

**Curriculum Committee Minutes**  
**Friday, April 19, 2019, 3:00PM**  
**Library, Room 053**

In attendance: Bill Barry, Regina Duthely, Julia Looper, Gary McCall, Julie Nelson-Christoph, Jennifer Pitonyak, Geoff Proehl, Holly Roberts, Maria Sampen, Leslie Saucedo, Courtney Thatcher.

Meeting called to order by Chair, Leslie Saucedo at 3:00pm.

Announcements: Neuroscience syllabi were received following the previous review. Leslie forwarded the Upper Division review and recommendations to the Curriculum Task Force.

Minutes of the April 10 meeting were approved as amended: Committee changed 'Academic Calendar Approval' to 'Academic Calendar Update.'

Course approval for SSI2 161 The Good Life. Saucedo recommended approval. Approved.

Academic Calendar:

Christoph distributed guidelines for setting the calendar and a draft of the 2020-2021 Basic Academic Calendar, and a detailed calendar of 2019-2020. The basic calendar for 2020-2021 was approved. The detailed 2019-20 was approved pending necessary corrections after Christoph meets with other administrative offices.

Foreign Languages graduation requirement (Working Group 1, attached): Discussion: Barry was unsure what guidelines for this requirement are needed. The working group recommended 'learning objectives' and 'guidelines' for this graduation requirement. Barry suggested a 'rationale' instead of 'guidelines.' Proehl suggested the guidelines would keep this requirement the same as core requirements which have guidelines and they could be simple, and something that works for those teaching these courses. For example, a guideline might be 'provide an introduction to the grammar of another language and the culture of another language.' Barry moved to change the Working Group's 1st recommendation to: 'It is imperative that *learning objectives* for the Foreign Language requirement be developed, much like those that exist for current core requirements.' (i.e. Delete development of 'guidelines.')

Approved.

SIM proposal for Tovah Gordon's Comparative Ethnic Studies in Visual Culture major. Working Group 3 (Sampen) recommends approval. Approved.

Senate Charge 1 (Working Group 3): Develop formal guidelines for distinguishing between activity credits and academic credits (attached). Sampen presented a summary of their review, findings, and recommendations. The working group recommended that all activity courses newly proposed have a syllabus, learning objectives, a course schedule, and a departmental (not university-wide) rationale explaining why the course counts as activity credit instead of academic credit. Departments want to establish their own guidelines because there are competing and differing reasons for offering activity courses. Looper suggested that each department must develop guidelines for offering activity credits, and then explain how a newly proposed activity course meets the departmental guidelines. Campbell asked if we need a definition of what qualifies as academic credit. Members commented that tuition overload policies continue to impact the decision of classifying courses as academic versus activity. Faculty are not compensated for partial unit activity or partial unit academic courses. No decision made.

Senate Charge 4: Please send comments to Leslie Saucedo before the next meeting.  
She will also distribute questions regarding the other senate charges.

Next Meeting: May 1

Meeting adjourned at 3:50pm.

**Working Group 1 report on the Foreign Language Graduation Requirement  
Curriculum Committee  
April, 2019**

Working Group 1 (Kent Hooper, Nate Jacobi, Julia Looper, Geoff Proehl) had the charge to review the Foreign Language Graduation Requirement; the requirement was last reviewed in 2014. The working group reviewed reports from 2013-2014 and the results of the University Research student survey from Spring 2018. Additionally, we received information and met with staff from the Center for Writing Learning and Teaching (CWLT) with regards to Foreign Language Proficiency Testing. We conducted a close reading of the requirement parameters in the bulletin and discussed our own observations about the structure of the requirement. We also reviewed syllabi for learning outcomes and other content.

After discussions of the above mentioned material, we sent an email survey to the faculty members who taught classes that met the Foreign Language Graduation Requirement. We received 15 responses to the survey.

The email survey asked the following questions:

1. What, in your opinion, is the objective of the Foreign Language Graduation Requirement?
2. What is your response to the perception of some students that their course work in fulfillment of the foreign language requirement did not make them proficient in the language they took and that courses fulfilling this requirement should be more culture-centered with less of a focus on grammar and syntax? (See attached: "2018 University of Puget Sound Core Curriculum Assessment Report.")
3. It has, for various reasons, become quite problematic for the Center for Writing, Learning and Teaching to administer foreign language proficiency exams. After looking at the history of Foreign Language testing since 2003, we are considering making the following recommendations:
  1. That Puget Sound discontinue proctoring and providing tests in languages that we do not teach on our campus.
  2. That, rather than using on external exams in languages that we do teach, we, instead, develop our own Puget Sound exams.

