

Department Meeting -- April 30, 2008

Present: Olsen, Chirhart, Clark, Fischer, Foster, Giffin, Hawkins, Hunter, Land, Phillips, Schneirov, Skinner, Stofferahn

Absent: Nichols

Approval of minutes: Moved Schneirov, second Hunter, Approved 12-0-0 (Chirhart not yet present)

Announcements:

- 34 newly admitted students (freshman/transfer) on the list from the Admissions Office
- 400 Level -- Please do not sign in students until all 400-level sections are filled
- Need to spend Distance Delivery money
 - Distance Education support
 - Development of distance courses are from a separate fund available from CIRT for transforming existing courses for on-line delivery
- Gen. Ed. open forums
 - Revised structure likely to go through with separate Literature and Art Requirements
 - New "Foundations" (the new campus wide term for Gen. Ed.) suggested History would have five courses -- 101, 102, 201, 202, 113
 - Current upper-level HIST and other electives could be taught as part of the proposed upper-level electives category

Committee reports

- **Assessment** -- On schedule for undergraduate evaluations (through Dec. 2008). Also nominated history and SSE majors for awards/scholarships. Faculty approved these nominations via email earlier in the semester. Exit interviews are helpful to a degree. It was suggested that perhaps the department could distribute reports, or at least summaries thereof. A long discussion about the nature of the interviews continued. A discussion about writing (student) was also an integral part of the discussion.
- **Budget** -- Chirhart reminded that people must use IT travel or Orbitz for travel. Olsen also reminded people need to fill out travel forms with Carolyn, even if not traveling with ISU funding.
- **Curriculum** -- Hawkins passed out Gen. Ed. mission statement for the Department's consideration. Olsen explained the purpose behind the policy: 1) the Gen Ed Coordinator will collect all syllabi for Gen. Ed. courses; 2) the Gen. Ed. Council is pushing for uniformity across the courses within a given category. Proposed statement therefore supposed to make course aims/purpose clear to students and clarify what Historical Studies courses are for. A discussion about

the language and use of the statement ensued. Hunter moved to accept, Stofferahn seconded. Approved 13-0-0.

- **Graduate** -- Giffin reported on last meeting. Initial steps were taken to revise the graduate handbook. Graduate assessment (e.g. exit interviews) is underway. Main issue is grad. assistantships. Some assistantships may change based on awarding of Debs fellowship. One assistantship divided by semester between two students. One additional half-assistantship for will be available for the Fall, one full time assistant for history 300 (funded partly by grant to Foster). Schneirov reported that the applicant pool seems to be stronger. Land moved approval for slate of assistants, Phillips seconded. Approved 13-0-0
- Chirhart brought up issue of grading from Grad. Committee. It was suggested that perhaps grad students need to be graded in a more exacting manner if work is less than stellar. Some of the students do not seem to understand their lack of progress. It was suggested that the department needs to be more in step on this front. Giffin confirmed that students in exit interviews have concerns about differing lengths of seminar papers. It was suggested that we, as advisors, may also need to encourage the students to contact us more as their seminar papers develop. The Graduate committee may need to take up the issue again in the Fall.
- **Retention** -- No comments

Old business

- **Hiring Lines** -- No news on next year's lines, but Department asked to confirm lines it would theoretically want. East Asia, Pre-Modern, Public History, Africa were proposed last year. Skinner noted that there was a great interest in public history among the students. A more general discussion ensued.
- **History 113** -- Approved by Gen. Ed. council. Two questions: Not open to majors, but what about to minors? Olsen suggested not. General acceptance of position. Is the course repeatable for credit? For grade, can repeat. Can take another course with another professor? No decision clearly taken.

Question about approval of 113 courses internal to and external from the Department: Will they have to go through DOH Curriculum Committee using new language for Gen. Ed.?

- **Department By-laws** -- Olsen passed out copy of existing by-laws. Committee still working through changes. People should forward suggested changes to the committee as well. The committee members are: Fischer, Foster, and Skinner.

New business

- **Honoraria** -- Are there honoraria requests for 2008-09? People should think about. Normal levels \$250 or \$500. Requests due late August.
- **Equipment** -- any requests. Need to think about soon.
- **Newsletter** -- Any notes, please forward to Olsen.

Other business

- Several faculty members made announcements about organizations on campus and invited faculty members to join.

Meeting adjourned, 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christopher Fischer