

## Department of English & Philosophy Meeting Minutes for November 1, 2005

### Attending:

#### English

Jennifer Adkison

Brian Attebery

Keith Comer

Mark Dodd

Terry Engebretsen

Janne Goldbeck

Hal Hellwig

Alan Johnson

Tom Klein

Dawn Lattin

Tracy Montgomery

Brian Norman

Folke Person

Deb Shein

Susan Swetnam

Curt Whitaker

Jessica Winston

#### Philosophy

Jim Skidmore

Melissa Norton

Russell Wahl

### The meeting began at 2:30 p.m.

### Announcements

Eight ISU administrators have turned back part of the raises from last year; four others attempted to do so, but anyone earning below 85% of Oklahoma study figures was not permitted to do so by the university president.

The job search deadline is Nov 2nd. As of Nov. 1st, there are 40 complete applications and approximately 20 more partial applications. All of those submitted so far appear suited for the position.

There is a conference on Don Quixote this Friday – faculty and students are welcome to attend.

The last Arts & Sciences chairs' meeting was supposed to address the new tenure and promotion guidelines, and working groups for those will be formed next week (humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, and so forth). More input on the proposed guidelines is welcome, and faculty can discuss their concerns with Terry. There will also be a discussion about the faculty workload policy.

### Reports from (Standing) Committees

Research & Prof. Development:

Two upcoming events: a new "What's New in Your Field" (Jessica and Curt) on Friday, Nov. 11th – a reading for it will be provided on Monday, Nov. 7th.

After Thanksgiving (Dec. 2nd) Vince will be presenting a "Work in Progress." Details to follow. Volunteers for both types of sessions for spring semester are encouraged, and interested faculty should contact Jim Skidmore.

English Undergraduate:	Tom noted that there has been some interest expressed in an English “club” or English Honor Society. Faculty are asked to query their students concerning their interest in such an organization.
Philosophy:	No news to report.
Composition:	A syllabus review of English 090, 101, and 102 has been completed. There is a review of the mentor program underway, as well as an examination of distance (televised) courses. A committee has been appointed to review the 102 approved textbook list, and the dual-enrollment / early college program is being reviewed.
Special Programs:	The panel previously scheduled for this fall (“creative publishing”) will be taking place next spring instead.
Faculty Senate:	A new faculty workload survey is forthcoming. Dr. Gallagher visited the “open forum” of the Senate at Monday’s meeting. Tom asked about the salaries of faculty earning below the 85% mark, but there are no immediate plans by the administration to address these.
Graduate Committee:	A review of the graduate program has been begun, and the committee is considering other approaches to research and teaching.
Other notes:	Brian Norman noted that we have used nearly all of our available funds for new library books (only \$280 left). However, some funding will still be possible for other selections.

## **New Business**

Discussion of curriculum revision –

Faculty offered a variety of responses to the initial questions about possible curricular revision. P&P worked to focus the comments, concerns, and issues that were developed, and the resulting questions there then sent to all faculty via email prior to this meeting:

- 1. We almost universally agreed that the English major should give students good critical thinking skills, but many other majors also give students good critical thinking skills. What*

*does the English major produce in terms of critical thinking skills that other majors do not? What is distinctive about our approach to critical thinking skills?*

*2. How important is a core curriculum (not a canonical curriculum but a shared body of material that instructors can assume and that can foster critical conversation among our students)?*

*3. Should the department define a departmental identity or area of notable strength? What are the practical curricular consequences of defining such an identity?*

*4. What is the function of a lower division survey? Do our survey courses serve that function?*

*5. What is the balance of genre and literary history that we believe is appropriate? Does one genre course seem sufficient? Should there be more?*

*6. How many hours should the English major require?*

Faculty at the meeting discussed a variety of concerns with regard to these general questions and issues, and then agreed that it would be helpful to task individual questions to representative faculty working groups for further consideration. P&P will select working group members – if faculty have a strong preference for one working group, let Terry know this week.

Terry also asked that all faculty identify their three areas of specialization (email message to follow).

The working groups will not be required to report their work until January.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.