Academic Priorities Council
Minutes of November 2, 2010

Attendees: Richard Bogartz, Susan Sturgeon, Margaret Allard, John Kingston, Eliot Moss, Jim Rinderle, Bryan Harvey, Mark Hamin (LARP guest), Kathy Debevec (Chair)

1. Minutes of the October 5, 2010 meeting were amended and approved.

2. The Council reviewed the revisions for the proposed Dual Degree Program of Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA)/Master of Architecture (MArch). Mark Hamin (LARP) attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Council. He was asked to address areas of concern that have not yet been satisfactorily revised including:
   a. In the MLA/MArch proposal, Table 1, the total credits for the existing 2-year MArch Program (based on the courses listed) add up to 60, not 57. Professor Hamin indicated that they should add up to 57 and will re-check the courses and credits to correct the error.
   b. The credit reduction percentage is affected by the total number of credits in the existing program. The University guidelines for credit reduction state that the new (combined) program credits should be at or above 80% of the original program credits. Assuming that the proposed program requires 82 credits and the original programs required 105 credits (48+57), the proposed program would only be 78% of the total of the combined programs. If the original program credits are 108 (48+60), and the proposed program requires 82 credits, the proposed program would only be 76% of the total of the combined programs. If the existing 2-year MArch is 57 credits, which course needs to come out or where are the credits reduced? It appears that the source of the discrepancy may be the Arch-Des 670 (Research Forum) which is in the original program but not the proposed program.
   c. On p. 4, the “Thesis/Project” section needs to be revised so that it reads clearly. Currently there are grammatical errors throughout. The last sentence on certification should read something like “Students can continue to receive certification through successful completion of a thesis/project which demonstrates their research skills and area of competency.
   d. The credits in the last paragraph need to be consistent with the credits in Table 3 of the revised proposal. There should be 34 credits in the MLA, not 33 and 82 total credits instead of 81.

3. The Council also reviewed the Dual Degree Proposal for a Master of Regional Planning (MRP)/Master of Architecture (MArch).
a. The same problems that exist in the MLA/MArch dual degree proposal need to be corrected in this proposal as well. The existing 2-year (advanced standing) MArch program adds up to 60 credits rather than 57 credits. The source of the discrepancy needs to be assessed.

b. The University’s guideline of 80% has not been reached in the Credit Reduction section. Instead, the new program reflects only 77% of the credits from the original two programs.

c. In the “Thesis/Project” section, the last sentence should again be reworded as suggested for the MLA/MArch program.

4. The Academic Priorities Council approved the proposed degree of a BA in Linguistics and Spanish/Portuguese on November 2, 2010. The proposal is strongly aligned with the University’s mission and priorities. It allows for a capstone experience and an international education experience. The program is expected to be of special interest and value to first-generation students from diverse populations. The department’s outreach programs and community college partnerships should further the goal of providing increased access to the University of Massachusetts.

5. The Council reviewed the proposed concentration in Sports Journalism. A question was posed about the purpose of the Special Topics course, and it was suggested that the Academic Matters Council consider this. The Council approved the proposal. The concentration was developed through stimulus funding and is expected to provide students with knowledge and skills sought by employers in the industry. It is also expected to fulfill an unmet need and attract high quality high school grads from out of state to UMass.