

Annual Report of CEPP - 2004-5

The membership of the Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP) for the 2004-05 academic year consisted of the following individuals.

Fall 2004

Michael Arnush [03-06 term], Classics Faculty representative, chair

Meghan Fair '05 Student representative

Hugh Foley, Psychology [02-05 term] Faculty representative

Matthew Hockenos, History [04-07 term] Faculty representative

Charles Joseph, Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for

Academic Affairs

Administration representative

Ruth Andrea Levinson, E TJ 3.41 0 Td ()Tj -0.004 Tc 0.004 Tw -25.55 -1.15 Td [(F)2(acu)-4(l)-6(t)-26(y)16(and study groups; made proposals; and participated in broad discussions concerning the educational mission of the College.

The following report has two parts. Michael Arnush has prepared the report for the fall semester and Gordon Thompson, the spring section.

Fall Semester, 2004

The Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP) focused its attention on the Academic Vision Statement and, more specifically, the proposal for the First-Year Experience (FYE) through most of the fall semester 2004. CEPP hosted a retreat in May, an open forum in September, and disseminated both the proposal (revised 9/29/04) and a clarification via email (9/29/04) prior to the October faculty meeting (see attached). On October 1st, the faculty voted to phase out the Liberal Studies program at the end of the 2004/5 (LS1) and 2005/6 (LS2) academic years and implement the new FYE, whose centerpiece will be the Scribner Seminar Program (SSP). A few elements of the SSP distinguish this new program from LS: faculty will design the seminars according to their own intellectual pursuits, similar to LS2; the seminars will contain no more than 15 students, as opposed to 18 (LS1) or 25 (LS2);

Approved Programs, in consultation with the faculty via chairs and departments, and has shaped the policies which will guide overseas study for our students. The committee members agreed to serve for a two-year term, and will submit a report to CEPP at the conclusion of their tenure; at that time, CEPP will decide whether ACIS will continue and under what auspices.

Spring Semester 2005

CEPP continued the agenda set in the fall, bringing several issues to the attention of the faculty. Although Michael Arnush departed CEPP to direct the new First Year Seminar program and Gordon Thompson, as the chair of CEPP, replaced him on the Institutional Planning Committee, Arnush continued to sit on ACIS (see above) and the committee preparing for the Middle States review. Gordon Thompson sat on IPC and represented CEPP at interviews of candidates for the position of the Dean of the Faculty.

Below are the principal issues with which CEPP dealt this spring semester (in alphabetical order).

Academic Affiliations. CEPP dealt with two tasks related to academic affiliations. First, Matt Hockenos and Gordon Thompson revised the academic affiliations guidelines to reflect the development of an Approved Programs list by ACIS and the OIP as well as the changes in the administrative reporting structure (notably the relocation of the Dean of Studies from the Dean of Student Affairs to the Dean of the Faculty's office). CEPP approved the changes in the document, but also recognized that the guidelines will need further revision both to reflect the continued evolution of the administrative structure, but also to more clearly define Articulation Agreements and

the details of how best to implement the plan. The taskforce is to include (a) a representative from CEPP, (b) a representative from the Curriculum Committee, (c) a member of the faculty at large who is also a member of the Assessment Group, (d) the Vice President for Academic Affairs [chair], (e) the Dean of the Faculty, (f) a representative from the office of the Dean of Student Affairs, (g), a student representative, and (h) the Registrar/Director of Institutional Research.

Department of Exercise Science. In the fall, when the faculty approved the formation of a Department of Dance, the consequence was the creation of a Department of Exercise Science and Athletics. However, the administration's reorganization of the athletics program and its relocation as a part of the Dean of Student Affairs left a de facto Department of Exercise Science. CEPP debated whether or not this situation constituted the creation of a new department. We concluded that the reorganization had not created a new department and that CEPP had no role in the process. (CEPP has the responsibility of determining whether to recommend that departments be created or terminated.)

Enriched Writing. Linda Simon representing the Expository Writing Committee brought a proposal to change Skidmore's writing requirement (8 December 2004) and she then joined as a CEPP member for the spring of 2005 (replacing Michael Arnush). CEPP reviewed and revised the proposal that sought to recognize courses with a significant writing component, but which did not have the status of Writing Intensive courses. CEPP hosted a faculty forum (11 February) and the chair (with Linda Simon) participated in a discussion of the proposal at Academic Staff and in a panel discussion at SGA. CEPP presented the proposal at the 4 March 2005 meeting and made modifications after discussions with the faculty. Nevertheless, the faculty rejected the proposal at the 1 April 2005 meeting. Some faculty asked for revisions and a resubmission of the proposal, but CEPP felt that the objections went deeper than the proposal itself and required a longer process of education and consultation. CEPP put out a call for participation in a task force to be chaired by Matt Hockenos and, after reviewing the list of volunteers, invited Lenora de la Luna (Education), Greg Pfitzer (American Studies), Michael Marx (English), Katie Hauser (Art History), Judy Halstead (Environmental Studies and Chemistry), Chuck Joseph (VPAA), Matthew Wilson '06 (Studio Art major and tutor at the Writing Center), and Kendra Asplund '07 (Chemistry) to sit on this task force.

Scribner Seminars. With the establishment of the first-year seminar program, inevitable operational problems demanded addressing. The Director of the First-year Experience and the Committee on Academic Standing brought to CEPP's attention several related issues (a) students who withdraw or fail the first-year seminar and (b) students who either transfer into the college in the spring semester or whose admission to Skidmore has been deferred to January (the so-called "January admits"). The principle issue is whether the first-year seminar is a requirement or an experience. Contributing to this question is the new emphasis on mentoring, which will create a strong bond between the incoming freshmen and their faculty advisors. After considerable discussion of the options and the recognition that we have no perFECt solution, the DoFYE and the CAS drafted a set of guidelines that would allow the first-year program to deal with the small percentage of students who either do not arrive with most of our students in the fall or who are unable to complete the seminar. CEPP reviewed these guidelines and presented them to the faculty at the 1 April meeting.

Strategic Plan. The chair of CEPP brought versions of the Plan for Skidmore to CEPP for comments and recommendations. CEPP made several recommendations, some of which were adopted by the IPC and included in the Plan.

CEPP Membership 2005-06. Several issues emerged over the course of the year relating to the