What are your thoughts about this possible recommendation? What kind of support would your department need for such a change?

After the survey was sent, a follow-up meeting was organized. In addition to the working group, 13 people attended the meeting on March 1, 2019 at 4pm. At the meeting, the working group, those who teach non-English languages, and representatives from the CWLT discussed the goals and objectives of the Foreign Language Graduation Requirement, as well as the difficulties in administering the foreign language proficiency exams.

Concerns that have emerged:

1. Unlike other core areas, the Foreign Language Requirement has no written objective, guidelines or rubric. Therefore it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of courses and determine accommodations
2. It has been increasingly difficult for the CWLT to administer proficiency testing: we currently do not have a limit on the languages that proficiency testing is offered in, some tests are expensive, some tests provide results that are difficult to interpret.
3. The use of the term "Foreign" in "Foreign Language Requirement" is generally acknowledged to be outdated.

- a. Proposed alternatives include “The Second Language Requirement” or “The Language Requirement”

Consensus of those attending the meeting:

1. The Foreign Language Requirement should have written objectives, guidelines, or a rubric.
2. The Foreign Language Requirement is an important part of a liberal arts education.
3. Language, culture, and global awareness are all important parts of this requirement.
4. Students often confuse “proficiency” with “fluency”; therefore the term “proficiency”, as stated in the bulletin, leads students to unrealistic expectations about the outcome of the Foreign Language Requirement. The term “familiarity” may be a better alternative.
5. Proficiency testing should be done in the languages that we teach on campus.
6. The process of learning a language is important to student development and benefits all who can learn a language. In this light, it might be best to require all students to take at least 2 semesters of a foreign language. In other words, students who are already proficient in 2 languages would still take 2 semesters of a language other than English. This would eliminate proficiency testing.

Working Group recommendations:

1. It is imperative that learning objectives and guidelines for the Foreign Language Requirement be developed, much like those that exist for current core requirements.
2. The Foreign Language Faculty should form a task force to formulate and propose learning objectives and guidelines for the Foreign Language Requirement.
3. The current mandate for proficiency testing through the CWLT has become unmanageable for a variety of reasons, including cost, SAA issues, staffing, and challenges in finding appropriate tests for some languages. We recommend that if we continue with proficiency testing, departments assume responsibility for both placement and proficiency testing in their language. We do not have a firm recommendation for testing in languages that we do not instruct but we recommend that more of the cost and more of the initiative be borne by the student.
4. In the past, the need for guidelines has been pointed out and not acted on. We recommend that the Curriculum Committee follow up with the language faculty about the development of learning objectives and guidelines-no later than Spring 2020.

**Senate Charge: Develop formal guidelines for distinguishing between activity credits and academic credits.**

Working Group 3 met over the course of Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 to discuss the Senate Charge. We contacted chairs from all university departments that offered Activity credit courses to ask them to define their departmental criteria for distinguishing between Activity and Academic credit. [Note: we did not review Physical Education courses because we felt that these courses fulfilled the standard definition of “Activity” and did not need further clarification] We received responses from German, English, Art and Art History, Asian Studies, Global Development Studies, French, Library, Psychology, Biology, CWLT, School of Music, School of Business and Leadership, and Economics.

The following themes emerged from our research:

- 1. Departments stated that one of their top priorities is to provide students with academic tools for success in the profession and in graduate school**
- 2. Departments are concerned about placing additional financial burdens on students (tuition overload)**
- 3. Different departments have accreditation responsibilities that impact curricular offerings**
- 4. Different departments have different needs**
- 5. If guidelines are established, departments request that they be set within the department and not by the university as a whole**

Additionally, Working Group 3, Leslie Saucedo (Curriculum Committee Chair), and Maggie Mittuch (Vice President for Student Financial Affairs) co-hosted a Wednesday at 4 session on February 20, 2019 entitled “Curricular Implications of Unit Caps: Tensions between Academic, Activity, and Tuition Exempt Courses.” The full Curriculum Committee also discussed the topic of Academic versus Activity credits on several occasions. Maggie Mittuch attended the December 1, 2018 CC meeting to discuss the complications of tuition exempt courses and overload credit.

Based on our research and discussions, Working Group 3 makes the following general recommendations:

**Every new course proposed as Activity Credit must include the following:**

- 1. Syllabus**
- 2. Learning Objectives**
- 3. Course schedule**
- 4. Rationale from the department explaining why the course qualifies as an Activity Credit based on the departmental guidelines.**