

BCCAT Philosophy Articulation Committee - Minutes of the AGM

Hosting institution: Alexander College, Sat., May 17, 2014

Chair: Lyle Crawford (Alexander College)

Secretary: Wayne Henry (University of the Fraser Valley)

Attending: Darcy Cutler (Douglas College); Mazen Guirguis (Kwantlen Polytechnic University & Corpus Christi College); Reuben L. Gabriel (College of New Caledonia); Vance Mattson (College of the Rockies); John FitzGibbon (BCCAT); Dai Heide (Simon Fraser University); Karen Shirley (Camosun College)

- The meeting was called to order at 2:15 and began with a quick round table of introductions.
- Wayne volunteered to be secretary and asked to amend the agenda to move Item 9 (Selection of host for the 2015 meeting) to Item 3 (Election of the secretary).
- This change was made and the agenda approved.
- The minutes of the 2013 meeting were approved without alteration (these had been previously circulated by email).

Selection of host venue for 2015:

- Wayne volunteered UFV as the host venue for 2015 and made the request that the committee vote immediately to select the host venue for 2016.
- Wayne further noted that, historically, this is how it was done: the selection of host venue for the succeeding year has been made at the previous AGM and the person representing that institution is the default secretary for the present AGM. This facilitates planning and gives the rep for the host institution for two years out time to get approval without disrupting plans for the next year.
- Darcy and Mazen agreed to seek approval from their institutions (Douglas & KPU respectively) for the years 2016 & 2017. They will work out the sequence between them and inform the committee in due course.

Business Arising from the 2013 Minutes:

- Wayne spoke to Item 6 (Philosophy as a teachable minor), mentioning that progress continues to be made, albeit slowly, and mostly focused at this point with making connections, including with individuals who have been instrumental in making this happen in Ontario.
- UFV has also been liaising with Sardis High in Chilliwack where philosophy is offered as a grade 12 elective course, taught by Rickard Chadsey.
- Lyle has also been visiting local area high schools, sometimes delivering lunch time lectures, for enthusiastic audiences.

- Wayne has been a guest lecturer there in both the Fall and Spring terms and Peter Raabe was a guest lecturer this past Spring.
- John, who in his capacity as BCCAT rep attends articulation meetings for several disciplines, noted that there are many others wishing to become established as teachable minors (e.g., psychology, political science). While not reason for despair, it is clear that the task is not guaranteed to succeed and will not be easy.
- There are initiatives presently underway that are noteworthy: some institutions offer 1st yr courses to high schools (in some cases with dual credit as an incentive) and U-Vic has its “Head Start” program.
- Wayne mentioned the inaugural launch of UFV’s “Think Fun” modeled loosely on the “Eureka” camps run successfully at University of Alberta for several years now.

Report from BCCAT (John FitzGibbon):

- John distributed a hard copy report and elaborated on some specific items.
- He noted the 25th anniversary of the founding of BCCAT and that Council is instituting an Awards program to honour individuals and institutions that have contributed to the success of student transfer in the province. ~~meeting of the Joint Annual Meeting of the various articulation committees is to be held this November.~~
- ~~Work proceeds to facilitate transfer between institutions.~~
- Nominations are open for individuals who have made noteworthy contributions to this goal.
- A committee has been struck to review implement the approved changes to the Associate Degrees and problems arising: There is a huge diversity of accreditations called by the name “associate degree” credentials in the province; from diplomas, which can vary from 7 weeks to 7 years for completion, to certificates, post-bachelor and post-graduate certificates and diplomas. The cumulative effect has been some degree of confusion and, perhaps, uncertainty regarding the significance of these credentials such a degree.
- Work also proceeds on transfer accreditation across the country. ~~At least 13 of the various~~ articulation committees from BC and Alberta are in talks.
- Mazen raised the issue of the recent ministry announcement that all post secondary institutions must allocate 25% of their educational budgets to the delivery of technical and vocational training.
- John noted that BCCAT doesn’t have any privileged information on this proposal nor about how it will be implemented.
- Reuben raised the issue of what, if anything, can be done to prepare international students for Canadian citizenship. And, specifically, what role might BCCAT play in this.
- John replied that nothing specifically is being done and it is difficult to foresee how this might be changed, beyond a general apprehension that perhaps we need to begin a serious consideration of the consequences of

a policy/enrolment strategy that seeks to attract increasing numbers of international students without any thought to such issues.

