

## **Academic Affairs Committee—April 3, 2018**

Present: Sandy Maisel, Steve Saunders, Dale Kocevski, Katie Donahue, Loren McClenahan, Adrienne Carmack, Jacob Adner, Sam Scott, Beth Schiller, Russ Johnson, Jim Sloat, David Freidenreich (by phone)

I. The minutes from the March 20, 2018 meeting were approved.

II. Economics department course revisions

Michael Donihue (chair) presented a proposal under which Economics capstone seminars and elective course offerings at the 200 and 300 levels may (at the discretion of individual faculty members) include an additional contact period. The additional period (75 minutes) will be used to support increased opportunities for student research and writing. The department plans to count each “expanded” course as 1.5 courses in a faculty member’s teaching load.

The committee asked Michael many questions about the proposal. These questions focused on the constantly increasing number of Economics majors and minors, on whether the additional meeting period might cause scheduling difficulties for students, and on how the department’s overall curriculum would be affected. Michael indicated that one additional faculty member will need to be added to the department to make the new system work under a 4.5 course teaching load.

Concerns were expressed that some 4-credit Economics courses will have 3 hours of class time per week, while others will have 4.5 hours, resulting in inconsistency. It was noted, however, that considerable inconsistency like this already exists, as most 4-credit lab science courses meet for 6 hours per week, while many non-lab courses receive 4 credits for meeting 3 hours per week. Regardless of whether it is right to do so, we already lack a strict correlation between contact hours and credit hours.

Ultimately, the committee approved (by majority vote) the inclusion of an additional contact period in the specified Economics courses. The committee defers to the provost on the question of whether Economics’ new system (or any other system) of counting faculty course loads is appropriate.

III. Consent agenda: five course proposals were approved

- A. Computer Science 442 (Computational Physiology)
- B. English 3xx – (Poetry Remixes) [experimental, L]
- C. Spanish 298 (Medieval Iberian Cultures) [L,I]
- D. Spanish 498 (The Inca Garcilaso de la Vega) [experimental, L]
- E. Statistics 482 (Topics in Statistical Inference)

IV. Memo to AAC from Mary Beth Mills (about the grading motions)

Mary Beth Mills has expressed concerns, most specifically about Motion #2, and has asked if the committee would consider withdrawing or modifying that motion. After a brief discussion, the committee expressed willingness to engage with the concerns expressed, but the meeting time ran out before it was possible

to do so. As there will not be any additional AAC meetings before the April faculty meeting, the committee agreed to postpone the motions (or possibly just motion #2) if more time is needed for the faculty to have a full and robust discussion.

#### V. Announcements

Members were reminded that there will be no AAC meeting on April 10 (because of the DC campaign launch).