

Department of History
Departmental Meeting
February 25, 2009

Meeting called to order at 3:15 PM.

Present: Chirhart, Clark, Fischer, Foster, Hawkins, Land, Nichols, Olsen, Skinner, Stofferahn

Absent: Giffin, Hunter, Phillips, Schneirov

Agenda item: proposed by-laws changes for proposed merger of AFRI (African and African American Studies) and History departments.

Chirhart: expressed concern about precedent set by merging AFRI into History; administration might deny future lines, regard AFRI as “taken care of.” Post-merger, any future History Department requests for lines might look less needed because “we” are a bigger Department.

Hawkins: train has already left the station; AFRI can no longer survive on its own.

Nichols: concern about how this merger is perceived by the rest of the college. This drew comment at Faculty Council. Lotspeich asked: not a logical merger, why not with Interdisciplinary Studies? Claim (from another faculty member on Faculty Council): offensive stigma, associate African American Studies “with” History, almost as bad as associating it with Criminology (this may have been sarcastic). Will there be a political cost to this merger; will we be seen as “devouring” AFRI?

Olsen: perception is positive, this is what was wanted from AFRI’s end as the best way to maintain independence. This was brought to us rather than the other way around.

English, Criminology, Political Science, Sociology/Psychology, Music... other Departments might want a seat on the Program Committee. Yet interest is limited.

Olsen noted that all affiliated faculty members from other disciplines who teach AFRI courses were included in the discussion of this proposal and none expressed any concerns; all of those who responded were in favor of this solution.

Nichols: Concern about wording; will we lose lines from attrition in Europe or Wider World to AFRI hires?

Hawkins: if AFRI wanted to be in Interdisciplinary Studies, and if Interdisciplinary Studies has been around for a while... that might have been viable. But that is not the reality.

Nichols: CAS shows no desire to have actual faculty in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Chirhart: Existing program committee has done good work.

Motion to table the proposal: Hawkins. Foster seconds. (7-0-3). Motion tabled.

Meeting adjourned 4:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Isaac Land