

Curriculum Committee Minutes
Friday, October 7, 2011
8:00 a.m. Library 020

In attendance: Roger Allen, Terry Beck, Jane Carlin, Alyce DeMarais, Brad Dillman, Lisa Ferrari, Alison Tracy Hale, Lisa Hutchinson, Amanda Mifflin, Katie Mihalovich, Emelie Peine, Brad Reich, Ned Sherry, Brad Tomhave, Barbara Warren, Carolyn Weisz, Steven Zopfi

Chair Barbara Warren called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Chair Remarks: Barbara Warren announced that due to Alyce DeMarais' increasing responsibilities, Lisa Ferrari will be transitioning in to the role of Associate Dean support for the Curriculum Committee.

Approval of Minutes of September 16, 2011:

M/S/P to approve the minutes of September 16, 2011.

Working Group Reports:

Working Group One: Brad Reich moved the approval of African American Studies 205, Survey of African American Literature. Emelie Peine seconded.

The working group found the course to be well organized and clearly within the guidelines.

The course is scheduled to be offered yearly starting this coming spring

Motion passed.

Working Group Two: Emelie Peine moved approval of a new Scholarly and Creative Inquiry Course, History 125, The Frontier in World History, to be offered in Spring 2012. Alyce DeMarais seconded.

Through the course proposal and discussions with the course proposer, the working group is satisfied that the course fits the guidelines.

Motion passed.

Working Groups Three, Four, and Five are working on courses and reviews and have no business to bring to the larger committee at this time.

Reviewing charges from Faculty Senate:

At Barbara Warren's request, Alyce DeMarais reviewed the Committee's charges from the Senate and talked about how we might proceed with various charges.

The Committee briefly discussed the Senate charge to address the discrepancy in the lengths of fall and spring semester. Warren asked why we don't simply decide to make the semesters the same length.

Amanda Mifflin asked if there is a specific reason for the difference. Committee members responded that the reasons have to do with the total number of days in the year and how the calendar works-- when will the semesters start and end.

Possible alternatives were suggested. For example, we might implement a senior research day at the end of the spring semester or consider other ways of using the end of the spring semester differently to allow the semesters to be the same length.

The question, "What is the problem with having a 14-week spring semester?" was asked.

Brad Tomhave responded that there is no intrinsic problem with a 14-week spring semester. Rather, it is an issue of what the terms look like. There was no intention to make the terms different and there is no clear indication that the faculty has said what it wants to do.

DeMarais talked about problems that have been raised in the past. Making the semesters the same length might cause us to start in mid-August or lengthen winter break or having graduation a week earlier. If students graduate a week earlier it could cause issues with attracting summer school students. Almost all of our summer school students are Puget Sound students and they would need to find something to do for a week. Committee members were not sure if a week off in between spring and summer would be a problem.

Carolyn Weisz argued that we need to see the big picture and the pros and cons of both the status quo and making a change. She suggested a small committee to outline the big picture.

Following some additional discussion, Brad Dillman said he would be happy to work on gathering information as long as there was clarity of what we're trying to do.

Alison Tracy Hale advocated that the group find where the objections came from, creating a document about the issue so we could discuss it and for future reference.

Alison Tracy Hale volunteered to help with the effort (she was replaced by Emelie Peine later in the meeting). Lisa Ferrari will also be part of the group.

Senate Charge Two: Diversity in the core discussion. Carolyn W volunteered to work on this charge with a small group and she invited others to join her.

Lisa Ferrari offered her assistance as she is also on the diversity committee.

Alison Tracy Hale joined the committee as did Katie Mihalovich and Ned Sherry (for fall semester only).

Senate Charge Three: Revise calendar setting guidelines to accommodate January university holiday. It was noted that the Curriculum Committee has worked on January holiday language in the past. Brad Tomhave will bring that language to the group.

Senate Charge Four: Revising curriculum review guidelines.

After some discussion and stunned silence on the part of Working Group One, this task was assigned to Working Group One. It was suggested that the group consult with Ellen Peters in Institutional Research. Alyce DeMarais will continue to work on this with the group.

Senate Charge Five: Foreign Language requirement and students with learning disabilities.

After discussion about how to proceed with this charge, it was decided that Barbara Warren, Linda Williams, Lisa Ferrari, Steven Zopfi, and Brad Tomhave will look at documentation from discussions around the foreign language requirement, consult with faculty in foreign languages, and consult with disabilities coordinator, Elizabeth Lockwood.

Next Meeting Date:

The Curriculum Committee will meet next week (Friday, October 14, 2011 at 8:00 a.m.) to discuss outstanding course proposals that need to be considered prior to registration for Spring 2012.

Steven moved to adjure. Two Brads seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Beck