

MONT ALTO FACULTY SENATE MEETING—NOVEMBER 16, 2012

Chair Peter Linehan called the meeting to order at 2:00 P.M. and reminded the faculty of the MADE on January 3, 2013.

Morgan Jenkins motioned, seconded by Kevin Boon, to approve the minutes from the October MAFS meeting. Motion carried.

Kevin Boon presented a report from the Curricular Affairs committee regarding the closing of the English program on campus. The Core Council of the university determined that any major with less than 20 students was determined nonviable. Current enrollment of the English program is less than 10 students. To the best determination of the Curricular Affairs committee, English is being eliminated not due to financial reasons, quality of the program, or a lack of benefit to students, faculty, or the campus. The Core Council sent their recommendations to Madlyn Hanes, Vice President of Commonwealth Campuses, who in turn informed David Gnage and Michael Doncheski to close the program. The Curricular affairs committee presents a resolution to request that the Mont Alto Faculty Senate reject the closure of the English program (attached).

David Gnage presented more background information on the closing of the English program. In early fall 2011, the campus received a report that the minimum number of students needed in a program to keep it open was 20 (Core Council determined that this was enough students to insure minimum class size of 8 in upper division classes). A town hall meeting was held on campus at that point to discuss the findings. In late fall 2011, the Core Council report for our campus was received. The results were discussed at the January 2012 MADE. Our campus was criticized for having the highest cost per student ratio and most underenrolled courses for all commonwealth campuses. English, 4LAS, 2FSCC, 2IST, and 4-year business programs were all placed on a “watch” list. A response to this report was drafted and sent to UP, with discussion at another town hall meeting. Programs were encouraged to increase the number of students in their programs.

Michael Doncheski informed the Senate that administration was told to close the program with no room for discussion. David Gnage spoke to Nancy Herron and Madlyn Haines who informed him that the English program was either viable nor or not for this academic year. MAFS has until March to vote on closing the program, but as of this meeting the English program may still admit students. Michael Doncheski and David Gnage recommended that MAFS not vote on the resolution today but that all faculty work to build up the English enrollment by an additional 14 students by March.

After lengthy discussion on the proposal, Kira Hamman motioned to accept the resolution presented by the Curricular Affairs Committee, Brian Sensenig seconded. Voting results: For—24, against—0, abstention—0. Motion carried.

Robin Yaure presented information regarding the academic festival. The festival committee is waiting for the website update to be approved. The same judging criteria will be used as was used in 2012. A call for proposals will be out in January 2013.

Lauraine Hawkins passed out information from the Mont Alto Advising Council regarding Entrance to major, including a timeline for ETM decisions to take place. All faculty members present received a copy of the information.

Robin Yaure motioned to adjourn the meeting, Edward Hipkiss seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 3:03 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Edward L. Hipkiss, Secretary

RESOLUTION: English Program Closure Review (PSMSA)

SUBMITTED TO: Penn State Mont Alto Faculty Senate (MAFS)

SUBMITTED BY: Curricular Affairs Committee, Penn State Mont Alto
(Kevin Alexander Boon [Chair], Cheryl Cheek, John Henry, Tom Glumac, Susan Johnston Graf,
Richard C. Kane, Edward Hipkiss, Susan Lange, Lila Rajabion, Jennifer Marchand-Reilly)

13 November 13, 2012

THE CURRICULAR AFFAIRS COMMITTEE,

Having studied the proposed closure of the English major on the Penn State Mont Alto campus; and

Having consulted with Nancy Herron, Associate Dean for Academic Programs for the Commonwealth Campuses; and

Affirming the Associate Dean's explanation that "the intent [of program changes within the university] is to redirect programs that are appropriate to the region where they are delivered;" and

Believing the 50% drop in enrollments from 2007 to 2011 to be largely a result of inadequate marketing rather than a drop in relevance to region the campus serves; and

Taking into account the strong opposition among the student body and the Student Government to the closing of the program; and

Taking into account the contributions of the existing program to the positive intellectual environment on campus as relayed to this committee via both English and non-English faculty; and

Realizing the many ancillary benefits to the campus that are directly traceable to the English program (e.g. English Honors Society, Student Newspaper, The Mont Alto Film Project, English Club); and

Deeply convinced that a viable four-year English degree program is essential to the campus mission and the growing reputation of the campus;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

1. that the members of the Penn State Mont Alto Curricular Affairs Committee request that the Mont Alto Faculty Senate reject the immediate closure of the English Program on the Mont Alto campus.

Response to charge by Mont Alto Faculty Senate dated October 25, 2012