

Curriculum Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 23, 2012 - 4:01-4:55 PM
Collins Memorial Library #020

Attendees: Roger Allen, Gwynne Brown, Jane Carlin, Julie Christoph, Lisa Ferrari, Sara Freeman, Alison Tracy Hale, Lisa Hutchinson, Lisa Johnson (Secretary), Tatiana Kaminsky (Chair), Alan Krause, Paul Loeb, Phoebe Smith, Mike Spivey, Jonathan Stockdale, Brad Tomhave, Barbara Warren, Linda Williams

Meeting called to order by Kaminsky at 4:01 p.m.

Remarks from the Chair: The review for Classics and Theater Arts has been deferred to next year. Also, Latino Studies Minor proposal will be given to WG 5.

M/S/P (18-0-0) to approved minutes for 10/9/12, with minor changes.

Kaminsky asked for reports from the working groups (WG).

Allen reported for WG 1. The Biology review is complete and no changes are recommended. There were two minor issues that the WG recommends that Biology consider: 1) learning outcomes (with this point already recognized by the department); and 2) whether there is some overlap between Biology and two other programs. WG 1 recommends that the Curriculum Committee (CC) accepts the review of the Biology department.

M/S/P (18-0-0) to approve the review of the Biology department.

Allen reported that WG 1 reviewed the Honors program. The Honors program is comprised of eight courses. Instructors in all courses know what the common background has been. There is a requirement for a senior thesis. It is a western civilization and classic literature focus. A question is whether this is really an “Honors Program”? If the university has one, is this it? There is an implication that the Honors program has more rigor and more talented students than other programs. However, there is some indication that these courses do not present greater rigor than other programs. There is also a focus on Classics and Literature. WG 1 thought that this particular issue or question was vastly beyond the WG authority. WG 1 wishes to bring it to the CC. Is this a time to consider whether it is appropriate for the university to label a program as the Honors program? Is this program an Honors program? Is it simply a marketing device?

Smith reported that she had been interested in the Honors program, but as a science major, the Honors program felt too narrow. Carlin thinks that all classes at Puget Sound are Honors-level classes. There is a segment of our student body that cannot take advantage of the Honors program. As we think about student retention and recruitment, how do we define Honors? Loeb said that we could invite the director of Honors to come talk with us. Ferrari agreed that the director of Honors would prefer that to having a discussion without him. Stockdale asked what the selection process was. Loeb reported

that the process is selective, viz. the SAT scores and GPAs are higher. Andy Rex is the current director, and Denise Despres will be the future director. Maybe both could meet with the CC. Science students can do their work within Honors.

Hale asked whether the CC can even subject a program to this type of scrutiny from an external source. Kaminsky noted that we are an external voice, which is the purpose of the review. We purposefully do not have people from the departments under review on the WG that is reviewing them. Loeb reported that the Honors faculty members discuss this issue frequently. However, the name of the program gets students to come to UPS. They want to go to something called an Honors program. But the Honors title is controversial within the program. Christoph asked what goes on the transcript. Loeb said that Chapman Honors Scholar goes on the transcript. Kaminsky said that we would extend an invitation to both the current and future directors to attend the next CC meeting that they are able to attend.

Stockdale reported for WG 2. WG 2 continues to review Connections core. It has reviewed the second third of the syllabi. The members of the WG looked at two new courses for the Connections core, too, and both are recommended for approval.

1. The Art and Politics of the Civil Rights Movement, AFM360, proposed by Nancy Bristow. This course has an interdisciplinary approach, including history, art, and politics.

M/S/P (18-0-0) to approve The Art and Politics of the Civil Rights Movement, AFM360

Williams asked who was teaching the new Connections Core class submitted by Nancy Bristow to see whether it was to see if it was a team-taught class.

2. Biodiversity and Conservation in Borneo, ENVR335, proposed by Peter Wimberger. This course extends research that Wimberger conducted in the PacRim program. The interdisciplinary approach includes conservation biology, ethics, environmental studies, and politics. WG 2 recommended minor changes in language and grammar in the course description.

Spivey asked if ENVR 335 already exists. Ferrari said that this is ENVR 335b. Tomhave asked whether this course was going to be a PacRim course. Ferrari said no.

M/S/P (18-0-0) to approve Biodiversity and Conservation in Borneo, ENVR335

Loeb reported for WG3. WG 3 is reviewing freshman seminars, and they are in the process of sending out the checklist. As soon as they have a campus email address they will send them out. Ferrari reported that five email accounts have been set up for the WGs. WG members will have a password to the email accounts. To access the accounts,

go through webmail. Messages sent out for that account will get replies just to that account. Caveats: if two people are in the account at the same time, then they can both send an email at the same time. Also, the accounts do not bounce replies to individual accounts. This means that someone will have to go into the WG accounts to check for mail. Ferrari will send electronic information about the accounts to the members of the CC. Loeb said this will allow the members of the WG to divide up the work.

Hale reported for WG4. WG 4 is on a temporary hiatus. They are reviewing proposals and waiting for the checklist to be operational.

WG 5 reported that it is working on the special interdisciplinary major review.

