

SOCIAL SCIENCE PANEL

MINUTES

March 22, 2006
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
TSC 204

I. MINUTES OF 2/22/06 SSP MEETING

- **APPROVED.**

NEW ITEMS:

II. LAS: POLITICAL SCIENCE

Req. by Ann Crigler

- A. Add a new minor:

Eff. Fall 2006

Minor in Political Organizing in the Digital Age [20 unit program]

- **DEFERRED TO PANEL:** The panel is in favor of establishing such a minor, and wishes to approve it after some streamlining or revisions. The main contact for this minor, Richard Fliegel, is invited to attend the April 12 meeting. The proposal for a new course that will be required for this minor, ITP 304, has not yet been received, although an advance copy of the proposed course syllabus was provided along with the request for the minor. As an Engineering course, it will be reviewed by the Science and Engineering Panel (one week after the April SSP meeting if it is received in time). If Engineering submits a proposal for the course with a significantly different syllabus in advance of the April SSP meeting, the Curriculum office will provide a copy of it for SSP to review in April. The panel noted that in the current ITP 304 syllabus, virtually all readings are identified as “instructor notes,” which is probably due to the fluid and topical nature of the subject matter. One reading is identified as a chapter (Chapter 3), but no textbook title is listed. The requirements for this minor seem diffuse, and not as coherent as they could be. For example, students could select courses which are entirely non-technological (except for the ITP course), but would still be awarded a minor whose title suggests that they are knowledgeable about the ‘digital age.’ Some panel members expressed the view that one could not count on advisement to lead students to take an appropriate set of courses. Some panel members also thought that the two COMM courses in category IV (321 and 489) seemed especially relevant—perhaps one of them should be required. Also, the capstone course will provide a very different experience depending on which one is chosen. The capstone course should be integrative rather than further promoting differentiation, as this set of choices seems to do.

- B. Revise a course:

Eff. Fall 2007

NEW: POSC 190ab POLITICS AND SOCIETY (4-4)

a: Honors seminar for freshmen and sophomores. *b:* Continuation of work begun in first semester. Open only to freshman and sophomore Political Science majors only.

OLD: POSC 190 POLITICS AND SOCIETY (4)

Significant political writings emphasizing historical perspectives, differing approaches to recurring political problems, and conflicting contemporary ideologies. Discussion; independent research. Maximum enrollment, 20.

- **DEFERRED TO PANEL CHAIR.** The panel approves the ‘a’ section of the course; but has questions about the ‘b’ section, which is not as well developed. It asks that a more complete syllabus for the ‘b’ section be

provided; and that the mechanisms for selection into 190a be identified, considering that the new catalogue description indicates it is to be an 'honors' course. The panel understands that the College is encouraging departments to make undergraduate classes more attractive, particularly lower division classes. In this seminar, each year a topical focus is chosen that fits the interest of the professor leading the class. If someone other than the faculty member who provided this syllabus were to teach 190b, this syllabus does not provide very clear guidelines as to what is expected in terms of number of meetings, intermediate assignments, etc.

III. LAS: SOCIOLOGY

Req. by Michael Messner

Add a new course:

Eff. Fall 2006

SOCI 408 VOLUNTEERS, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND EVERYDAY POLITICS (4, FaSpSm)

Theory, practice, and history of civic life. Examines communication, personal obligation, collective imagination, and political representation, in grassroots, state-sponsored, and non-governmental organization-sponsored civic associations around the world. Prerequisite: SOCI 370.

NOTE: This course is to be listed in the "Theme Area III" area in the Sociology department section of the catalogue.

- **DEFERRED TO PANEL CHAIR.** The panel recognized the reading materials as substantial and applicable. The grade breakdown description needs to be clarified, however, and made consistent with the summary of the grade breakdown (e.g. the first grading breakdown gives 10% for a book report, but the "summary" grading breakdown does not mention a book report). The panel expects that criteria for field notes and book reviews will be provided to students, and that the paper will be due on the date of the final exam. The panel noted that the syllabus lacks a statement describing resources for students with disabilities.

Members present

Frances M. Fitzgerald (support staff)
Je Hoon Lee
Alice Cline Parker
William M. Rideout
Terry Seip
Nitin Sharma
Edwenna Werner (for Kenneth Servis,
ex-officio)

Members absent

Eugene Bickers (ex-officio)
Elizabeth Garrett (ex-officio)
David Glasgow (ex-officio)
Steven Lamy
Kenneth Servis (ex-officio)
Peter Starr (ex-officio)

Guests