Minutes of the Arts & Science Faculty Council

February 5, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 4:12 p.m. by the Chair, Professor Michael Bess. Present at the meeting were Dean Richard McCarty, Professors Brooke Ackerly, Michael Aurbach, Clint Carter, Monica Casper, Kassian Kovalcheck, Jane Landers, Elizabeth Lunbeck, and Lynn Ramey. Professors Beth Conklin, Senta Victoria Greene, and David Wood were unable to attend. Jonathan Bremer, from the A&S Dean’s Office staff, attended as a guest of the Faculty Council.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Faculty Council meeting of January 15, 2008.

There were no comments or questions, and Council unanimously approved the Minutes.

2. Business from the Committee on Educational Programs (CEP).

Professor Kovalcheck stated that he had thought that departments could make changes to their majors on their own, but changes to minors required CEP approval. Dean McCarty responded that revisions to majors require CEP and Council approval as well as minors, because of the interconnections between departmental and interdisciplinary majors, and because of accreditation issues.

A. Proposed revision of the Women’s and Gender Studies major.

Professor Casper explained that the Women’s and Gender Studies program has proposed to eliminate its undergraduate thesis requirement in order to increase the number of students majoring in the field. Almost all A&S departments and programs do not require undergraduate students to complete a thesis to complete the major, she continued, and hence WGS is unusual in that it requires a thesis. Further, several students have stated to her that they did not major in Women’s and Gender Studies because of the thesis requirement. Other changes to the program are being considered, Professor Casper remarked, but this proposed change is one important step. Professor Landers expressed sympathy with Professor Casper about the relatively low numbers of students majoring in Women’s and Gender Studies; she said that her Gender and Women’s History course has low enrollments as well. Honors students majoring in Women’s and Gender Studies, Professor Landers noted, would still be required to write a thesis. Council approved the proposed revision to the Women’s and Gender Studies major.

B. Proposed revision of the Physics major.

There was no discussion, and Council approved the proposed revision of the Physics major.
C. Proposed revision of the Spanish and Portuguese major.

There was no discussion, and Council approved the proposed revision of the Spanish and Portuguese major.

D. Proposed revision of the Spanish major.

There was no discussion, and Council approved the proposed revision of the Spanish major.

E. Proposed revision of the Spanish minor.

There was no discussion, and Council approved the proposed revision of the Spanish minor.

3. Business from the Curriculum Committee and the Committee on Graduate Education.

New and revised courses. Council approved the course changes and additions from the Curriculum Committee and the Committee on Graduate Education as amended (the course descriptions will be attached to the Minutes of the February 2008 Faculty Meeting).

4. New business and concerns.

No issues were raised.

5. Good of the Council.

No issues were raised.

6 Adjournment.

Council voted to adjourn at 5:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Senta Victoria Greene
Secretary of the Faculty Council