

Educational Policy Committee (EPC)
September 20, 2011

Present: Professors Cynthia J Koepp, Ted Lossowski, Sally Sievers, Susan Tabrizi; and
Provost Cindy Speaker (Chair)

The meeting began at 9:29 a.m. with much jocularity.

- 1) The minutes of Sept. 13 were approved with minor corrections.
- 2) The remainder of the meeting was devoted to consideration of Position Requests.
The Chair announced the presence on MyGroups—Position Requests of the numbers for
Prospectives—expressed interest in major fields
Majors—at present across the college.

Question (reiterated throughout the meeting): Are we having trouble offering necessary courses for our majors; for our service courses for frosh and other majors? How much demand is there which is unmet or badly met?
No clear answer as to how to find or present the information; but the Chair will collect and post enrollments in the fields applying for tenure track positions.

Discussion of Biology position for genetics, genomics and informatics, microbiology and molecular biology. Reiteration of principle that retirement replacements should be an occasion to rethink the position to fit contemporary needs; and that flexibility is a major desideratum in any tenure-track hire.

Goal: General Rubric for ranking and deciding on tenure track positions.

- * **Enrollments** in the fields at issue (info to be gathered and posted by Chair)
(Clarification: Retirement replacements will be fully replaced by Visitors and/ or Adjuncts if not tenure track? Chair: Not necessarily; must rethink all needs. But not contemplating complete abandonment.)
- * **Stability** in an area: Churning of visitors and adjuncts in an area with no continuing staffing is harmful to program and general enrollments. Need to know the number of full time continuing staff in the area (including continuing Adjunct and Visitors?)
- * **Staffing supply:** How easy is it to hire good adjuncts or visitors for such a position? This is a “known unknown”—unclear how to determine this. Further, some short-term replacements (e.g. History, Visual Arts) are deliberately chosen to vary offerings by supplementing the “core” faculty expertise. (Such use assumes an ongoing/returning core faculty expertise.)
- * **Liberal arts college foundation:** Is maintaining this area fundamental to the idea of a liberal arts college?
- * **Service to new general curriculum** as well as needs of **majors**. (Again, a known unknown. No clear way to assess.)
- * **History of dependence on Adjunct/Visitor staffing:** Who is chronically relying on the same and is it sustainable? (Unclear how to establish) Nervousness about being one phone-call/disaster away from collapse of a field due to unscheduled incapacity of a teacher.

Discussion turned to the meaning of 3 tenure track positions, in light of the fact that one of the proposals is from the nascent Business program, which the faculty assumes is to be funded substantially if not completely by the Business grant. It is still not clear whether the trustees mean “3 plus business” or “3 including business.” We are urged to consider it as “3 including.” Consensus is that we should rank-order-with-rationales, at least the first 5, in order to meet all contingencies, including input from other committees. We must continue to assume that this is not the last-ever set of tenure track positions at Wells, and that there will be further chances to appoint such.

Other discussion re **Business:** Informal conversation with Bob Ellis indicates that (a) business faculty are Very Expensive (80-90K at least, for new grad), especially by Wells standards, and that (b) he might prefer a contract position for flexibility, expense. However, the program probably needs to have at least one terminal-degree holder (which Ellis is not); and the state may be assuming a tenure track position for approval.

There is potential for resentment at a much higher pay scale for Business, by the longterm and poorly paid denizens of the trenches, especially after their long struggle at Wells to achieve relative equity across fields. Agreement that this should be avoided, but no further discussion of how.

General staffing issues arising from question of sustainability of Visiting/Adjunct/Lecturer positions: What can be done to increase the pool? Increase flexibility of types of positions. At present, no benefits are available to anyone teaching less than full time. Some memory that this was not always the case, but may not have ever been in effect for any individual.

3) Meeting as usual next week; keeping on. Chair will post requested info.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Sievers, Secretary pro tem