Board of Undergraduate Studies  
Minutes of Meeting of January 18, 2017  
Zilber Hall 470

Present: John Borg, Scott D'Urso, Sarah Feldner, Susanne Foster (Chair), M. Behnam Ghasemzadeh, Jill Guttormson, Michelle Mynlieff, John O'Rouke, Michael Slattery, Doug Smith, John Su,  

Guests: Corinne Bloch-Mullins (Philosophy), Bill Henk (Education), Tina McNamara (Education), James South (Philosophy)

Recorder: Michael Slattery.

1. The meeting started at 1:05 p.m.

2. Minutes of the December 7 meeting were approved.

3. Proposal for an Educational Studies Major was presented by T. McNamara and W. Henk.
   
   This proposal was developed in response to interest from several organizations in the Milwaukee area. Many of the non-profits (e.g. museums, zoo) do a lot of education work, but the employees are typically not licensed teachers. Some background knowledge of educational theories and practice would help the employees and the organizations.
   
   Like students working on a teaching degree, majors would have a secondary major as well as this as their primary major. The skills in the program include project management, strategic planning, and similar areas valuable in most non-profit organizations. The Educational Studies Major would emphasize service learning and include an (academic) year-long internship.
   
   This major would also provide a good option for students leaving the standard Education teaching majors. Also, it is impractical for a student athlete to complete a teaching major, however many of these students express some interest in an education-related career.
   
   It seems inevitable that a list of waivers would arise in helping a teaching major move into the Educational Studies major. The question was raised whether the ES Major could have a more flexible description to avoid needing waivers. This might very well be arranged in the future, but right now a case-by-case handling seems most reasonable.
   
   The college has proposed an Educational Studies Minor as well.

4. Discussion of the Educational Studies Major proposal followed.
   
   It seems this would be a great minor. The major is less clear. It doesn’t sound very flexible. Concern was expressed that there should be a reasonable path for Educational Studies majors to return for a teaching license.
   
   COMM sees promise in this area, but would like to include Adult Learning as a topic.
   
   Requiring this to be the primary major seems needlessly restrictive. It is expected that many students might be interested in adding this as a secondary major.
   
   The College of Education actually lists more than one “college core” depending on the type of degree. It is not clear which curriculum would be required for Educational Studies.

5. It was moved by D. Smith, seconded by J. O’Rouke, to table the proposal while the chair discusses some of the committee’s concerns with EDUC. The motion passed with 7 yes votes, 1 no vote.

6. Proposal for a Cognitive Sciences Interdisciplinary Major was presented by C. Bloch-Mullins and J. South.
Development of the proposal was supported by the Strategic Innovation Fund. Cognitive Sciences studies the mind from different perspectives. Students are encouraged to double major in one of the component areas of the major.

There is a growing demand for cognitive science majors and, in a MU student poll, there was definite interest in the major. The curriculum was developed in consultation with the allied departments.

No new resources are requested. In addition to existing courses, there will be a capstone course developed.


Concern was expressed that this might compete with the Biomedical Sciences program, especially since the proposal suggests this might be a viable major for pre-med students. It was noted that the Cognitive Sciences curriculum does not cover many of the essential topics for the MCAT exam.

It was suggested that most students interested in this new major will not be pre-med. It provides a new focus for students studying areas such as Philosophy, Psychology, Education, Marketing, Artificial Intelligence. It has a broader scope than the Neuroscience minor.

There are prerequisite courses for some of the listed electives that are not mentioned. This means some paths through the major will require more credits than stated. This major will require careful, individualized advising – especially for any pre-med students.

It appears graduates with the major should have good employment prospects.

8. It was moved by J. O’Rouke, seconded by S. D’Urso, to approve the proposal. The motion passed unanimously.

9. The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael C. Slattery