

Minutes for Undergraduate Studies Committee Meeting
March 8, 2006, 2 P.M.

Present: Craig Bertolet (chair), Julie Hinz, Isabella Thompson, Cedrick May, Don Wehrs

Announcements: Craig announced that registration had begun, and that, with only seniors at present registered, the five upper-division undergraduate courses had at least between 14 and 20 seats already taken. For Fall 2006, one upper division class—Modern American Literature—was already full, and nine open seats remained between two sections of Fiction I. Craig announced that he had added an extra section of Poetry I to the Fall schedule, so that two sections would be offered. He announced that he had recently enrolled approximately 10 new English majors, so that the number of majors and double-majors could be about 300.

Previous Minutes: a motion was made to accept the previous meeting's minutes. The motion was approved.

Agenda:

1. The Liles Scholarship.

Craig announced a new scholarship, the Liles Scholarship, which was to go to “an English major with good grades.” Craig announced that the scholarship had been awarded to a deserving student for the upcoming year, and then proposed that the Liles might be usefully designated a sophomore scholarship. There was substantial interest in that idea. The idea of budgeting one or two scholarship for incoming English major freshmen was also discussed. It was noted that this might be a useful recruiting tool. The idea generated considerable interest.

2. The African-American topics course for Spring 2007.

Given the lack of success in hiring in African-American literature this year, there was no one available to teach this course scheduled for Spring 2007. The question was raised whether the course should be offered. There were objections to offering it under current circumstances. The question was raised whether another course should replace it on the schedule. After some discussion, consensus emerged around the idea of offering an ethnic studies course, pending consultation with relevant faculty. Discussion turned to the long-range desirability of being able to offer a series of ethnic studies courses, or developing a multi-ethnic focus, as an effort to both broaden the major's appeal to students and to make the undergraduate program more responsive to contemporary scholarship. The idea was raised of the department offering one to two-year post-doctorate positions in ethnic and/or minority studies as a way of developing course offerings and contacts that would facilitate such developments.

Submitted: March 20, 2006 by Don Wehrs