

# Curriculum Committee

## Minutes of the November 18, 2016 Meeting

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

RICHMAN called the meeting to order at 3:59 in the McCormick Room. The minutes of the October 28, 2016 meeting were approved with only a change in the date of the next meeting.

**Announcements** RICHMAN made the following announcements:

- Ellen Peters, Institutional Research, has aligned their surveys of students to match the committee's seven-year cycle for department, school and program reviews.
- There has been interest from the Faculty Senate in the committee's work on the Spring calendar equalization.
- Demographic information on students participating in surveys organized by Institutional Research show they have a 3.41 GPA, against a 3.24 GPA for students overall.

JACKSON suggested we organize the committee's Spring semester work at our next meeting.

**Working Group 1 Report** TIEHEN reported that work continues on the Biology Department curriculum review. They have contacted the Staff Senate for input on the Spring calendar, but have not had a reply.

**Working Group 2 Report** TROMLY reported survey questions continue to evolve as part of their Humanistic Approaches core area review. A response from Bob Kief, Assistant Vice-President for Facilities, about the various Spring calendar options reflected simply the impact it would have on timing of maintenance projects undertaken while classes are not in session.

**Working Group 3 Report** WIESE reported that work continues on the Philosophy Department curriculum review. Mike Segawa, Dean of Students, will report impacts on student life due to the various options for changes in the Spring calendar.

**Working Group 4 Report** HOOPER has arranged a meeting with administrators involved in Commencement exercises to discuss the various options for changes in the Spring calendar. Questions have been sent back to the Politics and Government Department in response to their review, along with a request for a more careful selection of syllabi to consider.

**Spring Calendar Study** As charged by the Faculty Senate, the committee is studying ways to reduce the number of teaching days in Spring semester to match the shorter Fall semester calendar. Option A would end the Spring semester a week earlier, and Option B would begin the semester a week earlier and end two weeks earlier. Much of the discussion revolved around renewed consideration of Option D which retains current start and end dates, but intersperse additional non-teaching days throughout the semester.

JACKSON, representing the interest of Dean Kristine Bartanen, explained that these additional days would provide opportunities for student presentations on year-end theses (or similar work), and asked that we think creatively about how to use those days, and how we might adjust the calendar to accommodate the change. For example, the semester need not start on a Tuesday, and final exams might be scheduled on weekends, along with changes in Reading Period. HOOPER noted that presentations would not be a valuable activity for his discipline. SAUCEDO noted the disruptive impact on scheduling science labs in lower-division courses if a few weeks were missing a teaching day. There was further discussion of the merits and faults of all three options.

Working groups will continue to gather information from affected constituencies, and the matter may be brought before academic department chairs for discussion at their next meeting.

**Unit Limits on Majors and Minors** Some of the discussion from the previous meeting was summarized for the benefit of the chair (RICHMAN) who had been unable to attend the meeting. Working Group 3 will take on this topic, to report back after the semester break. SAUCEDO suggested that as working groups consider responses to Question #3 of the committee's curriculum review questionnaire they consider possible improvements to the question, as TOMHAVE reiterated his opinion that the question is currently a "hollow drill."

**Liberal Studies Major** Discussion of this topic was tabled due to a lack of time. There was some limited discussion about preparations for the best way to approach the topic.

RICHMAN, Professor of Art, adjourned the meeting at 5:00 P.M. The next, and final, meeting of the semester will be December 2, 2016 at 4 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Robert Beezer