

Department of English and Philosophy
Department Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2009; 2:30 p.m.; LA 256

Attending: J. Adkison, B. Attebery, J. Attebery, M. Dodd, C. Donovan, T. Engebretsen, S. Goslee, H. Hellwig, B. Schultz-Hurst, A. Johnson, M. Johnson, T. Klein, D. Lattin, S. Launspach, T. Montgomery, M. Norton, A. Petit, P. Reedy, R. Schmidt, J. Skidmore, S. Swetnam, R. Wahl, C. Whitaker, J. Winston, B. Wolter

1. Announcements

M. Johnson welcomed faculty, thanked faculty who served last year in administrative positions and have stepped down, and thanked those who have assumed those positions. She introduced Lynn Worsham, who was unable to attend this meeting because of a pre-existing schedule conflict.

M. Johnson reported on a meeting with the Provost. The College of Arts and Sciences will be choosing a permanent dean, and she invited faculty to submit nominations for membership on the search committee.

Department Picnic: Sept. 11. University-wide Faculty Assembly: Sept. 14.

2. Reports from Committees

A. *Graduate Committee*

J. Winston reported that applications and student numbers in the graduate program are up.

B. *Undergraduate Committee*

S. Goslee noted that the Undergraduate Committee had not yet met.

C. *Composition*

H. Hellwig asked for ideas for panel discussions. He reported on the Early College Program: 25 sections of Early College Courses are scheduled, with 5 sections of English 110. Currently EC courses account for 40% of our 101 workload in terms of total student enrollment; 30% of our 110 students are enrolled in EC classes. Ten English faculty members will monitor Early College Instructors this year.

He also reported that the ISU Guide to Writing is now at the Bookstore. He invited faculty to forward to the Composition Committee ideas about how the next edition might be improved.

D. *Philosophy*

R. Wahl announced that Philosophy faculty will meet this Friday at 2.

E. *Publicity*

J. Adkison noted that the Publicity Committee had not yet met. Faculty will soon be receiving an email requesting information for the next newsletter. On agenda for this year is exploring ways to disseminate the Department newsletter more broadly, especially to alumni.

C. Donovan asked everyone to check his or her personal web page and send updates to her, especially updates on publications. She noted that she wants to develop a page on the website featuring emeritus faculty and asked for input.

F. *Special Programs*

J. Skidmore invited volunteers to lead Works In Progress and What's New In Your Field sessions this academic year. He also solicited suggestions for speakers/writers who might be invited to visit campus.

G. *Faculty Senate*

B. Wolter called attendees' attention to an email memo they should have received from A. Frantz, this year's Chair of the Faculty Senate. B. Wolter briefly noted the ongoing and fervent discussions about workload policy and other matters currently in progress, and reminded Department members (including Adjunct Faculty) that he is their representative to the Senate and thus interested in

hearing their comments and suggestions. He noted that the University has an Ombudsman, J. Gribas, who is prepared to help arbitrate workplace conflicts.

Additional Announcement:

M. Johnson reminded attendees that tomorrow, Sept. 2, is the deadline for submitting schedule request forms for Spring, 2009, to the Assistant Chair, S. Swetnam..

3. 2009-10 Department Budget

M. Johnson provided figures comparing the Department's 2008-09 budget to the 2009-10 budget, including the following information:

- Irregular salaries and Communications lines are the same as last year.
- Travel has been cut roughly in half, from \$10,776 to \$5,000
- Materials and Supplies has been cut from \$24,103 to \$19,103
- Equipment, which was cut as last year progressed, is the same as the beginning of last year, at \$6924

The Policy and Personnel Committee has already discussed the implications of the travel budget. The Department would ideally like to support faculty travel at \$1,000 per person for the year, but this appears to be impossible, given the current budget. Requests for funding already exceed \$5,000. The Committee's initial inclination is to support more people at a reduced rate; department input was requested. In response to a question from B. Attebery, M. Johnson noted that the guidelines from last year for prioritizing funding will be followed. R. Wahl registered his support for funding more people at a lower rate, especially given the current university research emphasis. J. Winston suggested that everyone keep a log of the amount of out-of-pocket money he or she is paying for professional travel so that the Department can compile an annual report; M. Johnson endorsed that idea. The latter also noted that the Office of Research has some special monies available for travel to high-profile national or international conferences.

In anticipation of its meeting next week, P & P would like all travel requests for 2009-10 submitted by 9/4. After allocations are made, M. Johnson will contact everyone who has requested travel monies so that they can make a decision about whether or not to attend their proposed conference(s). Faculty who decide not to attend a conference should let her know so that the monies can be reallocated.

4. College General Instructional Budget

M. Johnson reviewed the budget problem which has contributed to the current crisis involving adjunct faculty/lecturers. In addition to the cuts announced last spring, about half of the full-time lecturers in the college were given notices during the summer that their contracts would not be renewed next year. She lamented this situation, praising adjuncts/lecturers for the enormous contribution they make to the Department and to students.

