programs; new course and new faculty member will help strength the relationships between these programs.

Vote: Course unanimously approved

LABOR 120: New

Vote: Course unanimously approved

LABOR 325: Change of title and description

Vote: Course unanimously approved

**6. Motions from the Majors, Honors and Special Programs Committee to approve:**

Italian Cultural Center

Vote: Course unanimously approved

South Asian Center

Discussion: South Asian major only started in 2013 and is disproportionately enrolled compared with Asian Studies major; Center should create more visibility for the South Asian program and bring students and faculty together from across the university; Center will help program to secure external grant funding; proposed Center supposed to be self-funded. Senator asks about possible difficulties in securing grants and how this would impact the funding for the Center. Starting funds for the Center are from fees that visiting scholars pay and there are lots of visiting scholars interested in coming to UMB; Center has also requested start up program money from the Dean’s office. Senator asks if the Dean’s start-up money is secured given the current budget crisis. Not yet, but the Center is confident it will be approved; if it isn’t, it will impact the budget but won’t threaten the viability of the Center. Senator questions whether funding new centers is wise given the current budget and the extent of existing cuts. Senator notes that the proposal isn’t clear about office space and other material resources; a lot of centers (eg Ethics Center) have started without space or faculty have had to give up office space to create space for center.

Discussion concerning criteria for evaluating centers; senators should examine their funding model, the extent to which they bring together faculty from across the university, and their space requirements. Senator expresses need for a larger conversation about criteria for evaluating centers.

Blind vote: Center approved (14 yes; 2 no)

Changes to Chinese Minor

Tabled: wrong document uploaded to Zythos; will be put on CLA Agenda for the fall.

Changes to History MA Program

Vote: Course unanimously approved

**7. New Business**

Visit from Ana Frega, Advising Office:

Discussion: Senators commented on the value of professional advising, especially for gen ed requirements. Advising Office recognizes the importance of faculty contact and advising; not looking to replace it. Ana Frega explained the origins of the Advising Office; it was created in response to the lack of faculty advising, the increase in advising when holds became mandatory for all majors, and the NEASC requirement that advising be available to students according to their needs. Professional advisors are available at all times meet a range of student needs beyond lifting holds.

Senators raised concerns about professional advising weakening faculty contact with students as PAs lift advising holds. Concern that professional advising is contributing to declining enrollments in some majors. Senator suggested having two holds (gen ed and major). This is possible, but students will likely see it as putative as they are already frustrated that they have to go to two places for advising.

Senators raised concerns about lack of communication between professional and faculty advisors. Senators noted several instances where PAs have given incorrect advise to students. Senator commented that certain departments and programs aren’t comprehensible to incoming freshmen; despite efforts by chairs to explain programs to PAs so they can better explain and advertise them, PAs are still giving wrong information or leaving so frequently that these efforts are wasted. Advising office is trying to better connect with faculty advisors through introductory emails but faculty don’t know how to respond to these emails. Faculty are also encouraged to join the Faculty Advising Committee; every department is entitled to a representative. Senator suggests assigning advisees by major rather than alphabetically to help PAs learn majors. This isn’t possible given the disparity in department size and the turnover in PAs. However, there are department liaisons that are required to talk with department chairs and advising committee representatives and then report back to all professional advisors. Senator asks whether interdisciplinary programs have separate liaisons. They don’t; everything is done through department chairs. Concern that programs without a home department (eg. Cinema Studies) are getting lost.

Senators raised concerns that new advising software is unsecure, puts student data at risk, makes smaller programs invisible, and is unsuitable for liberal arts programs. Senator states that the design of the degree audit system could similarly be improved to make advising easier. Advising Office has nothing to do with software decisions – comes from Enrollment Management and Registrar. Senators state that there needs to be a separate conversation about how to increase faculty input in software purchases.

Action: Senators to ask departments to create a list of reasons why students need faculty advising – Advising Office will share this to encourage students to meet with faculty advisors; Senate will develop a list of specific issues to be addressed in a more systematic way; Anna Frega will come back to the Senate in the fall for more discussion; liaisons will copy senators on advising notices to create more contact people; Advising Office will contact program directors as well as department chairs; Advising Office will regularly check in with the Senate to target issues as they arise.

Vote on updated Senate by-laws

Discussion: CSM no longer running their courses through the Academic Affairs and Majors, Honors and Special Programs committees and will no longer be populating these committees. Bylaws have been altered to reflect this separation of CSM from CLA. Senator notes that there are some errors in the corrections.

Vote: unanimously approved

Constitution of 2017-2018 Senate Committees

Discussion: Committee lists are pretty set, but still a work in progress. Senator asks if chairs can serve on committees. They can serve on CLA committees, but chairs are not typically senators.

Vote: unanimously approved

Discussion of CLA Statement

Discussion: Senators are generally in favor of endorsing a statement of core values and posting it to the CLA website. Senator states that the statement needs to be endorsed by the upper administration; faculty are being asked to act as public intellectuals and this cannot be done without the support of the upper administration to defend faculty free speech. Steps beyond the CLA website would have to go through faculty council. Senator states that there are too many specifics listed in the statement concerning what CLA stands for and against; such lists can never be inclusive; details should be removed. Senator states that it is important for students to see themselves specifically represented in the document. Senator states that specificity is necessary in order for the statement to speak to the current political climate. Senator states that there is power in naming these issues. Senator notes that anti-Semitism is missing from the list. Senator suggests that the statement should include the point that such attitudes have no place in an intellectual environment. Senator suggests taking out the statements about Massachusetts history as this is a selective representation of state history. Senator states that it is important to align UMB with this part of state history.

Issue tabled until the fall: Needs more discussion.

Motion to adjourn at 4:08pm