

Department of English & Philosophy Meeting Minutes for December 5, 2006

Attending:

English

Jennifer Adkison
Steve Adkison
Brian Attebery
Jennifer Attebery
Keith Comer
Mark Dodd
Terry Engebretsen
Tom Flanigan
Hal Hellwig
Margaret Johnson
Kathleen King
Tom Klein

Sonja Launspach
Tracy Montgomery
Brian Norman
Amy Raymond
Roger Schmidt
Deborah Shein
Lynn Shutters
Leif Sorensen
Susan Swetnam
Curt Whitaker
Jessica Winston
Brent Wolter

Philosophy

Carl Levenson
Melissa Norton
Jim Skidmore
Russell Wahl
Jonathan Westphal

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

Announcements

Terry discussed the current state of the search for a new creative writer.

Spring enrollment is down markedly, especially for Engl 090 and 101. This may require some scheduling adjustments. There are also some problems with respect to enrollment in some 200-, 300-, and 400-level courses.

The Dean's reception and the President's reception are at the same day and same time.

If you have problems with your computer or need programs updated, please check with Lisa and the front office first (in order to cut down on expenses for ITS services, which cost \$50/hr for assistance).

Reports from (Standing) Committees

Graduate:

Jennifer Attebery thanked faculty for their participation in the Town Meetings. The NOI re: the name change has run astray with the Graduate Council. They have requested a formal, "PowerPoint-style" presentation that explains the need, curricular changes, and so forth.

Research & Prof. Development:	No news to report.
English Undergraduate:	Tom noted that faculty should be checking with their advisees, especially at registration. Tom also noted we would be trying to return the Reading Room to a more welcoming venue.
Philosophy Undergraduate:	Meeting later today.
Composition:	Comp Committee would like to see proposals for a "stretch" course - a 101-102 cluster with an interdisciplinary focus (e.g., with art, music, political science, etc.). Terry noted that they have been successful at other locations (e.g., BSU). This would be a two-semester sequence, 6-credits.
Special Programs:	No news to report.
Faculty Senate:	Jim thanked the faculty for their input on the recent surveys. The Senate is now dealing with student retention and recruitment issues primarily, and also faculty retention. Ideas on either of those issues are welcomed - please contact Jim.
Other/Special Committees?	<p>Lynn is working with the ISU reading program, and they are hoping to select this text earlier this year. Recommendations for texts roughly 300p in length are welcome, please contact Lynn.</p> <p>Tom asked about the updates to the web site and the status of the department newsletter. Jennifer Adkison noted that the material for the newsletter has been available for some time, but we do not have anyone "web-savvy" who can post the materials. Perhaps the department will be able to obtain a course release for next term to help speed this process along, or perhaps split a course release with other departments.</p>

New Business

Discussion of Proposed New Guidelines for English 308

The Comp Committee has been working on these revisions for over a year and working with the College of Business as part of this process. In their recent accreditation report, the CoB was lauded for their work with writing in their curriculum. Cathy Peppers (who used to teach in this department) was hired their to help coordinate their writing efforts. Various faculty in the CoB would prefer to see 308 moved back into the College; others would prefer to work with the English faculty to revise and improve the current 308 structure. The CoB has indicated that they may pull this course from English if those concerns are not met. Terry noted that similar concerns have been expressed by departments that require 307. Enrollment in English 307 & 308 constitute over 55% the Department's 300-level courses and over 40% of all 300- and 400-level student enrollment.

Concerns have been, with respect to current Department practices: consistency across sections; genre-type focus; inadequate focus on business writing values; insufficient writing (quantity); insufficient attention to business ethics. These guidelines are to be considered a beginning point. The Department will have to maintain an ongoing discussion with 308 teaching faculty and the CoB in order to continue improving our approach and meeting the needs of students in the CoB. Steve noted that we are teaching this course for a different college, and this is an attempt to meet those needs more effectively. The CoB would like to have their rubric used in 308 instruction and evaluation; Steve noted that it maps onto the new guidelines quite well and grew out of the same rubric the Department uses for English 102.

Jennifer Attebery requested a clarification on the business/ethical values aspect of the course description. Brian A. moved that this be approved as the new guidelines, and that the rubric be attached to this document (for voting purposes). Motion seconded. Margaret asked for the business/ethical values description be revised for clarity. Deb Shein asked about the "analysis of financial data"; Steve noted that this would apply to more general considerations (e.g., when to bring in such support, how to present it, and so forth). "Business-related fields" will be substituted for "their fields" in the initial description.

The clarifications will be obtained, and there will be a paper vote on this later this week or early finals week.

Discussion of Supplemental Readings List for Composition

Hal noted that this list is designed to help allow for more flexibility in text selection for instructors; these would be supplemental texts, not primary textbooks for the 101/102 courses. Tom felt the list was "rather bizarre" and "liberal." Susan felt that some of the choices were quite difficult, perhaps overly so for composition courses. Brian A. recommended a separate list for 101 and 102, with some works that offer or demonstrate academic writing for 102. Comp Committee will divide these selections accordingly; additional recommendations are welcome.

Old Business

Discussion of Working Group 4, the role of surveys in our revised curriculum.

Tom asked for a schedule with respect to these reports, as with the current approach these are not being addressed in a timely manner. Margaret recommended a second faculty meeting focused only on these issues. Brian A. asked for a proposal from the Undergraduate Committee based on these suggestions. Kathleen noted that the Working Group 4 report contradicted the Working Group 5 report. A number of faculty expressed a desire for a more timely process with a specific schedule for sessions (faculty meetings, town halls, etc.).

P&P will devise a schedule and set of specific issues to be addressed during the spring semester. Jennifer Attebery asked about the Curriculum Council schedule with respect to this, which would require that the Department have approved any changes by the end of spring term.

The meeting was adjourned at 4 p.m.