

Minutes
Undergraduate Studies Committee Meeting, March 22, 2006, 2:00

Members present: Craig Bertolet (chair), Chris Forhan, Julie Hinz, Cedrick May, Marc Silverstein, Isabelle Thompson, Don Wehrs

General Announcements

The chair announced that, in advance of the April 5 departmental meeting regarding hiring, the executive committee has met and decided that the department should search next year for at least three new tenure-track faculty members. Priority hires are for one or two positions in African-American Literature and one in Renaissance Lit. Other possible searches are in Post-Colonialism and Rhetoric and Composition.

There was some discussion among USC members of the desirability of searching for a specialist in Children's Literature or at least someone for whom Children's Lit is a secondary area of expertise. Another issue raised was the secondary interests the department might prefer to see in an African-Americanist hire; one idea introduced was the possibility of the department advertising for a specialist in "African-American Rhetorics."

March 8 Minutes

The minutes for the March 8 USC meeting were approved.

Enrollment

The chair announced that enrollment in upper-division English courses for Summer 2006 is strong; as of March 22, only one seat in a summer course was still open. Fall enrollment is also healthy, with all linguistics and rhetoric and upper-division writing courses being full. There are seats still available in some 4000-level literature courses. The chair is hopeful that no Fall classes will have to be cancelled.

Irish Literature Course Addition

The committee discussed the proposal for a new course—ENGL 4450: Irish Literature—which, if adopted, would necessitate the department dropping one of its present literature courses. The chair proposed that, if the Irish Literature course were adopted, the department consider dropping ENGL 4600: The Classical Background. He noted that this course would be the best choice for deletion considering that the authors it covers (major ancient Greeks and Romans) are assigned in other courses in the department, as well as in some foreign language courses. The committee discussed the potential benefits and losses involved in the exchanging of ENGL 4600 for ENGL 4450; one major benefit that was noted is that the new course would provide students with more thorough exposure to the works of major 20th century Irish writers (such as Joyce and Beckett). It was also noted that, based on the popularity of Irish Literature courses when they have been offered in the past, the new course would likely draw significant numbers of students.

A motion was made to defer for now the decision of whether to eliminate the course ENGL 4600: The Classical Background. The motion was approved 6-0.

A second motion was made to propose that the department adopt the new course ENGL 4450: Irish Literature. The motion was approved 6-0.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00

Reported by Chris Forhan