

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME DU LAC
STUDENT SENATE
Executive Summary
February 25, 2015

I. Opening Business

- A. Matt Devine called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.
- B. JP Bruno led the invocation.
- C. 6 were absent; 2 were late.
- D. Jake Wittenberg moved to approve the last week's minutes.
 - i. Kevin Coleman seconded.
 - ii. Minutes approved.

II. General Orders

A. Core Curriculum Review; *Dean John McGreevy*

- i. Core Curriculum Review occurs every 10 years.
- ii. A survey will be sent to all students in the next couple of days asking for their feedback.
- iii. The core curriculum has not been changed in more than 40 years.
- iv. Currently, the core curriculum is owned by departments.
 - 1. Is it better to have departmental ownership or a learning goals approach?
- v. Should there be thematic requirements? What sort of skills does the university want students to graduate with (i.e. writing)? What about the Catholic mission...could we get more faculty to buy into Catholic mission by integrating it with other disciplines? Is the university to generous with AP credit? What is the best way to go about academic advising?
- vi. 2 complaints heard most often from students...
 - 1. Students sometimes feel that the first year at ND is too much of a repetition of what they did in high school
 - a. "Year 13"
 - 2. An absence of integration – none of the core requirements have anything to do with one another and students are just trying to get them done
- vii. Discussion: Student Feedback
 - 1. Don't get rid of the theology requirements
 - 2. Marissa Taylor feels like everyone should be able to walk away with something, being able to take what you learn and apply it to the real world is important as opposed to the best grades
 - 3. Brian Cimons asked how many credits the core university requirement was
 - a. 14 classes – in theory the core was supposed to be about a third of a Notre Dame major, electives a third, and major requirement a third. But that varies from major to major (i.e. engineering has far more credits than most Arts and Letters)
 - 4. Brian C. asked a follow up about whether or not they were thinking of expanding the number of credits required for the core and suggested not to because of the differences in major requirements by college

- a. Notre Dame has one of the highest credit requirements for the core and so that would argue against requiring more credit hours
 - 5. Martin Walsh said that he felt that his freshman and sophomore year were mostly taught by grad students and TAs that he couldn't really connect with, and a way to make those core requirements better would be to focus on having tenured professors teach them
 - a. We have to grapple with the issue of training our graduate students for their future professions as well as educating the undergrads
 - 6. Janie asked about the language requirement
 - a. Science and Arts and Letters require language
 - i. Should there be a language requirement for every undergrad?
 - 1. Half of senate says yes
 - a. A more globalized society, our students need to be prepared for it
 - b. You also learn different ways of thinking by learning another language
 - 2. One third says no
 - a. Another requirement, you're not really focusing on the language
 - b. Practical: not sure how you would fit a language requirement in for majors like engineering
 - c. Business faculty tend to be opposed to a language requirement because English tends to be the global language of business
 - d. How much language do you really learn in a year and a half at Notre Dame anyway? A better solution may be studying abroad and learning the language through immersion
 - 7. Zach Waterson asked about the potential for a technical literacy class as a requirement
 - a. Dean McGreevey says the faculty has been batting it around
 - 8. Jimmy McEntee talked about the idea of classes that people "have to take" as opposed to classes that people want to take, causing people to race to get the best DART time and the best class (his second philosophy was awful because he was forced into it because of his dart time)
 - a. Any curriculum at ND will have theology and philosophy at the center because of the Catholic identity of Notre Dame, but there is a lot of thought about integration between disciplines
 - b. Dean Greg Crawford says no class should count for the core if it's an introduction to a discipline or could be a class taken in high school
 - 9. David Krohn asked about a variation in Foundations of Theo, especially for people who took a lot of theology in high school
 - a. There are two ends of the spectrum, those that have a rich high school background in theology and those who have never even thought about it. We have to balance serving both but we could do better
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10. Chris DeSapio talked about the math requirement and how people can test out of it...is there any way the same sort of approach could be applied to Theology?
 11. Dan Swanson talked about the Writing and Rhetoric requirement, especially as a science major, stating that it would be helpful if you could have a W&R course that aligned with the writing skills necessary for your major
 12. Jake asked about how the writing requirement feeds into the University Seminar Requirement because you can make an argument that it is an extension of writing and rhetoric.
 - a. There is an argument that this writing intensive class requirement is not enough because after these two courses there may not be another semester where a student is required to write 25 pages in a semester
 13. Kristen Gates asked about discussion about getting rid of AP or transfer credits
 - a. There is no talk of getting rid of transfer credit, but there is talk of using AP to test up in level but not out of a class
 14. Michael Wajda was wondering with ND becoming a more international institution if there was any thought to require an international course, as well as if there was any thought to increasing the bar for things like science requirements so that you cannot get out of it with something like Common Human Diseases
 - a. It really comes down to the fact that disciplines that need requirements like high level math will take it, and it's a discussion about whether other disciplines should be required to take the same
 - b. Some people have said that if we are going to have a theme class it should be on something global. The criticism is that it will get watered down pretty quickly if it's just one semester of a global
 15. JP asked about classes taken at a university during high school being counted towards AP credit, and since it is a college course it should be taken into consideration for credit
 - a. The faculty isn't really saying "let's take more credit"
 - b. But at the same time we want to make sure the college experience is different than the high school experience
 16. Kevin McMannis asked if giving the college deans more power had ever been considered in terms of bumping down the number of theology or philosophy courses (for example) so that students could take classes that catered more towards their major
 - a. Most faculty say that there are too many requirements, but at the same time there is an academic foundation that all students should have
 17. Kathryn Peruski, as a senior engineer, resented her core curriculum classes because it took away from time that could be spent in electives more relevant for her future or helpful in preparing for grad school
 - a. There's a balance between practical education helping students in their pursuits and what students will need for their lifetime as opposed to their major and graduate school
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18. Kristen Parkinson expressed concern with increasing requirements in terms of cross-listing because it is even more limiting
 19. Scott Moore noted that you need to be at a certain level to get into Notre Dame, and core requirements should help students move up the ladder of academia
 20. Elle Huang said we need to focus on the quality of the courses and noted a statistic that from CIFs 53% of students thought that their foundations class was not worth taking
 21. Marissa suggested that if the school were to implement a testing out of theology it needed to have multiple religions in mind, because theology is theology not just Catholicism
- B. 2015-2016 Student Union Treasurer Appointment; Kristen Parkinson, *Student Union Treasurer*
- i. Brian moved to close discussion.
 1. Elle seconded.
 - ii. Kevin moved to vote.
 1. Marissa seconded.
 - iii. 27 in favor, 0 opposed.

III. New Business

- A. Apologies about paper deliveries. There have been cart issues and weather issues so they haven't been delivered the past couple days

IV. Announcements

- A. Miss ND is March 4. Tickets are \$2 at the door.
- B. You have until 11:59 tonight to email HPC if you are interested in sitting on the Hall of the Year committee.
- C. The dining hall will now be open over Spring Break
- D. CLC has been discussing student stress and wellbeing, so email Lauren if you have any input.
- E. There are 59 days until the Fisher Regatta.
- F. SUB is hosting the Collegiate Jazz festival in the Lafortuen Ballroom this Friday and Saturday night.
- G. JCC is hosting a class skate tonight with free Chick-fil-a.
- H. The BP meal action is tomorrow in Lafortune from 5-7pm.
- I. Political Brew is this Sunday. Please take 2 posters to put up in dorms.

V. Adjournment

- A. Brian C. motioned to adjourn.
- B. Kevin Bond seconded.
- C. Meeting adjourned at 6:39pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon S. Montague
Student Union Chief of Staff
