

Minutes of the Curriculum Committee

Friday, September 16, 8:00 am, Lib 020.

In attendance: Roger Allen, Bill Barry (guest), Jane Carlin, Julie Christoph (guest), Alyce DeMarais, Brad Dillman, Kent Hooper (guest), Lisa Hutchinson, Alison Tracy Hale, Tatiana Kaminsky, Katie Mihalovich, Amanda Mifflin, Eric Orlin (guest), Emelie Peine, Brad Reich, Ned Sherry, Brad Tomhave, Barbara Warren, Carolyn Weisz, Linda Williams, Steven Zopfi

Call to order: Barbara Warren called the meeting to order. A motion to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2011 meeting was made by Steven Zopfi and seconded by Linda Williams.

M/S/P to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2011 meeting.

Working group assignments: Alyce DeMarais reviewed the working groups with the Committee. No changes were made. Working groups will convene on their own to review curriculum.

Alyce DeMarais introduced the Review of "The Functions of the Associate Deans' Office in Curricular Matters" document that was distributed to committee members. Steven Zofti made a motion to approve and this was seconded by Carolyn Weisz. The Committee voted to endorse the document. There was one abstention.

M/S/P to approve "The Functions of the Associate Deans' Office in Curricular Matters" as written.

Discussion of the first-year seminar proposal:

Julie Christoph introduced the "Seminar in Scholarly Inquiry I and II Proposed Objectives and Guidelines" document. In response to issues raised through the Curriculum Committee's review of the first-year seminar core area, Julie has been working with faculty members teaching first-year (FY) seminars over the last academic year. This past summer she coordinated two workshops to review and revise the first-year seminars as part of a Burlington Northern grant. Many of the faculty who worked with Julie joined the meeting to provide input and answer questions: Bill Barry, Kent Hooper, and Eric Orlin. The Burlington Northern group worked together to review existing data on the FY seminars as well as to review best practices in higher education and the result is the proposal that provides a new rubric for first-year seminars that is simple, clear, and flexible. There was considerable discussion concerning the proposal and major points and questions are listed below:

Since this is a revision to existing rubric it is anticipated that some faculty colleagues may be concerned about having to change their courses. Will there be sufficient support to assist faculty with changes, such as information literacy? The language of information literacy (IL) is a new concept, but most seminars already have some component of IL in the class. The rubric will provide a more focused and scaffolded approach to IL. The group referenced data presented by Peggy Burge (Humanities Librarian and Coordinator of Information Literacy in the Library) about the limited research skills of incoming students. Julie Christoph has already established a SoundNet site on this topic and will be working with Jane Carlin and librarians to provide examples of assignments for different disciplines. If the rubric is approved, a series of faculty development workshops will be organized to address the implementation.

There was additional discussion about how classes may be sequenced and many questions were raised, such as: Will students be encouraged to stay with the same professor both semesters? Could classes be team taught? What are the practical next steps? How will the course approval process work? It was determined these are all viable questions that need to be addressed once the rubric has been approved. It is important to note that these will be new courses, not just a new name attached to the current seminars and that everyone teaching first-year seminars should think of the seminars in a new context. This is a new process and while it will not constitute

massive revision, it will require some change. On a practical level, it is important to move through the approval process and share with the Senate. An implementation plan that would address the course revision and approval process, faculty development workshops as well as provide a timeline would be developed.

A motion to endorse the new rubrics was made by Emilie Peine and seconded by Alyce DeMarais. The motion passed unanimously.

M/S/P to endorse the revised first-year seminar rubrics as written.

The motion will be sent to the Senate for discussion at the October 12th 2011 faculty meeting.

Linda William motioned for adjournment and this was seconded by Brad Tomhave.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Carlin