

Liberal Studies Committee Minutes  
October 25, 2005

All members present : Millie Abel, Brent Kinser, Windy Gordon, Beth Tyson Lofquist, Jeanne Kaufman, Peter Nieckarz, Tracy Zontek, Brian Dinklemeyer, Charles Wallis, Jim DeConinck, Kari Hensley

Also attending: Terry Michelsen

Minutes of the October 18 meeting were approved.

The following statement under the P6 category of the checksheet was discussed:

“Only three of the six credit hours earned in FREN, GER, SPAN 110 apply to Liberal Studies. The remainder apply to major or elective hours outside of Liberal Studies.”

In fact, all 6 hours may count towards Liberal Studies if a student has had a category waived and needs an additional 3 LS hours.

A motion was made (and seconded) that the Liberal Studies committee recommend that the two sentences on the Liberal Studies checksheet be amended to the single statement:

“Only three of the six credit hours earned in FREN, GER, SPAN 110 apply to the P6 category.”

The motion passed with a unanimous vote (9 in favor, 0 against).

Charles will talk with the MFL department before the official recommendation leaves the committee.

In preparation for the meeting with David McCord next week, the LS committee reviewed the past history of some of the LS policies, including the strict 42-hour requirement (a student must take 42 LS hours, even if some categories have been waived), and the “no double dipping” policy for perspectives courses. The purpose of this discussion was not to set policy, but to encourage reflection of these issues prior to next week’s meeting with David McCord.

Philosophical reasons for the “no double dipping” policy include: making sure that students can choose their LS courses (as opposed to having degree programs mandate them), and preserving the integrity of the LS program. An opposing viewpoint is that allowing LS courses to serve as program requirements does not diminish the fact that the student has received a “liberal education.” Many viewpoints were expressed in extended committee discussion.

Discussion surrounded the issue of loosening the current rules by allowing a maximum of 3 major requirements to serve as LS courses, and that 33 hours of LS courses must be outside of the major requirements. This would remove the current distinction of allowing “double dipping” in the core but not allowing “double dipping” in the perspectives areas; it would not diminish the current flexibility of applied science programs to determine the appropriate math and science requirements for their majors, where they may currently “double dip.” Related issues: If a student waives a requirement without earning credit hours (e.g., transferring to WCU with more than 15 hours and waiving freshman seminar, or earning a C on a credit-by-exam test), how would this count towards the proposed 33-LS-hour requirement? It was noted that the total number of hours required for the degree (typically 120 or 128) MUST be met, regardless of how

LS hours are counted. What about a student who receives a W or F in the first-year seminar? Currently, such students technically cannot meet the first-year seminar requirement. Various possible solutions were discussed, including allowing students to repeat any 190-199 first-year seminar (and stating that this should be done the following semester).

The upper-level perspective course was discussed, and several members expressed the sentiment that this course should continue to be outside of the student's major. (This sentiment was not unanimous.) The committee suggested that the wording of the LS checksheet for the upper-level perspective be clarified. The statement "One course required in any perspective category outside of the student's major requirements and discipline area" would be more consistent with the LS document.