Options for the committee website:

- Lyle noted that there still exists a committee website, created initially by Dan O'Reilly at TRU, which, since Dan's retirement, has become egregiously out of date. The issue is: what shall the committee do about this website moving forward? Update it? Eliminate it?
- It was felt by the committee that the best option at this point is to contact TRU and see if it can be taken down. Darcy agreed to look into this and will report back to the committee.

Institutional reports:

Carolyn Swanson (VIU)

- It was noted that Carolyn Swanson submitted a report on behalf of VIU by email but was unable to attend.
- In this report she notes that while there are no dire financial issues and no faculty lay offs as of yet, things are tight.
- Despite this, some new courses have been introduced in the last year or so.

Lyle (Alexander):

- Philosophy enrolments have been stable over the past year and a second yr metaphysics course is presently being planned.
- Some consultation with Jillian McIntosh (SFU) re: new courses; such consultation was previously conducted by Norman Schwartz who has now retired.
- ILO's are being discussed and Lyle is a member of the committee struck to draft the language.

Dai (SFU)

- Enrolments down in some 1st yr courses.
- Curriculum review is set to begin soon.

Karen (Camosun)

- The budget has been held steady this past year, but the Dean now requires minimum enrolment targets for a section to run.
- This has negatively impacted core courses in favour of courses in the Philosophy of Film, Philosophy of Love, etc.
- At present, the numbers aren't there to run courses in Epistemology or the Philosophy of Science.

Wayne (UFV)

- Wayne noted that enrolments are strong and the new major thrives. In the last three years we have sent on at least five students to graduate studies in philosophy on scholarships of various sorts.

- The development of the program, featuring streams in both the Continental and Analytic traditions is now nearly complete with a variety of new courses introduced in the last two years.
- On the negative side, we had two retirements in this year (Paul Herman & Moira Kloster) but neither position has been funded for full time tenure track replacement. For the next year at least we have retained the sections and we are filling one of them as a Limited Term Appointment without guarantees for the future of these positions.

Darcy (Douglas)

- Some course renumbering (upwards) and at least one new 3rd yr course is being introduced to flesh out upper level offerings.
- Leonard Angel has retired and a new full time faculty member has been hired. This is the third full time person hired in the last six years and the department is now at 13 or 14 full time faculty members.

Mazen (KPU)

- The major program in philosophy is now 3 years old and is going very well (it has, in addition, an Honours option).
- The department presently offers between 100 and 105 sections of philosophy per year.
- Warren Bourgeois and Jonathan Katz have retired and both positions have been reaffirmed as full time tenure track positions. The hiring process is presently underway.

Mazen Corpus Christi)

- CC has recently launched a Coordinated Arts Program involving the departments of English, Philosophy, and Religious Studies. More information should be available at our next meeting.
- Mazen has developed an on-line course in Business Ethics which will be deliverable by both CC and KPU.

Reuben (CNC)

- Enrolments in philosophy are improving relative to a low experienced five years ago. This may be a demographic issue.
- Last yr, CNC experimented with a 2nd yr course in political/moral philosophy but it did not enroll well and is presently on hold.

Vance (CR)

- Presently, the philosophy department offers courses in Intro Ethics (Fall), Intro Knowledge & Reality (Spring) and a course titled Search for Meaning in addition to service sections of Nursing Ethics.
- Enrolments are steady at present, but demographic trends predict declining enrolments going forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55.

