

## CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES

5 December 2008 (Friday)

Library 020

**Present:** Jane Brazell, Alyce DeMarais, Greg Elliott, Fred Hamel, Kent Hooper, Kriszta Kotsis, Mary Rose Lamb, Lynda Livingston, Paul Loeb, Bob Matthews, Brad Richards, Florence Sandler, Kurt Walls, Barbara Warren

**Visitor:** Sam Hardwick

**Call to order:** Chair Livingston called the meeting to order at 8:02.

**Opening remarks:** There were no opening remarks

**Announcements:** .

**Meeting Times:** The Chair announced that Fridays, 9:00 AM, had been selected for meeting times in the Spring term 2009.

**First Year Seminar Rubrics:** DeMarais reported that the Committee's work on First Year Seminar rubrics including material on academic honesty had been presented to the Faculty Senate (please see the minutes of April 18, 2008 and appendix E of those minutes).

**Approval of Minutes of November 14, 2008:** The minutes of November 14, 2008 were approved as written..

**Core Review Process Discussion:**

The Chair reviewed the "Fallow Year" charge to review the Core Curriculum, suggesting that a process be developed to do this. In a memorandum dated December 2, 2008, Dean DeMarais and Chair Livingston reminded us of a charge to the Curriculum Committee given by the Chair of the Faculty Senate Doug Cannon in his report to the Board of Trustees on October 10, 2008, in which he reported:

There are no other pending proposals for changes to the Faculty Code or Bylaws, so the Senate sees the way clear to address new topics. One involves assessment of the core curriculum, which has now been in place for five years. When the time comes, Senate deliberation will draw on the review of the core as a whole, which the Curriculum Committee has been charged to conduct, and also on the assessment sections of the reaccreditation self-study.

In their memo, DeMarais and Livingston asked

1. How should we proceed?
2. How should we evaluate the effectiveness of the rubrics for the various core categories?
3. What procedure should be used to change core rubrics?

4. What information would be most useful for future Curriculum Committee core subcommittees? What sorts of guidelines/insights should we pass on to them, given our experiences so far?
5. How should we assess the effectiveness of the overall core? of the foreign language requirement? of the upper-division unit requirement?

**DeMarais** began the discussion by noting that individual core areas are reviewed on an ongoing basis, but that a review of the current Core in its entirety had not yet been undertaken. While this was the original intent of the "fallow year", no guidelines have been established for this undertaking, and that the "fallow year" has fallen by the wayside. In the discussion which followed, several issues and ideas were proposed:

**Lamb** and **Livingston** suggested that the reports of working groups reviewing Core areas could be reviewed to see what is working and what is not. **Lamb** and **DeMarais** noted that these reports are available. **Sandler** suggested that we should evaluate the Core as a whole in addition to reviewing individual areas. **Livingston** noted that two Core areas are under review this year. Working Group 1 has been charged with the Foreign Language graduation requirement, and the Connections Core area has been continued from last year and is the responsibility of Working Group 3.

**DeMarais** asked about student perceptions of the Core. **Hamel** suggested that surveys or focus groups would be an appropriate way to get this information.

**Loeb** suggested that we could initiate a discussion in a Faculty Meeting about the Core, and that chairs of departments could solicit comments from departmental members. **Livingston** suggested that departments could be asked particularly about the upper division and foreign language requirements. **DeMarais** recommended that we should have some structure to the review before bringing it to a faculty meeting. **Loeb** suggested that we should begin with the working groups, then move to department chairs before bringing the issue to the Faculty.

**Livingston** asked about a time line for presenting this to the Faculty. In discussion the second faculty meeting of the Spring term was suggested as a possibility (Monday, April 6, 2009). **Loeb** suggested that the Core was perhaps not as much of a hot topic than it had been in the past.

**Lamb** proposed that we do a review (from working group documents) and see if a full review is called for. We might find some things in the current Core to modify, but we can then present a report and let the Faculty decide whether or not to proceed. **DeMarais** and **Hooper** recommended that the Committee devise a process for the review of the Core. This would meet both the intent of the "fallow year" and support the Senate's charge to the Committee.

## **Reports of Working Groups:**

### **Working Group 1**

Working Group 1 did not have a report.

### **Working Group 2:**

Working Group 2 did not have a report.

### **Working Group 3:**

**Hamel** reported that the Working Group had responded to a Connections proposal from James Jasinski and had requested further information from him. He also reported that the Working Group would meet with **Keith Ward**, Head of the School of Music, on December 17. (In an email sent Wednesday, January 14 from Hamel to Matthews **Hamel** wrote that the intended meeting had occurred as planned)

### **Working Group 4:**

**Richards** reported that the Department of Economics Curriculum Review was complete and **M/S/P** approval for the Department of Economics review.

### **Working Group 5:**

**Kotsis** reported that the Working Group had met with the Asian Studies program to discuss the addition of language focus majors to the existing majors.

**DeMarais** noted that Asian Language faculty are currently part of the Asian Studies Program.

**Kotsis** and **DeMarais** noted that language study would be strengthened by a required study abroad semester for those students selecting a major in East Asian Languages with a focus in Chinese or Japanese.

**Hooper** asked if we had had adequate faculty resources for this. **Livingston** asked how many courses would be added. **DeMarais** replied that two courses in Language and Culture would be added to the existing East Asia Language classes.

**Loeb** recommended that the Committee take a further look at the proposed new majors and that we separate the discussion of the Asian Studies Curriculum Review from the proposed new majors.

**Hooper** raised the issue of the current restriction requiring that instructors teach only at the 100 and 200 level. **Loeb** noted the push to make upper division

courses available to more students, and both noted the need to consider staffing issues.

At the end of the discussion, it was decided to delay further discussion until the Spring term when the issue of the proposed new majors could be considered further in the full Committee. The Committee finds itself in support of the direction taken by the Asian Studies Program, but wanted to take more time in reviewing the details.

**Election of new Secretary:**

The current secretary of the Curriculum Committee being on sabbatical in the Spring term, the Chair called for volunteers for the position. There were no takers, and the issue will be added to the agenda of the first meeting of the Spring term.

**Adjournment**

**Kotsis** moved that we adjourn, and we did adjourn at 8.49

Respectfully submitted  
Bob Matthews