

Curriculum Committee

Minutes of the October 28, 2016 Meeting

Present: Rob Beezer (Secretary), Peggy Burge, David Chiu, Sara Freeman (Chair *pro tempore*), Kent Hooper, Martin Jackson, Alan Krause, Carson Nies, Holly Roberts, Leslie Saucedo, Jason Struna, Brad Tomhave, Bryan Thines, Justin Tiehen, Benjamin Tromly, Nila Wiese.

FREEMAN, acting for RICHMAN, called the meeting to order at 4:03 in the McCormick Room. The minutes of the October 21, 2016 meeting were approved after several small corrections.

Announcements JACKSON, acting for the Dean of the University, expressed interest in retaining or reconsidering Option (d) from last year's discussion of the Spring calendar equalization. This option would keep the start and end dates of the semester the same, but would add some weekdays free of classes. The rationale was to provide for certain end-of-the-year activities in departments where students present significant projects in public settings. There was some discussion of the merits of doing these activities on the weekends or at night, versus weekdays.

Working Group 1 Report TIEHEN reported that the group had begun work on the Biology Department curriculum review.

Working Group 2 Report TROMLY reported that they had met to consider the tasks and logistics of their review of the Humanistic Approaches core area review. They plan to also consult with Professor Greta Austin (Religion), the current Dolliver Chair.

Working Group 3 Report WIESE reported that they had assigned tasks for their work on the Philosophy Department curriculum review.

Their consultation with the Staff Senate about the Spring calendar equalization will need to wait at least until the next full meeting of the Staff Senate on December 7. So the Staff Senate will be asked to report back in early January.

Working Group 4 Report HOOPER reported that materials for the Politics and Government Department review had been received, but not yet discussed.

Unit Limits on Majors and Minors The committee's second charge from the Faculty Senate is:

While part of ongoing charges, the Faculty Senate would like to encourage attention to the question of limits on the number of units required for majors and minors. Specifically, "Create guidelines for unit limits for majors to fit existing practices, core curriculum, and educational goals."

A discussion consumed the remainder of the meeting. The "Guidance to Review Question #3" is part of the committee's materials intended to provide advice to working groups performing reviews of departments (and programs and schools). Question #3 is part of the list given to departments to answer, which addresses the number of units required by the department for majors. We describe the broad themes of the discussion, not always in chronological order.

JACKSON, and later BEEZER, questioned the language in the guidance as being vague about definitions of majors, major fields, disciplinary areas, and departments.

Practice and necessity was discussed by representatives of various departments: German (HOOPER), Biology (SAUCEDO), Theater (FREEMAN), Business and Leadership (WIESE), Mathematics and Computer Science (BEEZER, JACKSON) and Philosophy (TIEHEN). There was frequently a tension between the goals of a liberal arts education and preparation for specialization, i.e. breadth versus depth. JACKSON was consistently interested in if a major was designed to automatically prepare a student for graduate studies, or if a student would be advised to choose certain electives as necessary preparation for graduate school, and the answers ranged to either end of this spectrum.

TOMHAVE critiqued the question and the review guidance as a hollow exercise and asked for an understandable question with an understandable review process. JACKSON concurred that the question could be clarified.

RICHMAN will be asked to assign further work on the charge to a Working Group.

The long-running tradition of the motion to adjourn being made by a professor of Art began with Professor Emeritus Ken Stevens. TOMHAVE observed that with the absence today of RICHMAN, that streak would now end, and marking this occasion might be a fitting memorial to Professor Stevens, who passed away on October 8 of this year.

The motion to adjourn was made by FREEMAN, Professor of Theater, a discipline closely allied with Art, at 5:00 P.M. The next meeting will be November 18, 2016 at 4 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Beezer