CHASS Undergraduate Academic Affairs Report

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The college decided to try a new approach to directing undergraduate academic programs for CHASS beginning in August 2011. Instead of having independent bi-monthly meetings of the Directors of Undergraduate Programs and twice monthly meetings of the CHASS courses and curricula committee, the college decided to combine these two groups to better integrate decision making about undergraduate programs. This integrated model mirrors the current decision making process in regard to graduate programs, policies, courses and curricula in the college. The university is currently reviewing and considering changes to an array of academic policies. Regular consultation with the representatives who direct undergraduate programs in the departments is critical for ensuring that CHASS faculty members have sufficient opportunities to provide their feedback about such proposals. Major policies that have been part of ongoing discussions this fall include intra-campus transfer policies/procedures, course review procedures for the GEP Global Knowledge category, and the application of courses taken by NDS students to subsequent undergraduate degree programs.

We have continued to use the web site that was developed one year ago to store and communicate information about courses and curricular actions. Two other successes from last year have been maintained as well: the support for a College Standards Coordinator and the use of two in-depth reviewers for each action. With the folding together of these two committees, we have a larger pool of faculty to serve as in-depth reviewers for course and curricular actions. We have paired faculty who have current review experience with faculty who may not have done course action reviews for some time. The committee has reviewed all 22 actions put forward thus far this semester and the group is currently working on a streamlined process to review Global Knowledge GEP courses. CHASS has about 150 courses on this list, and we are working to develop a process that facilitates the review of these courses. We have drafted a proposal for CUE and are meeting with Catherine Freeman, John Ambrose, Helmut Hergeth, and some major stakeholders to work out details.

There are two other college initiatives related to undergraduate academic affairs that are noteworthy. During Spring 2011, the college created a pilot program to provide academic support at the college level to undergraduates currently in CHASS and students currently in a major outside of CHASS who are interested in matriculating into CHASS. The program was very successful and has been continued this year (2011-2012 AY). The college also developed a new 2-credit First-Year Experience Course utilizing the new IP 295 shell. The course serves two primary purposes: 1) to introduce new CHASS students to the various disciplines in our college, including the similarities and differences in the different disciplinary approaches, and 2) to provide guidance to students regarding managing the transition to college (e.g., time management, goal setting, campus student services/resources, diversity training).