

Center for Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities  
Advisory Committee Meeting  
Minutes  
Thursday, September 24, 2009

Present: Quispe-Agnoli, Kidwell, Alfaraz, Bonge, Brockey, Charnley, Dimitrova, Rachman, Rauch (substituting for Francese), Rauscher, Ryu, Schuttler, Word

Meeting started at 1:00 p.m.

1. Review of April 16, 2009 meeting minutes

- Bonge moved to approve the April 16 meeting minutes; Charnley seconded; motion approved.

2. Updates and Announcements

- Quispe-Agnoli reviewed items from her August 25, 2009, memo to IAH faculty regarding CISAH budget cuts, services to IAH instructors, and MSU policies.
- Quispe-Agnoli briefly discussed the impact of future budget cuts in IAH and that IAH has begun a self-study under the auspices of both CAL and Associate Provost Estry.
- Several Faculty Learning Communities may be of interest to IAH faculty: an FLC focused on integrative studies (cofacilitated by Kidwell and Quispe-Agnoli), an FLC on teaching large classes, and an FLC on online learning.
- Quispe-Agnoli distributed a list of IAH course syllabi that had been approved by Quispe-Agnoli and Kidwell over the summer and of IAH course syllabi for upcoming semesters that will need to be reviewed as they are submitted to the committee. Discussion of review process was deferred to the next AC meeting.
- Quispe-Agnoli noted that since IAH has begun using the university's online SIRS for IAH student evaluations, the nomination and selection process for the Fintz and Somers awards (which had previously been based, in part, on IAH's own SIRS forms) would need to be revised. Discussion on this item was deferred to a future AC meeting.
- Quispe-Agnoli informed the AC that she will be on sabbatical from February to July 2010. Kidwell has been appointed by the Dean to serve as acting director during that time.

3. Discussion Items

- Quispe-Agnoli tabled for discussion the topic of potential changes in IAH derived from the charges from CAL Dean Wurst to chairs and directors, from Provost Wilcox to Associate Provost Estry, and from Associate Provost Estry to the administrators of IAH, ISS, and ISGS. She distributed relevant excerpts from these charges, her own letter to CAL chairs, and summary enrollment data for IAH courses offered FS05 to SS10. For AC consideration, Quispe-Agnoli reviewed suggestions IAH proposed in her letter to chairs:
  - ◆ “Maintaining the IAH-Tier I (A) courses with its fundamental charge of keeping an emphasis on student writing, instructor's feedback and opportunity to rewrite (continuation of the Freshman Writing program and core feature of General Education).
  - ◆ “Transforming the academic goals and learning outcomes for IAH-Tier II (B) courses in such way that written assignments (like traditional formal essays)

will not be a substantial part of their assessment tools for learning outcomes. This implies a redefinition of what we want to achieve with IAH-B courses (matter of discussion in all involved groups).

- ◆ “Changes in IAH-Tier II should result in new modes of instruction that will facilitate large classes with no recitations. TAs –if any—of FT instructors could assist the assessment of learning outcomes of large classes and the creation of evaluation criteria that will be technology enhanced.
- ◆ “In order to assist faculty, IAH-Tier II (B) courses should include a hybrid/blended mode of instructional delivery (one, two or three hours online).
- ◆ “Another mode of delivery of IAH-Tier II (B) courses could include several sessions of experiential learning and/or service learning activities. These activities, if planned carefully and ahead of time, would be counted as part of the 56 instructional hours of IAH courses (4 cr).”
- Members of the AC shared feedback they had received from their chairs and departments, and the committee discussed a variety of suggestions and proposals:
  - ◆ Redefining the role of writing in IAH courses, perhaps shifting away from the traditional genre of the formal academic essay to genres of writing more broadly expected across the university and in students’ future careers
  - ◆ Exploring alternative means of learning assessment that would be less reliant of writing but would still place an emphasis on critical thinking, analysis, interpretation, evaluation, etc.
  - ◆ Cross-listing IAH courses with departmental courses (problematic since this would mix integrative studies courses with disciplinary courses)
  - ◆ Removing the distinction between A- and B-courses levels such that students would be required to earn credit to any two IAH course rather than one IAH 201-210 and one IAH 211-241
  - ◆ Addressing negative attitudes among both students and faculty regarding IAH courses (and IS courses in general) as an unnecessary burden to complete an undergraduate degree at MSU
  - ◆ Emphasizing the value of the content of IAH course and placing less emphasis on how that content is delivered and/or assessed
  - ◆ Reconsidering the role of graduate teaching assistants in IAH courses, shifting TAs from serving as instructors to serving as graders, perhaps assigning new TAs as graders but allowing more advanced (ABD?) TAs to serve as instructors
  - ◆ Balancing top-down mandates for change with bottom-up shifts in teaching practice, perhaps to allow faculty a stronger role in shaping the curriculum of upper-level IAH courses
  - ◆ Exploring the use of more online instructional technologies—more hybrid/blended courses, especially in B-courses—with the caveat that any mandate to increase the role of online instruction must be supported with effective training and faculty development programs targeting the specific needs of faculty teaching those courses with more online instruction
  - ◆ Considering small increases in section size as an incremental means to serve more students with fewer faculty and course—shifting from the current 25 student per section, to 28 per section the next year, to 30 per section the next year—thereby serving the same number of students with roughly 20% fewer

courses/faculty

- ◆ Examining why students in the sciences and engineering are allowed to use the alternative science track to fulfill ISB/P requirements (i.e., those students can use disciplinary courses in the biological and physical science to fulfill ISB/P requirements) and why students in the arts and humanities and the social science are not allowed analogous alternative tracks (i.e., why can't students in CAL use disciplinary courses for IAH and students in CSS using disciplinary courses for ISS)
- ◆ Providing more opportunities to use experiential and/or service learning in IAH courses
- Quispe-Agnoli expressed her appreciation for the ideas, suggestions, concerns that were expressed. She will take the discussion into consideration as she prepares her report for Dean Wurst, due October 1. She will report back to AC at the next meeting on October 15.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Submitted by Kirk S. Kidwell