

SAGE Minutes

Tuesday, November 9, 2010

Wescoe 4040

Attending: Jana Tigchelaar, Colin Christopher, Ann Martinez, Rob Topinka, Lance Turner, Lauren Kiehna, Erin Williams, Kristen Lillvis, Amy Ash, Jason Robberson, Pat Flor, Ben Cartwright, Caitlin Thornbrugh, Jennifer Brussow

Call to Order, Minutes approved; Topinka moved, Christopher seconded.

Officer Reports.

a. Presidents' Report. Topinka and Martinez opened by reminding students about the department holiday party coming up and the SAGE silent auction. Topinka also mentions the possibility of purchasing some books and DVDs for the SAGE library. Finally, Topinka thanks the (absent) events committee members for the successful Halloween party.

b. Secretary's Report. No report.

c. Treasurer's Report. Christopher states that our account currently holds \$714.78 in the treasury.

d. FY Liaison Report. Thornbrugh states that several first-year creative writing students had questions about the department's status in regards to AWP. Are we members of AWP? Some first-year creative writers had questions about the AWP joblist and membership information and fees for AWP. Thornbrugh also asked about whether students can apply for SAGE Travel Funds for AWP. In addition, a few students have asked whether it would be possible to avoid scheduling SAGE meeting times during grad classes, Thornbrugh mentions. Ash answers questions about AWP membership. "We should be getting access to the joblist" Ash states. Martinez mentions that Susan Harris might have more information as job advisor. Topinka states that the travel funds application is usually in the spring; Tigchelaar elaborates about the typical process for applying for travel funds and affirms that creative writing students could certainly apply, but that one of the primary criteria is that students have exhausted other avenues of funding first (grad studies and the department). Martinez discusses the issue of SAGE meeting times, asking whether picking different times from month to month work better. E. Williams mentions that that would perhaps add unnecessary confusion. Tigchelaar states that the meeting times are usually decided simply on the basis of being the only available time for all members of the executive committee to meet. Martinez agrees, and adds that should there be a number of options for meeting times that work for all executive committee members in future semesters, the next step would be considering the schedule of graduate courses.

Committee Reports

a. Academics Anonymous: Nish emailed: “the novelist panel was really interesting, thanks to all who participated (Ben Pfeiffer, Ben Cartwright, Bryce Holt, Joe Miller). We're planning a second event for Wednesday, Dec. 1st from 4-5 p.m., with Darren Canady, room TBA.

Nish continued: “Attendance was a little low at the novelist panel (one person outside committee members), and I remember having quite low attendance at all of the events last year. I'm wondering if members have any suggestions for boosting attendance. I know that announcing the events with more notice might help, which is why I'm trying to reserve a room for the Dec. 1 event right now. I really think the committee is a good idea, and could be such valuable addition to SAGE and the English graduate program, but I don't feel like it's living up to its potential, and it's a bit hard to stay motivated when hardly anyone attends the events. Professor Canady seems quite interested in the group and thinks the work is important (however I described it to him-- learning about the work going on at KU, being aware of conversations taking place in the field, getting a sense of life as an academic, etc.), and I would hate for the attendance at his session to be so low after he's agreed so enthusiastically to participate. To be clear, though, it's not just about this session. This is my second year on the committee, and 1-3 attendees is all I've ever known for these events. Now that I don't feel so nervous about doing what I'm supposed to do, I'd like to get to work making changes, if possible. I know everyone is busy and therefore attendance will never be earth-shattering, but I think it could (or should?) be better than one person (which is why I'm looking for suggestions). Do people need to be made more aware of what the committee is about? Is it simply a matter of more notice given about the events? I'd like to make more changes than just the planning/further notice part of things, if possible, so I'd really appreciate your (SAGE members') suggestions. If need be, I can design a survey for SAGE members, but I thought that some input from the meeting would be a great first step, since it's that super-busy time of year (not to be confused with the rest of the year, which pretty similar but a little less crazy-inducing).”

Topinka responds that fliers and mention in the DNB might help. Flor: “I agree that the timing hurt this last meeting.” Cartwright suggests announcing the event on the English department Facebook page. Lillvis also suggests pushing it with faculty as an opportunity to meet with Canady if they missed the summer event.

b. Advisory Committee: Lillvis: no report, meeting on 15th

c. Events Committee: Brox emailed: “Great turnout for the Halloween party. Thank you again to Samantha Bishop Simmons for hosting. We will keep you posted on future events. In the meantime, if you have suggestions/ideas, please contact Ali or Margaux.”

d. FSE Committee: Nish emailed: meeting today (Nov. 9)

e. Graduate Student Advisory Board: Topinka sent out an email to the SAGE listserv outlining the changes to Grad Assembly and the opportunity to serve on the advisory board. The applications are due Friday, November 12, and they won't be intensive. Topinka states that he doesn't know what involvement in the GSAB will look like, but mentions that “it's good to get involved because you get to hear about things.” Lillvis asks if participation is limited to a certain number per department; Topinka states that he is unaware of any limitations.

