

Curriculum Committee

Minutes of the February 3, 2017 Meeting

Present: Rob Beezer (Secretary), Peggy Burge, 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 3:00 in the McCormick Room. The minutes of the January 27, 2017 meeting were approved with two small changes to wording.

Working Group 1 Report TIEHEN presented one course for approval.

COMM 372, *Contemporary Media Culture: Deconstructing Disney*, as proposed by Derek Buescher (Communication Studies) for the KNOW graduation requirement. **Action:** Approved.

The Neuroscience Program proposed, and the working group recommended, changing the program from an emphasis to a minor. After some discussion involving SAUCEDO, TOMHAVE, and JACKSON about the general difference between the two, and specific differences in the proposal in hand, the proposal was approved. **Action:** Approved.

Working Group 2 Report TROMLY reported meeting today, and formulating questions for the German language faculty as part of their review. There was consultation with JACKSON and TOMHAVE about a requested change in how credit is awarded for the major through Advanced Placement examinations in German.

Working Group 3 Report WIESE reported meeting today and continuing to work through their reviews of the Philosophy Department and the Social Sciences Approaches core area, including consultation with Ellen Peters in Institutional Research as part of the latter. Next week they will work on draft language for a reformulation of the department review question about the number of required units.

Working Group 4 Report In the absence of HOOPER, SAUCEDO reported that they have not met recently.

Academic Calendars JACKSON presented a proposed Academic Calendar, developed with TOMHAVE, for the 2017-18 academic year. This follows the “Guidelines for Setting Academic Calendar” (rev. Fall 2013) for setting the calendar based on an end date for Fall semester before Christmas, and a start date for Spring semester on Martin Luther King Day (for which there are no

classes). JACKSON has abandoned the practice of including dates for items such as tuition refunds, or residence hall availability, presuming these are not academic matters, and not of interest to the committee.

BEEZER observed that the Guidelines begin by asserting “two fifteen week semesters”, then list six days for each semester with no classes, and so then wondered why we are trying to equalize the number of teaching days across semesters. TOMHAVE solved by the conundrum by noting that Spring Break is not counted as one of the fifteen weeks, while there is no continuous week to ignore in the fall.

WIESE asked if we might first settle the general question of the nature of Spring semester, and then approve a calendar for Spring 2018 reflecting resolution of that question. RICHMAN suggested there was still remaining information-gathering from some affected parts of campus, while JACKSON suggested time for a decision was running short, as there is already pressure to determine the date of Commencement at the end of AY 2017-18. It was agreed that a general Spring calendar change could well wait for Spring 2019 at the earliest.

The academic dates for the 2017-18 academic year were approved as presented. **Action:** Approved.

Liberal Studies Major, Freedom Education Project Puget Sound Discussion of the Freedom Education Project Puget Sound (FEPPS) continued from the previous meeting, in anticipation of Professors Robin Jacobson and Seth Weinberger visiting the committee’s next meeting. There were a variety of questions and concerns, though most speakers expressed strong support for the goals and activities of FEPPS.

- BEEZER asked if he understood correctly that faculty from other institutions would be teaching these courses, in classrooms with no other regularly-enrolled Puget Sound students? Yes, was the answer.
- TOMHAVE wondered aloud about how students in this program were to be admitted.
- SAUCEDO asked if the University of Washington Tacoma campus had been approached about participating? TOMHAVE replied that a Liberal Studies major was more the sort of program that The Evergreen State College might specialize in.
- In response to RICHMAN suggesting there were few parallels, BEEZER talked about his own experiences with volunteer teaching of Masters’ courses in South Africa for disadvantaged students from the entire continent, in a program where nearby established universities provide the actual degrees. His point was that it takes a serious commitment to teach in these kinds of programs and he would find it difficult to add this teaching to his other responsibilities during the semester, rather than during breaks.
- STRUNA asked if faculty teaching in this program might have some sort of limited appointment to the Puget Sound faculty.
- RICHMAN asked about the “final 8 units in residence” requirement. TOMHAVE explained that this requirement was broadly interpreted to include courses that are part of Pac-Rim and other study abroad programs, and could be treated similarly in this instance.

- KENDALL asked to what extent the committee approved individual courses. JACKSON explained that generally the committee approves new courses for core requirements and the KNOW requirement, but for those courses approved administratively by the Associate Deans' Office, the committee may always choose to examine them individually. So the committee could elect to approve or review courses employed as part of FEPPS.
- WIESE felt there was a lot of information we did not have, and which would be necessary for making a decision.
- RICHMAN tried to summarize the discussion so far as revolving around questions of how to ensure the courses at FEPPS were of the same academic quality as on the Puget Sound campus.
- BURGE offered that it would be difficult to have students gain the necessary research skills, without access to the Library, and presumably with limited or no Internet access.
- TROMLY suggested that we might consider the introduction of a new Liberal Studies major in the same way we might if such a program was proposed for current students. Would it be considered consistent with the other types of majors we offer?
- The foreign language requirement was discussed, in part since the alternatives for students with learning disabilities were included in the degree requirements for the proposed major. JACKSON took this to a broader discussion of how to provide student support services, such as Academic Advising, and accommodations administered by the Student Accessibility and Accommodation office.
- JACKSON reminded the committee that the proposal asks for a waiver of the university's "three upper-division courses" graduation requirement, based on the claim that the entire major would "inherently satisfy the spirit of this requirement." He suggested we would want further rationale about how these were similar.

RICHMAN, Professor of Art, adjourned the meeting at 3:58 P.M. The next meeting will be on February 10 at 3 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Beezer