1. Early Africa to 1807, HIS293, proposed for the Humanistic core. WG 5 wants this class on the books for spring.

M/S/P (18-0-0) to approve Early Africa to 1807, HIS293

2. It's Only Rock and Roll: Rock from Cradle to Adolescence (1955 – 1970), HUM250, proposed by Steve Rodgers, for the Humanistic core.

Brown asked if Rodgers was going to talk about music in that class. Freeman said the course requires students to listen to music and watch films, but they are primarily reading histories. Ferrari said that Rodgers talked to Paul Harris to ask about differences between this proposed course and existing courses. Ferrari reported that Harris was satisfied that the differences existed.

M/S/P (18-0-0) to approve It's Only Rock and Roll: Rock from Cradle to Adolescence (1955 – 1970), HUM250

WG 5 has a couple of other course proposals for spring that have been sent back for clarification and revision.

Kaminsky said that we need to address the senate charges. We need to figure out the FYS Policy Memo, viz., how to implement the items in the memo. This is in addition to WG work. How do we want to deal with this? Christoph said policy considerations related to course numbers is urgent. Ferrari reported that she, Hutchinson, and Martin Jackson worked through it for the bulletin. They came up with a system that could be changed. Specifically, prefixes SSI1 and SSI2 are used, and the courses are simply being numbered as they come in from 100 – 199. Each description has an added line: “affiliate department or affiliate program: [department or School].” The questions on the memo under general

recommendations 1 were addressed. Kaminsky said that the CC can note that this part of the memo has been addressed by the Associate Deans' office. The CC does not need to approve it.

Christoph said that some of the recommendations have already passed into history, like creating a website. However, it would be good for outside eyes to look at these recommendations. Kaminsky asked if the recommendations sounded good, then we can just approve the memo. Kaminsky asked for the CC to discuss whether we want to simply approve the memo.

Loeb moved to approve the recommendations from the memo. Ferrari asked for a minute for those present to review it. Ferrari asked about point 17 having to do with Assoc. Deans' Office.

17. The Associate Deans should ask more experienced faculty to teach the off-cycle seminars, since the off-cycle seminars will likely include a more challenging group of students (students who failed a previous SSI course, incoming transfer students, and so forth).

Additionally, she asked for discussion about points 7 and 8:

7. Transfer students may receive transfer credit for SSII, provided that they have taken a first-year writing course that includes a significant focus on argument-based writing in an academic context. That is the minimum standard to be used by the Registrar's office in determining whether a course taken elsewhere should count for SSII.

8. Transfer students may choose to count courses taken at other institutions that satisfy the requirements for SSII as elective credit or as credit for SSII.

Ferrari asked us to consider whether we want transfer credit to count as credit in the foundational core. Freeman said it is very difficult for transfer students to do both seminars. Spivey asked what the policy is for transfer students. Tomhave said they could get credit for both seminars. Tomhave said that they are more accommodating with the Writing and Rhetoric seminar. But, it's more difficult to do the second one. Under this scheme, it is important for students to take the second seminar piece. Christoph said that it also has to do with school-identity, as well as the information literacy piece. It's a balance, because we do not want to make it overly difficult for transfer students to come in. Tomhave said it would be unusual to find a student who has had a course with argument based writing. Loeb said that the language is OK. We can leave it as it is written, because it is possible, though perhaps difficult, to meet. If students don't have argument based writing, then they simply have to take it. Tomhave said that students can appeal decisions about this to the Academic Standards Committee.

Beck asked about #9:

9. Transfer students may not count courses taken at other institutions toward SSI2.

Beck said that he was worried about absolute rules that are to be enforced absolutely. He does not see why someone could not build a case. He is uncomfortable with a rule that does not compromise. If someone can demonstrate that they have this, then why do we have the rule? Christoph said that the difficulty is how we assess it. It takes time and money to review portfolios. Tomhave said that it could be appealable. Beck said that as long as there is a way for an exceptional case to be appealed, then he is unbothered by the language in #9. Hale asked how many transfer students we have in each class. Tomhave said that we do know that information.

Ferrari discussed item 17. As written, item 17 means that Ferrari will go to departments to say that first year faculty cannot teach these classes. She wants the CC to be fully aware that this is what we are asking for. Johnson said that the term “more experienced faculty” in item 17 seems ambiguous. Does it include an adjunct with a lot of experience? Christoph said that an adjunct would not have enough institutional history or affiliation to support students in those classes. Also, there is a need to protect untenured faculty from the negative evaluations that might result. Spivey asked if we want to give this provision “teeth” or not? Ferrari asked if the language is going to be imperative, then we might have to get Senate approval. Discussion ensued about Senate approval. Johnson asked whether the CC would need to seek affirmative approval from the Senate. If the CC acts and the Senate does not overturn the action, then doesn't it become policy?

Loeb moved to approve all except #17, and to change the wording of #9 to note the appeal process.

M/S/P (18-0-0) all except #17, and to change the wording of #9 to note the appeal process.

Kaminsky noted that further discussion about #17 was tabled.

M/S/P to adjourn at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Johnson
Secretary, University Curriculum Committee