

## Minutes for the Undergraduate Studies Committee Meeting 19 April, 2006

Present: Craig Bertolet (Chair), Chris Forhan, Julie Hinz, Cedrick May, Marc Silverstein, Don Wehrs

- I. ANNOUNCEMENTS—The CUS reminded the committee that the Undergraduate Awards Ceremony was scheduled for April 21 at 3:00.
- II. MINUTES—The minutes for the USC meeting of 5 April, 2006 were unanimously accepted.
- III. AGENDA FOR FACULTY MEETING—We reviewed the items that the CUS was going to present at that day's general faculty meeting: enrollments, number of majors and double-majors, the proposal to transform ENGL 4310 from History of English Drama to 1642 to Drama of Shakespeare's Contemporaries, and the proposal to create a new course, ENGL 4450 Irish Literature.
- IV. FRESHMAN SCHOLARSHIP PROPOSAL—The committee approved the proposal to offer two scholarships for incoming freshman English majors at \$2000 each (an amount that would make us competitive with and exceed what University of Alabama offers). Eligibility would be based on a minimum 3.0 GPA, a minimum ACT score of 30 or the equivalent SAT score of 1340, and the quality of the personal statement submitted by the applicants. The committee reserved the right to request letters of recommendation if necessary. The CUS plans to work up a list of eligible candidates to present to the committee, who will decide on the two recipients when selecting the winners of the departmental awards.
- V. GUIDELINES FOR SEMINAR IN ENGLISH—The committee approved a set of guidelines that emphasized (1) rigorous and inspiring teaching by professors who are active scholars; (2) content of the highest literary and intellectual value; (3) commitment to the teaching of sophisticated textual analysis and research methodology; (4) commitment to excellence by both professor and students; and (5) the student's producing a project of sustained length, original thought and excellent writing. It was also suggested that since this class is conducted as a seminar, one of the guidelines should have language reflecting the need for active and dedicated class participation by the students.
- VI. OTHER BUSINESS—Don Wehrs reported on the demise of the department's Distinction program. Only one student has elected to complete the program. Despite the best efforts it hasn't worked as a recruitment tool and there's been little interest among our existing majors. We do want to encourage, and have our colleagues encourage, eligible students to apply to the university's Honors program and to complete the Readings for Honors/Honors Thesis sequence so they can have the unique pedagogical experience that comes from tutorials.

The meeting ended at 2:53.

Submitted by Marc Silverstein