

Minutes of the Academic Affairs Committee
October 4, 2016

Present: Margaret McFadden, Nadia El-Shaarawi, JimScott, Fernando Gouvea, Beth Schiller, Adrienne Carmack, Jenner Foster, Sahan Dissanayake, Karlene Burrell-McRae, Lisa McDaniels, Jim Sloat, Marta Ameri

1. Approval of minutes

The minutes were approved. There was also some further discussion about the best way to include notifications to the library when new courses are approved, a question that arose in the previous meeting. Such notification would allow the library to plan better and to accommodate what the faculty needs. There was consensus about the need to develop a workable mechanism to provide timely notification.

2. Computational Biology major proposal

There was further discussion of the Computational Biology major proposal. The committee is generally in favor of the proposal, but asked that the department clarify the description of the focus areas, reduce the number of courses to 14, and provide a pathway that shows how student can come into the major after the first year. There was further discussion of the potential equity issues involved in such a large and structured major, and agreement that the majort needs to be publicized so that students will know about it early in their careers, as with pre-med and engineering.

3. Motion on independent studies

This motion was referred back to committee after extensive discussion in the faculty meeting. After further discussion of the points raised in the faculty meeting, the committee reached a consensus not to move forward with this proposal.

4. Economics proposal

The first draft of a proposal to make changes in the Economics majors was circulated. One outstanding issue is concerns of the Mathematics and Statistics department about some of the changes; the departments are in conversation about those questions. Michael Donihue, chair of the department, will come to the October 11th meeting.

NEXT MEETING: October 11, 2016 at 4:00 p.m., in Diamond 123