

Minutes English Departmental Meeting

9 November 2018

In attendance: Karen Chandler, Joe Turner, Bruce Horner, Joan D'Antoni, Steve Smith, Frank Kelderman, Mark Mattes, Paul Griner, Ian Stansel, Mary P Sheridan, Hristomir Stanev, Susan Ryan, Deborah Lutz, Glynis Ridley, Andrew Rabin, Elaine Wise, Stephen Schneider, Tim Johnson, Karen Kopelson, Kristi Maxwell, Fran McDonald, Bronwyn Williams, David Anderson, Alan Golding, Kiki Petrosino, Alex Way.

Apologies: Matthew Biberman, Dale Billingsley, Dale Hachten, Andrea Olinger, Beth Willey

Meeting called to order: 2:00 pm

I. Updates

- Search for tenure-track position (professional writing)
 - Ad for search should be ready in June 2019
 - Possible to re-circulate the ad later in the Fall of 2019
- Reduced teaching load for graduate students supported by the Dean's Office
- Applications for Writing Center front desk position now closed

II. Request for four questions added to course evaluations

A request has been made by professors Sherri Wallace and Adam Enders (POLs) to be allowed to add questions to the student course evaluation forms.

Discussion:

- One-semester request only and students have the option to opt out.
- Questions are disconnected from the course evaluations themselves.
- Results are to be used for a peer-reviewed article, and the questions have been used before, beyond UofL
- Questions of why there is a need to use course evaluations for this, and whether this sets a precedent for other researchers to use course evaluations in this way.

General vote on request to add four questions to course evaluations:

- 13 “no” (request denied)
- 11 “yes”

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III. Graduate Program guidelines

Motion to amend language in Graduate Program guidelines.

1. The graduate committee moves that GS 799 be added to the PhD curriculum as an alternative for English 689.

→ Motion passes (1 abstention)

2. The graduate committee moves that language be added to the SLA guidelines in the Graduate Program Guidelines.

→ Motion passes (1 abstention)

3. The graduate committee moves that language of mission statement be changed.

Discussion:

- Internal document for IR only; not a public-facing mission statement.
- Add Creative Writing in “allied fields”
- Suggested edits for clarity

→ Motion to accept proposed text as amended passes unanimously.

4. The graduate committee moves that we remove the second language requirement from the MA and PhD programs.

Discussion:

- Second language requirement often a roadblock for graduate student degree progress/completion.
- Difficult to administer the language requirement; dropping the second language requirement as “least bad option”
- Comparison to other institutions; about half of surveyed peer institutions have second language requirement
- Meaning of second language requirement in cultural/political climate. Question of what broader intellectual goals the language requirement represents: thinking about politics of language/language difference/diversity. Possible to do this without requiring second language.

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- Second language requirement as speaking to the SLO framing of “diverse populations”
- Question of whether intermediate language study is helpful for advanced research in polylingual studies/literature.

→ Vote on motion to remove second language requirement:

Yes (21)

No (4)

Abst. (2)

→ Motion passes.

IV. Undergraduate Committee

Consideration of responses from survey of undergraduate majors, and recommendations for reshaping the major from Undergraduate Committee.

Discussion:

- Survey addresses issue of sometimes lacking sense of “completion” or “preparation” of English majors.
- Proposal to think about different tracks in the major, also to help with advising.
 - Six “common core” courses
 - Three different options for particular tracks for remainder of courses
- Question of whether the “common core” courses would prepare students equally well for different tracks.
- Popularity of linguistics among majors: how related to discussion of tracks?
- Idea of a “shared experience”→ students taking as many of the same courses as possible
- Question of to what extent the tracks proposal is about attracting new majors or better serving current majors, especially in light of the need to grow the major.
- In designing the tracks, need to take account of the 3 general fields represented by English faculty.
- Next steps: pick up conversations during next departmental meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 3:30 pm.