Move to change the name of this committee from Grad Assembly to Graduate Student Advisory Board: Tigchelaar moved, Flor seconded, motion passed.

f. Graduate Committee: Brussow discusses the plan to restructure the MA requirements: 24 instead of 30 credit hours, thesis hours would be 6 of that 24, and more streamlined depending on what track you are in. Plan exists, and it has been approved. It will go advisory and then to voting where they anticipate it will meet substantial opposition. Brussow says it would be prudent for SAGE members and graduate students who are in favor make their voices heard. The advisory meeting is on the 15th, department voting meeting on the 16th. Brussow: "We want to be taking measures to improve time to degree." Tigchelaar: "Would we be able to see the potential changes before the voting meeting?" Williams states that that is unclear.

Ash adds that the graduate committee voted to discontinue use of the honors designation and also voted to change the language requirements. Tigchelaar: "Is that advisable?" Ash states that the logistics or wisdom of choosing to take only one language would be something you discuss with your advisor.

Williams outlines the voting process in response to questions.

g. GTAL Committee: Phillips emailed: "Basically, besides annual work that the GTAL committee does (performance reviews and award nominations for the GTAs and lecturers) the main charge for the committee is to review and propose changes to the 801/802 sequence. We've only had one meeting so far, but there were a number of tentative proposals thrown around. The committee, however, wants to get input from both students and the professors who've taught this course before they move on to looking at specific alternatives. Two things, then, for SAGE:

"(1) An online survey will be coming in the next week or so to those students who've taken 801/802. Please encourage everyone to respond to this--the more we know about how students feel about these courses, the more we can change it.

"(2) If there are specific things that SAGE would like to propose with regard to these courses, please let me know and I can pass them along to the committee. I can't guarantee anything, but I know the committee is interested in how students feel about these courses. Would students prefer just straight-up practicum courses (2 credits/1 credit) instead of a practicum/theory mix? Would a summer course alone be attractive to students? Other ideas would be good to hear as well."

Williams adds that GTAL created the subcommittee to review 801/802. "Forget the models (Phillips) talked about: we can promise nothing. We want to know how you feel about the individual components and aspects of 801/802."

Brussow adds that Phillips mentioned this at Grad Committee because the new 24-hour plan hinges upon what GTAL decides about these professionalization issues.

E Williams: “It may take time, but that’s the nature of these things. Hold your breath until you get the survey. We’re not scheduled to meet again GTAL in December.”

Flor: “So within the 24-hour model, what is the space allotted to 801/802?”

Brussow: “Three hours total.”

h. Lecturers/Readers Committee: Martinez: no report

i. Library Committee: E Williams states that they probably won’t meet until next semester. She adds that there is talk of a curating or cultivating a Sturgeon collection.

j. MFA Committee: No report sent.

k. Professionalization Workshops Committee: Lillvis states that they’re looking to have a panel in the first week of December on conferences

l. Public Face/Alumni Relations: No report sent.

m. SAGE Advice: Cartwright states that they have met 2-3 times to discuss plans. One thing they’re interested in doing is making an archive of past work that has been done with SAGE advice for graduate students, Cartwright states that they are going to talk to Brussow and Flor about revamping the page on the SAGE website. Cartwright asks for students to contact him or another member of SAGE advice with suggestions for features they would like to see.

n. Summer Institutes Committee: Hume emailed: no report

o. Supplemental Funds Committee: Turned: no report

p. Sustainability Committee: Brox emailed: no report

q. Webmaster’s Report: Brussow states that things are on hold. Flor adds that they will be meeting soon about a redesign and rebuild.

Old Business: Thornbrugh mentions that if people have questions about the new journal they can talk to Ben Pfeiffer or Caitlin Thornbrugh. Williams asks for a reiteration of what is going on with the new journal. Cartwright and Ash outline the history of the problem with Cottonwood. Williams asks why the by-laws had to be approved by Marta and Joe. Cartwright answers that it is because the journal is getting departmental money. Williams: “Why were people being left out?” The consensus is that the issue stemmed from communication problems.

Williams refers to the last SAGE minutes, and asks if this new journal is a matter of liberating or factionalizing? Cartwright states that things now are liberating, that the problems have been redressed now. Cartwright mentions the meeting to revote, and Ash adds that this led to discussion of how votes will happen in the future. Williams: “So it has been redressed, and it

won't happen again in the future?" Flor: "The process this second time around seemed to be happening on much firmer footing." Williams mentions the importance of remaining collegial.

New Business: none

Motion to adjourn: Kiehna moved, Lillvis seconded, approved.

Meeting Adjourned.