

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: October 27, 2005

PRESENT:	Agnes Samples Paul Bauer Ben Marschke Randall Gloege Noreen Lee Lewis Rife (student) Tasneem Khaleel (ex-officio)	Sandie Rietz Audrey ConnerRosberg Keith Edgerton Bruce Brumley Matt Redinger Brittany Lane (student) George White (ex-officio)
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ABSENT:	Mark Hardt – <i>excused</i> Craig McKenzie – <i>excused</i> David Garloff (ex-officio) Mary Susan Fishbaugh (ex-officio) Kirk Lacy (ex-officio) Curt Kochner (ex-officio)	Lorrie Steerey – <i>excused</i> Joe Michels (ex-officio) John Cech (ex-officio) Terrie Iverson (ex-officio)
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GUESTS:	Curtis Sherrodd (student) Kathy Chandra Bill Plank	Laura Dimmiller St. John Robinson
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PRESIDING: Keith Edgerton, Chair

Keith Edgerton called the meeting to order at 3:41 p.m. in the Chancellor's Conference Room.

The minutes of October 20 were accepted as presented.

I. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Item 80 AA in Rehabilitation and Related Services. Modification of an existing program.

Item 80.a REHA 497 Capstone in Chemical Dependency Rehabilitation. New course.

Item 13 BS in Rehabilitation and Related Services. Modification of an existing program (change title of degree).

Since there is no one to discuss these items, they will be deferred until next week.

II. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Community Information System Project Presentation: Laura Dimmeler

Ms. Dimmeler distributed a short report and stated that the CIS is a web-based, comprehensive database to bring lots of information together. The Polis Center in Indianapolis will be our model. The data which will be shared will primarily be used as a grant writing resource, and we would really like faculty participation in this project. The pilot project will be implemented in January, and we have a number of interested groups which we have been meeting with for three years. The University is partnered with United Way on this project. MSU-Billings has about \$50,000 invested including Ms. Dimmeler's salary, but the University is not "paying" for this project because we are taking it to the community as an opportunity. If the community is not interested, the project is dead. The funding to run the CIS will come from grants and foundations, and United Way is the primary fundraiser. The goal of the CIS is to get information out quickly, rather than the process of getting it from city and county offices, which can take years.

The Senate thanked Ms. Dimmeler for her presentation.

B. Second Language Requirements Erosion

It was noted that MSU-Billings is facing an erosion of the language requirement in many programs, some of which now accept computer and math classes as second languages. Curtis Sherrodd noted that Dean Khaleel had asked him to speak to fellow students about the second language requirement, and he said that most of the students he spoke with (who were mostly education majors) think a second language should be required of all majors. Mr. Sherrodd only found one student who switched majors to avoid a language requirement.

Bill Plank, Modern Languages and Literatures, stated that many years ago the Arts & Sciences chairs agreed that a B.A. should have two years of a second language, and a B.S. should have one year. Then the Board of Regents decided that students should be able to get a degree as quickly and cheaply as possible, and one of the first things to be cut was the language requirement.

St. John Robinson, Chairperson of Modern Languages and Literatures, reviewed the history of staffing in the department. He stated that in 1982 the department had 5.5 full-time faculty. In 1985 it went up to 6.5, and has declined since then. The department now has two Spanish instructors and one Spanish/French, and offers one major in Spanish. Dr. Robinson also noted that interest is up in French, but that may cause a problem

staffing the courses for the Spanish major, especially with the impending retirement of Dr. Ted Jensen. The question was raised as to whether high school teachers would be interested in teaching language courses, especially those we don't regularly offer. Dr. Robinson stated that some high school teachers do teach evening courses, but none of them do it on a regular basis. Dr. Robinson also asked that the Senate not concern itself so much with staffing, but more with the quality of instruction we are giving our students.

It was cited that the Senate could ask the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures to put together a proposal that would address the shrinkage of second languages. The Senate could also ask the departments to put the second language requirement on their agendas to discuss.

It was observed that the best way to initiate change would be to issue a resolution that is focused and direct that second language requirements be brought back in line. It was also suggested that a language requirement be added to Academic Foundations: one year required and a second optional. It was noted that a better requirement would be to demonstrate proficiency rather than require a number of credits. It was noted that a resolution should also come from the students about the need for a second language requirement. They could be done simultaneously. It was cited that if a language requirement were added to Academic Foundations, it would be wise to wait until the Academic Foundations Committee had completed this first section of work. Then the Senate could add to the structure.

It was observed that any time students are given a choice, there will always be some students who take the "easy" route and end up being less qualified graduates.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

rjrm