

WINTHROP UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC COUNCIL MINUTES
October 31, 2003

Academic Council met on Friday, October 31, 2003 at 2:00 pm in 308 Tillman Hall.

Members:

Jo Koster, Chair	English
Pat Ballard	Library
John Bird	English
Shaun Cassidy	Art & Design
Ray Dockery	Education
Barbara Fuller	Business
Barbara Heinemann	Modern Languages
Gloria Jones#	English
Peter Judge	Religion
David Letourneau	Finance
Paul Martyka	Art & Design

Sue Peck*	Education
David Pretty	History
Frank Pullano	Mathematics
Mesgun Sebhatu	Physics
William Seyfried	Economics
Sandra Wilson	Education
Jennifer Moss	Student
Timothy Druke	Records/Regis.

* Absent

#Siobhan Brownson represented Gloria Jones.

Guests present: Adolphus Belk, Debra Boyd, Ron Goolsby, Karen Jones, Tom Moore, and Marilyn Sarow

I. Minutes from the October 3, 2003 meeting

The minutes from the October 3, 2003 meeting were approved via e-mail on October 18. The final approved version of the minutes may be found on the Academic Affairs minutes web page: http://www.winthrop.edu/acad_aff/Minutes/minutes.html

II. Chair's Remarks

Jo Koster previewed the meeting by mentioning that today the Council will have the opportunity to discuss more of the intentions of the General Education Program. She also indicated the Council will not meet in November.

III. Vice President of Academic Affairs Report

Vice President Moore reminded the Council that this upcoming discussion of the items on the table will be healthy for the institution and the program.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Committee on Undergraduate Instruction

CUI has not met since the last Council meeting and had no report.

B. General Education

Paul Martyka reported for the General Education Committee. The General Education Committee met and presented three items for Council consideration:

1. Transfer Credit Acceptance

The General Education committee recommended that transfer courses accepted to meet general education requirements in Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences, or the Historical Perspective be exempted from containing the writing component. A lengthy discussion followed addressing the following issues: the nature of the writing component and its intent to include writing across the curriculum, the implications of not accepting transfer credit based on existing articulation agreements, the time necessary for review of outside courses if we were to need new articulation agreements, implications for degree progress if otherwise transferable courses cannot be used in our program, and whether we should expect the technical colleges to modify their courses to meet our requirement when the other 4-year colleges do not have a similar requirement.

Discussion continued on whether we should distinguish between a course transferred in when a student starts and one transferred in while he/she is a Winthrop student and how we could track whether the course did or did not have a writing component. Vice President Moore mentioned that the Chief Academic Affairs Officers across South Carolina have discussed transfer issues and are considering the effects of two competing issues: 1. the quality of the experience of the institution and 2. concerns about access and equity in transferability of courses. Further discussion included the feasibility of having transfer students submit a portfolio of their writing, the time and staff required to complete a portfolio review on 500 transfer students a year, the possibility of having an extra separate check for the writing component on 8 courses, a compensatory experience if some courses are transferred in that do not have a writing component, and whether transfer students will have the writing skills expected in our upper level courses.

It was then moved and seconded to call the question. The motion to call the question passed without dissent. The Council immediately proceeded to vote on the motion to allow transfer credit to count toward the general education program without considering the writing component. The motion failed on a vote of 6 in favor, 10 against. Chair Koster asked the General Education committee to look at the issue again and submit a new proposal.

2. Limit on the number of major hours used in the General Education program

The General Education committee recommended no policy be set and that each department should monitor its own programs. The Council approved this recommendation without dissent.

3. Require courses meeting Oral Communication requirement be conducted in Standard English.

This item was not included as part of the agenda. It was moved and seconded to suspend the rules to discuss and vote upon this topic. The motion to suspend the rules passed unanimously. The General Education committee proposed: Courses that satisfy the Oral Communication requirements (Gen Ed. Goal 1.1 and objective 1) must be conducted in Standard English. Paul Martyka, for the General education committee, reported that while the criteria for inclusion as an Oral Communication course did not specify the language, the goals and objectives did. John Bird mentioned that during the Oral Communications committee meetings the thought that a course in another language might be submitted was not considered. It was questioned whether the language conversation classes covered the depth of speaking skills as desired in the requirement; for example, debates, speeches and the like, rather than just carrying on a conversation in the language.

After discussion, the Council voted 13 in favor, 3 against, to approve the proposal from the General Education committee.

V. Old Business

A. Academic Eligibility Requirements

The request from the Vice President for Academic Affairs office to increase the minimum GPA for students to remain in good standing at Winthrop returned for its scheduled discussion after being introduced at the September 5 meeting.

The proposal is to raise the minimum cumulative grade point average to the following levels:

	Earned Hours	Minimum GPA
Freshmen	0-23	1.75 (from 1.50)
Sophomore	24-53	1.85 (from 1.75)
Junior	54-86	2.00 (from 1.90)
Senior	87+	2.00 (no change)

Karen Jones presented information regarding how last year's students would have done using these minimums. From her analysis few students would be affected. It was moved and seconded to approve the changes to the Academic Eligibility Requirements and forward the requested change to Faculty Conference. The motion was passed unanimously.

B. Task Force on University Integrity

Chair Koster reported the Task Force on University Integrity has been appointed; the following have been appointed to the Task Force:

Alice Burmeister, Art and Design (VPA)
Gloria Jones,* English (A&S)
Dave Pretty,* History (A&S)
Barbara Heinemann,* Modern Languages (A&S)
John Bird,* English (A&S)
Tim Drueke,* Registrar
Mark Herring, Library
Bethany Marlowe, Student Affairs
Bobbie Fuller,* Management and Marketing (CBA)
Marshall Jones, Center for Pedagogy (COE)
A student to be named soon.

* Indicates members of Academic Council

The first meeting of the Task Force has been scheduled for November 7, 2003.

C. Merit Pay

Ray Dockery reported for the ad hoc committee that was formed last year to review the institutional policy on faculty merit pay. He distributed a report on their deliberations. Since it was not part of the agenda it was moved to postpone all discussion on the topic until the January 16, 2004 meeting.

VI. New Business

None

VII. Announcements

Tim Drueke reminded everyone that registration will begin on November 5 for seniors and graduate students.

Jo Koster reported the preliminary comments from the NCATE site review team were very positive and the items of previous concern were remedied successfully. Thanks and congratulations to all involved in this accreditation visit.

The next meeting of the Council will be January 16, 2004.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 pm.