

December 1, 2006

TO: Honors Program Committee  
J.D. Wulfhorst, Chair  
Hannah Qualls, Chair, HSAB  
Stephan Flores, Director  
Mark Warner, Assoc. Director  
Pamela Bathurst

MaryAnn Boehmke  
Alton Campbell  
Mary DuPree  
Rick Edgeman  
George Patsakos  
Cheryl Wheaton

RE: Minutes of meeting held November 13, 2006

The meeting was called to order at 12:32 p.m. with the following members present: Pamela Bathurst, MaryAnn Boehmke, Alton Campbell, Mary DuPree, Rick Edgeman, Stephan Flores, Hannah Qualls, Mark Warner, Cheryl Wheaton, and J.D. Wulfhorst.

#### AGENDA ITEMS

1. **Review of 2007-2008 honors seminar proposals.** Dr. Flores began the meeting by suggesting that it had been useful in the past to begin with the student input and discussion regarding the seminar proposals. He invited Hannah Qualls to present to the committee the Honors Student Advisory Board's (HSAB) comments and evaluations of the seven proposals.

Hannah began by saying the board had not established a ranking of the proposals and later added that HSAB had selected the proposals based on a general interest by the board in the topic and a knowledge of the instructor proposing the seminar. She commented that rather than rank the proposals the board decided to select the five or six proposals they would most like to see offered. The two which the committee found least suitable were Myth-busting Academia and Contemporary Feminist Theories, with Myth-busting as the least favorite. Hannah said that the students felt there was a narrower appeal for the Contemporary Feminist Theories and Dr. Flores noted that enrollment in the Honors Sex and Culture core discovery course sections had been quite low, unlike the enrollment in the non-honors sections, perhaps suggesting that students in the program were not as interested in the particular subject area. One student suggested that the course title was scary. Reasons for not choosing Myth-busting were that none of the members were enthusiastic about the topic and the course appears to be largely student-led. Although this might be an asset, one of the board members (who has taken a class with the professor) expressed concern that the professor has had difficulty facilitating discussions, which would be vital in a student-led class.

Hannah felt that HSAB wished to see seminar rankings as follows: "Energy Issues" (although it has been offered before) and "Science and Nature in U.S. History," then "The Occult" and "Africa: A Developmental Trajectory," followed by "Geography of Conflict." She pointed out that HSAB felt the Contemporary Feminist Theories course would be suitable if a sixth seminar were offered or if one of the top five were not able to be offered. She did, however, make clear that although the students were in favor of a research based seminar, they did not care for the topic or format of the Myth-busting proposal. MaryAnn Boehmke observed that the Myth-busting proposal sounded like a good course for faculty.

Honors Program committee members posed questions and made observations regarding the students' seminar selections and the proposals. J.D. Wulfhorst thanked Hannah and the HSAB for their comments and considerations and said that he enjoyed hearing from the students

and getting their input. He also asked Dr. Flores if all the proposals had met the initial submission requirements. Flores indicated although the chairs of chemistry and geography had not submitted their letters of approval, all the others had been received and that since both instructors had submitted previous proposals and had taught the courses, he felt it wasn't a problem. Rick Edgeman made an observation that, after having recently attended a conference which included faculty who worked in Honors, recent research suggested that courses which were less linear and provided more hands-on experience seemed to be courses from which students learned more. Dr. Flores noted that with previous seminars, those dealing with international studies and a nation's history were always well enrolled. He emphasized that student research is very important; the [research] value of the Myth-busting seminar didn't seem to register with the students.

Alton Campbell noted that his seminar rankings were nearly identical to those of HSAB. Flores pointed out that Janice Capel Anderson, as well as other instructors in the social sciences, offered courses either every year or in rotation which are very similar in nature to the Contemporary Feminist Theories, providing students the opportunity to take similar courses if that seminar were not offered. He said that although four seminars had been offered this year, he preferred that there be five. He noted that the curriculum had been adjusted to fit in other upper-division courses but that he also didn't see a demand to offer six seminars. Wulfhorst wondered if four courses were sufficient and Flores responded that it was barely enough. Pamela Bathurst asked if it was possible for independent study courses to be offered and Flores responded that the option for independent study had always been a part of the program's history. Wulfhorst then asked if there were constraints on the number of seminars offered and Flores responded that it had been very difficult for him to know exactly what the future might bring regarding funding, so that he wasn't able to exactly plan for how much the budget could allow for curriculum and had recently increased the per credit amount for courses, including seminars, from \$700 to \$800.

The top five proposals selected by HSAB were approved by committee consensus. The committee was also in agreement that if one of the top five was not offered, Contemporary Feminist Theories should then be offered. Dr. Edgeman made the observation that philosophically he was opposed to simply offering a course that was next on the list, rather that he would opt for quality. He emphasized that he was not referring to any one of the proposed seminars but wanted the committee to know his feelings, perhaps for future policy considerations. Dr. Flores also assured the committee that he would discuss with Dr. Reineke the topic and content of her proposal.

**2. Speaker for 2008 Honors Convocation.** Dr. Flores distributed a provisional list (see attached) of prospective Honors Convocation scholars/speakers for 2008. He briefly gave reasons for those proposed and invited committee members to begin thinking about who they might suggest. Alton Campbell asked if there was a budget for the speakers and Flores responded that there was a modest stipend and travel funds provided. Duties of the speaker include the public lecture and the Convocation address, however some speakers have been willing to meet with students and address specific classes.

Dr. Flores stressed that by early spring semester he would like the committee to agree on several names so that he could begin contacting prospective speakers. Mary DuPree observed that it would be advantageous to find someone who could spend a week on campus and whose visit might be supported by several departments to help defray expenses. Dr. Edgeman suggested that the president of BYU-Idaho, previously the Dean of the College of Business at

Harvard, be contacted. Prof. Bathurst mentioned Dr. Candice Pert, best known for her opiate receptor, endorphin and peptide research and whose work is based on how the body/mind functions. Dr. Flores thanked the members for their good suggestions and reminded committee members to remember that speakers are rotated based on the subject matter and that there can be a built in audience, depending on courses being offered, that might coincide with that subject matter.

The next meeting of the program committee can be this semester but also can be pushed into January if the committee feels it necessary.

3. **New business/new agenda items.** Drs. Flores and Wulfhorst exchanged information about establishing the committee minutes on the UI website and it was decided that the more appropriate site would be the University Faculty Secretary's website. Wulfhorst will contact Anna Thompson regarding placing the minutes on that site, once the proper procedures for doing so are in place.

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Wheaton

cc: Douglas Baker, Provost  
Bill McLaughlin, Chair, Faculty Council  
Don Crowley, Chair, Committee on Committees  
Doug Adams, Faculty Secretary  
ASUI President  
Special Collections, Library