What happened in regard to full-time lecturers was this: full-time lecturers have been paid out of the College's 801 account for many years with the aim of better providing benefits and stability through that funding mechanism. The 801 budget, however, did not increase along with increases in the numbers of lecturers, and health insurance costs have skyrocketed. Thus, this year, \$894,459 out of the year total of \$1,133,059 in the 801 account has already been obligated for fall semester instruction. Academic Affairs has funded some classes across the College. But about half of the approximately 40 full-time Arts and Sciences lecturers paid from this budget received notices of terminal contracts.

M. Johnson has no final information on how this situation will effect the Department of English

and Philosophy, but she registered her sadness that valuable colleagues/friends are likely to be out of work next year.

One lecturer commented that the Administration sounds committed to moving adjuncts from full-time status with benefits, to part-time without. M. Johnson said that the Provost indicated at a meeting Tuesday morning that there's no master plan to get rid of instructors, but that he is committed to increasing instruction by graduate students. Several people commented that the faculty is hearing contradictory messages. A "strong, cohesive voice from faculty" relayed through Faculty Senate was suggested as a response to the adjunct situation.

One lecturer that the obligation to give notice had been removed from her current contract, after 13 years of service, without any warning.

T. Klein asked how many students hadn't been able to find places in composition classes this semester. M. Johnson said that many had probably been shut out of Engl 090, but that last-minute extra sections of 101 and 102 seemed to accommodate most students wishing to take those classes. S. Swetnam noted that she was turning upper-classmen away from her overly-full Engl 307 class. R. Wahl noted that the Philosophy program is offering close to the largest number of introductory sections ever, and that all are full. In response to a question, M. Johnson said that if people now on part-time contracts had been allowed to teach full-time, the Department would have gained about 1.5 faculty members. "A lot of work is being done," she said, by "a lot of people."

5. New Faculty Position Request

M. Johnson registered the irony of attempting to add a new faculty position while facing radical cuts; still, we must attempt to boost our numbers every year. P & P identified 19th and 20th Century British Literature as a specialty currently needed in the Department and asked for feedback. S. Swetnam noted that no one has requested the 200-level British Literature Survey course on the schedule forms submitted to date, while 6 faculty members have requested the American Literature Survey. After a discussion which included affirmation that specialties in Ethnicity and Literature and in Creative Writing should be part of the Department's long-term hiring plan, a show-of-hands vote registered 14 in favor of proposing a new faculty line in 19th and 20th Century British Literature, with 1 in favor of Ethnicity in Literature.

6. Proposed Course Changes

M. Johnson explained that the new Banner registration system required courses to be noted as Fall, Spring, and Summer if Departments wish ever to offer them in those semesters. Given our recent practice, we thus need to revise notations on some courses. Other courses need to be changed in their R designations, and several courses not offered for many years need to be eliminated. She presented a list of revised designations as follows:

Philosophy

103: Offer F, S, Su instead of F, S

English

115: Offer F, S, Su instead of F, S

126: Offer R2 instead of S

301: Offer F, S, Su instead of F, S

401: Offer R1 instead of R2

410: Offer F, S, Su instead of F, S

Delete Courses:

E 105

E 433

The discussion was interrupted by the arrival of the Faculty Senate Chair, Alan Frantz, and Vice-Chair, Phil Cole.

7. Discussion with the Faculty Senate Chair and Vice-Chair

A. Frantz reviewed the current discussion involving the University's Workload Policy and other matters; as a liason between faculty and administration, he invited faculty input. A lengthy discussion ensued, during which Department concerns about increased teaching loads and resulting de facto limitations on faculty ability to do research, about retention, about the threat to lecturers' employment and their new workload, about the proliferation of administrators, and about other matters were voiced. The following suggestions were made:

- Faculty members must be certain to make their voices heard through their Faculty Senate Representatives

- The Faculty Senate should write frequent statements of its position as open letters to the Administration

- To be certain that the Faculty Senate is accurately registering the views of its constituency, it should take a straw poll of faculty opinion on various matters as soon as possible, to be followed by more complete surveys

- The Faculty Senate might pursue a coalition with the Student Senate, given mutual interest in providing high-quality education and in the future of ISU

- Faculty might directly communicate with Legislators and the State Board of Education

- The AAUP study on Contingent Faculty should be disseminated, and its findings should be shared with the Administration

- A member of the ISU Contingent Faculty should sit on Faculty Senate

6. Proposed Course Changes, Continued

After a few minutes of additional clarification, S. Swetnam moved and J. Attebery seconded that these new designations be approved. A paper ballot will be circulated.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, S. Swetnam, Assistant Chair