REPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Senate Committee: Academic Policies Committee

Brief History of Issue—why the issue is being considered:
Students, faculty, and staff have been attempting to establish a Hmong Studies program for several years. Hmong-American students currently pursue a topical minor in Hmong Studies, following guidelines provided by the Hmong Studies Steering Committee. Given the alignment with the University’s mission; the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) goals; and the ongoing racial tension targeting Hmong-American students, the timing is right for a Hmong Studies certificate as one step toward establishing a Hmong Studies minor in the future.

Points Discussed by Committee:
1. Affected departments (e.g., Languages) indicated no problems with regularly offering the needed courses.
2. Pros of the certificate include student demand for it and its aligning with UWEC’s mission in various ways, especially as a means of increasing recruiting and retaining underrepresented students.
3. One committee member expressed concern about the presence of Critical Race Theory in the certificate and the proposal, worrying that it strayed away from inquiry and towards indoctrination. However, Critical Race Theory is not the only theory that will be used; additionally, if Critical Race Theory is taught correctly, the focus will be on inquiry.
4. Although access to Hmong and Hmong-American faculty is a benefit of the proposed certificate, establishing the Hmong Studies certificate is not dependent upon a success faculty hire (scheduled for Fall 2017).
5. The Hmong Studies certificate would be 15 credits—6 of which would need to be at the 300-400 level (including electives). Elements of the certificate would include (1) Language; (2) Hmong History, Culture, & Society; (3) Critical Race Theory (CRT); (4) Electives.
6. Page 6 of the proposal lists the sample courses; however, relevant HIST courses are planning to be added in the future.
7. The Hmong Studies certificate is supported by the related programs.

Pros of Recommendation:
1. This will be an interdisciplinary program that aligns with the University mission.
2. The Hmong-American students, who comprise the majority of our underrepresented student population, have been pushing for a Hmong Studies program. A demand for this program exists.

Cons of Recommendation:
1. A certificate including a focus on Critical Race Theory might lean toward indoctrination.
2. We currently do not have a dedicated faculty member for Hmong Studies. Faculty from other departments are supporting Hmong Studies through their course offerings; Dr. Ari Anand is serving as the advisor for students pursuing a topical minor in Hmong Studies. However, the Administration has committed to supporting a tenure-track position for Hmong Studies as a step toward a Hmong Studies minor.

Technology/Human Resource Impact:
1. All courses for the Hmong Studies certificate currently exist. No new courses will have to be developed for the certificate.
2. The proposal does list a dedicated faculty line and the Chancellor endorsed the Hmong Studies Steering Committee’s proposal to prepare the ground for hiring a tenure-track faculty (11/17/2015 blog). However, current faculty teach the courses proposed for inclusion in the Hmong Studies certificate.

Committee Recommendation:
Establish an interdisciplinary certificate in Hmong Studies, to be housed in the Department of Languages.
MOTION FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

The Academic Policies Committee,

by a vote of _6_ in favor and _1_ against on February 2, 2016,

recommends that an interdisciplinary certificate in Hmong Studies within the Department of Languages be established.

Implementation Date: 2016-2017 Catalog

Signed: ______Jean A. Pratt_____
Chair of the Committee

Send to: University Senate Office