

Liberal Studies Oversight Committee Minutes
April 9, 2007

Attendees: Brent Kinser (Acting Chair), Jim DeConinck, Windy Gordon, William Poynter, Tracy Zontek, Beth Tyson-Lofquist

Guests: Daryl Hale and Christopher Hoyt

- Minutes from March 26, 2007 meeting were approved pending name changes.
- Beth indicated that there were no formal liberal studies recommendations from SACS in the closing conference; however, we have not received the written report yet. SACS was pleased with the QEP and eager to see how it will be implemented.
- Drs. Hale and Hoyt from Philosophy and Religion were in attendance to discuss the PAR role in the liberal studies program and to seek approval of a new course, PAR 315, Philosophy of Mind. The following is a summary of the discussion.
 - PAR has courses in four perspectives and 34 courses in the liberal studies program. Why should additional courses be added?
 - There was concern that the numerous PAR courses decreased the overall diversity of the liberal studies program.
 - PAR uses these courses for both majors and non-majors; creating liberal studies courses allows more course selection for majors that could not be sustained otherwise.
 - A number of PAR courses have not been offered regularly. Several of these (PAR 313, 334) are due to loss of a faculty position. Others are offered on a three year rotation. Although this offers flexibility to faculty and majors, the overall effect is that PAR liberal studies courses are listed in the program, but not offered frequently, thus misrepresenting courses available.
 - PAR will consider taking courses out of the liberal studies program that cannot be offered.
 - PAR feels over invested in lower level liberal studies courses and wants to offer fewer in the future. They will offer more upper level perspectives, thus filling a critical need in the university curriculum.
- Beth discussed the shortfall of 18 first-year seminars for the fall 2008 semester. This number may increase due to uncertainty of faculty positions for the next academic year. Emergency approval was granted by the committee to allow faculty members to voluntarily increase their first-year seminar course size for the fall 2008 semester only. Beth will research options to offer a perk to faculty. Ideas included: accruing student credit hours at a higher rate, travel stipend, or money for the class to spend on a project.