Present: Michelle Dean, Annette Easton, Gary Grudnitski, Kathy Krentler, Josh Lyon (ABSC Representative), Bill Sterk, Sandi Williams
Guest: Dean Popp

1. Curriculum Proposal – BA 402
The Committee considered a proposal for a new course: BA 402 – Exploration of Career Development. This is a 1 unit, Credit/No Credit course that has been offered as a special topics course for three semesters. Taught by Steve Ross, the current CBA Executive in Residence, the course explores career opportunities in business. It is open to all upper-division business students and cannot be used for major credit. The course has been extremely popular to date. It is anticipated that the course would be taught by interested Executives in Residence in the future (beyond Steve’s tenure). Executives in Residence are not paid, and hence the course does not carry any resource implications.

The proposal was unanimously approved pending minor editorial changes to the proposal.

2. Oral Communication Skills
The Committee continued a discussion begun at its last meeting regarding our students’ oral communication skills. Krentler made a short presentation summarizing the results of the oral skills assessment completed in Fall 2008. Our students are satisfactorily meeting our expectations for oral communication skills but they fall below the Committee’s goal for the category of exceeding expectations. Further, comparison between a 2004 assessment of oral skills and the 2008 assessment suggests that our students’ oral communication skills may have declined.

The Committee acknowledged that the comparison between 2004 and 2008 is likely affected by changes that have occurred in the assessment process itself. Other possible explanations for a decline were also considered. These included the fact that increasing class sizes has reduced the amount of time students are allotted to practice their oral skills in classes.

Based on a suggestion made at the last meeting of the Undergraduate Committee, a proposal has been sent to the IDS 290 (Business Communications) faculty to embed an oral communication skills exercise in all sections of that course. The exercise requires at
a maximum, one course period (75 minutes). It involves students reviewing and
discussing as a group the CBA Oral Communication Skills rubric, viewing a recording of
students making a presentation, rating the presentations using the rubric, and then
sharing and discussing their assessments.

3. Written Communication Skills

The Committee’s discussion of the assessment of our students’ written communication
skills continued. A comparison of the CBA Written Communication Skills rubric and the
rubric used to rate WPA (Writing Proficiency Assessment) tests has been undertaken.
Further, Krentler has discussed WPA grading with Gretchen Vik. Gretchen serves as one
of the chief WPA graders. Following this information gathering and an analysis of the
potential for Type I and Type II errors that may occur due to the confounding of writing
and critical thinking skills on the WPA, the Committee concluded that WPA scores are a
reasonable method of assessing our students’ written communication skills.

Discussion ensued regarding the need for and value of assessing a sample of student
writing following completion of an upper-division writing (W) course. This type of
assessment would be undertaken in an effort to assess whether the remedy of taking
such a course was valuable in improving writing skills for those students who scored less
than a 10 on the WPA. After extensive discussion the Committee concluded that the
method available to conduct this type of follow-up assessment was fraught with
problems making data from it highly suspect. Given this concern it was decided that for
the current time period, WPA scores are an appropriate measure of our students’
written communication skills with the University-mandated requirement of completing
one or two writing courses for students falling below the level of “10” on the test
serving as a means of closing the loop for this skill. To support the CBA’s position that
writing skills matter in upper-division, the Committee will continue to encourage all
faculty to distribute the CBA Written Communication Skills rubric to their students and
to emphasize that it represents the College’s expectations for student writing.

The Committee discussed the need to reinforce to students that both of the CBA
Communication Skills Rubrics (Oral and Written) represent our expectations. It was
agreed that in addition to asking faculty to distribute the rubrics in classes and to use
the rubrics in their grading, the rubrics should be distributed to students at orientation
and when they declare their upper-division major. Both rubrics are also posted on the
CBA Assessment website.
4. **New Business**

Dean Popp described to the Committee an effort undertaken by the International Business Department to improve their students’ math skills. The effort was undertaken as a result of assessment findings from the BAT test suggesting that International Business majors perform more poorly in Finance 323 that do majors from the CBA. The International Business Department sponsored a six hour math review session on the two days prior to the start of spring semester. Attendance at the session was voluntary. Approximately 35 students attended. Self-reporting from attendees suggests that the students found the session helpful and that they believe their math skills were strengthened as a result of the review. Support for the session was provided by CIBER. The International Business Department is currently considering whether to repeat the effort in coming semesters.

Meeting adjourned at Noon.

**Next Meeting:** February 25, 10:00 AM; Dean’s Conference Room