

Arts and Sciences Senate
Tentative Agenda
February 16, 2009

- I. Approval of tentative agenda
- II. Approval of minutes of November 24, 2008
- III. Report of the College of Arts and Sciences (J. Staros)
- IV. Report of the University Libraries (C. Filstrup)
- IV. Presentation about the Writing Program (E. Hammond)
- V. President's Report (R. Ben-Zvi)
- VI. Old Business
- VII. New Business

A&S Senate
Minutes
November 24, 2008

- I. Approval of tentative agenda: approved.
- II. Approval of Minutes from October 2, 2008: approved.
- III. Report of the College of Arts and Sciences (J. Staros)
 - You can now process appointments.
 - Budget for the college was discussed.
 - N. Goodman heard that there was a rumor about recruiting Graduate Students. Some TA's will be reduced.
- IV. Report of the School of Journalism (H. Schneider)
 - The School of Journalism (SOJ) is now two years old.
 - SOJ is the first and only undergraduate School of Journalism in the SUNY system.
 - Focus is on high-tech future of the media.
 - Never has there been a greater need for smarter well-educated journalists with a passion for the public interest.
 - When the program began it was decided that we needed two missions. It was not sufficient just to train the journalists of the future. We needed to train the news consumers of the future as well. The SOJ is committed to the second mission as well as the first mission.
 - We have one of the most comprehensive programs in the United States. We require our journalism majors take 47 credits of study across multi-media platforms. We also require 80 credits outside of journalism.
 - Four concentrations are: Science in the Environment, Society and Diversity, Global Issues and Perspectives and Public Affairs.
 - The SOJ has six full-time faculty.
 - In June we created a Center for News Literacy.
 - Summer 2009 will be the first Study Abroad in China.

V. Presentation on the Teaching, Learning and Technology (G. Glynn)

- We have 37 full-time professional staff.
- One stop shopping for all your teaching support needs.
- David Ametrano, the new Director for the Faculty Center was introduced.
- Ying Xiong, the Education Assessment Specialist was introduced.
- We are hoping to start a Teaching Learning and Technology Certificate.
- There is a lot of work being done on the website. There is a calendar of workshops.
- The bi-annual teaching and learning survey: Sent to 2,050 faculty and instructors with a 25% response rate.
- Updated the Progress on Classrooms in terms of technology.
- Desktop video conferencing is available.
- Sharepoint collaborative web spaces and Blackboard integration.

There was discussion concerning the courses between Southampton and Stony Brook and what Senate Southampton will be affiliated with.

VI. President's Report (R. Ben-Zvi)

- The A&S Senate Committees are working hard and doing a great job.

VII. Old Business: no old business.

VIII. New Business: Howard Sirotkin spoke about the fact that lecturers are not vetted by Stony Brook for each course when hired by the home department. It was brought up that Southampton has issues regarding governance. A vote was brought to the floor to meet with the President regarding the course issues. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned

Submitted by:

Laurie Theobalt
Secretary

February 16, 2009

To: The Arts and Sciences Senate
From: Gene Hammond, Director of the Writing Program

Talking to professors and administrators here at Stony Brook last spring and this fall, I have sensed in many of you frustration about the writing abilities of the students here and about the difficulty of working on those writing abilities in the large classes that are so frequent here. Of course, a Writing Program would like to reduce or even eliminate that frustration; moreover, it would like the campus to be known as a campus whose students write well in all disciplines and carry that writing ability into their post-graduation jobs.

So, we have introduced this fall several initiatives to try to help both students and professors:

1. We have proposed several new junior/senior level courses that will be offered beginning in Fall 2009 (or perhaps in the summer), including Business Writing, Technical Writing, Writing in the Health Professions, and topic-specific Critical Writing Seminars. We hope that these courses will either be highly recommended by departments for their students, or will even be required as part or all of the department's upper level writing requirement. Throughout the country, universities with upper level writing courses have found that students are much more motivated to improve their writing by the time they are juniors than they were when they were freshmen.

There will be no new "cost" for these courses, because to pay for them we will be having fewer students taking two freshman writing courses. Starting next year, roughly 30% of our freshmen will take both WRT 101 and WRT 102, while 70% will take only WRT 102. This will save 30-40 sections of freshman writing that we can then devote to upper level writing courses. A passing portfolio of writing is necessary to complete WRT 102, so WRT 102 should continue to be an effective gateway course.

2. For our weaker students in writing we have proposed two new courses, a grammar course (which will include writing four short papers), WRT 200, at the sophomore level, and an ESL version of WRT 101, to be numbered WRT 100, which ESL students can elect as an alternative to WRT 101 if they wish. We hope that professors across campus will recommend both courses, but particularly the grammar course, to their students who seem to need them.
3. We have talked to several departments about offering their graduate students a writing course. Materials Science has arranged for such a course in the spring, and Public Health will follow in the fall. In some cases, we'll probably mix two or three departments together into a writing course for graduate students.
4. Each of our full-time faculty members has been assigned to serve as a liaison with another department to discuss difficulties that students have with writing in that department and what the department, with our help, can do to improve things.
5. Our Writing Center, which has been serving primarily students in courses in our program, is now encouraging students throughout the campus to work with the Writing Center tutors. The Writing Center is also now encouraging students to work with tutors specifically on their grammar if they wish.

New Courses in the Program in Writing and Rhetoric
Beginning Summer Term 2009

WRT 301: Writing in the Disciplines: Special Topics

Writing in specified academic disciplines is taught through the analysis of texts in appropriate fields to discover discourse conventions. Students produce a variety of written projects typical of the genres in the field. Different sections emphasize different disciplines. Typical topics will be Technical Writing, Business Writing, Legal Writing, and Writing for the Health Professions. May be repeated for credit as the topic changes.

WRT 302: Critical Writing Seminar: Special Topics

An intensive writing course, refining skills appropriate to upper-division work. Content varies: focus may be on analysis or various intellectual issues, rhetorical strategies, or compositional problems within or across disciplines. Frequent substantial writing projects are central to every version of the course. May be repeated for credit as the topic changes.

WRT 200: Grammar and Style for Writers

Students will study the aspects of grammar that are most relevant to punctuation and to clear writing, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, nominative and accusative cases, phrases, clauses, gerunds, participles, infinitives, and complete sentences. Students will also study prose style as a way of achieving rhetorical effectiveness through arranging and rearranging sentence elements. Students, through frequent writing, will learn to apply principles of clarity, concision, and coherence with more consciousness. Students will practice adapting their style to particular audiences and purposes. Sentence imitation, sentence combining, and sentence invention techniques will be used to help students become more flexible in their syntactic fluidity. There will be five tests, three short papers, and a final exam.

WRT 100: Introductory Writing Workshop – ESL Emphasis

A rigorous introduction to academic writing practices, including reading-based writing. Assignments in reading and in English grammar complement the aims of the writing assignments; all course work is intended to increase student awareness and mastery of the organizational and grammatical patterns of successful academic writing in English. Special attention will be given to the types of grammatical errors that are common in students for whom English is a second language. Students may not receive credit for both WRT 100 and WRT 101. A through C/Unsatisfactory grading only. Due to the content of the course, enrollment after the first week of class is not permitted.

WRT 101 – Introductory Writing Workshop

A rigorous introduction to academic writing practices, including reading-based writing. Assignments in reading and in English grammar complement the aims of the writing assignments; all course work is intended to increase student awareness and mastery of the organizational and grammatical patterns of successful academic writing in English. Students may not receive credit for both WRT 100 and WRT 101. A through C/Unsatisfactory grading only. Due to the content of the course, enrollment after the first week of class is not permitted.

WRT 100 – Introductory Writing Workshop: ESL Emphasis

A rigorous introduction to academic writing practices, including reading-based writing. Assignments in reading and in English grammar complement the aims of the writing assignments; all course work is intended to increase student awareness and mastery of the organizational and grammatical patterns of successful academic writing in English. **Special attention will be given to the types of grammatical errors that are common in students for whom English is a second language.** Students may not receive credit for both WRT 100 and WRT 101. A through C/Unsatisfactory grading only. Due to the content of the course, enrollment after the first week of class is not permitted.