

Minutes of Meeting of the Curriculum Committee

2 April 2010

(recorded by Greg Elliott)

In Attendance:

Derek Buescher (chair), Alyce DeMarais, Brad Dillman, Kena Fox-Dobbs, Leon Grunberg, Brad Reich, Brad Tomhave, Kurt Walls, Barbara Warren, Steven Zopfi, Rob Schaller (student rep)

Meeting called to order at 9 AM

Minutes from March 12 , 2010: Point by Dillman to be added; with that inclusion approval of minutes **M/S/P**

Buescher noted we have one, maybe two meetings left, on 4/16/2010 and perhaps 4/23/2010. Prior to those meetings we will convene the stakeholders in the fine arts core rubric change discussion.

Working group reports:

WG#1: almost done with Foreign Language review. Committee had a brief discussion about the proficiency exam. Warren: is there no penalty to fail? Why do students avoid the exam? Are they unaware of it? Tomhave: no penalty to fail, they are made aware of it. Zopfi: Some schools require such an exam. Schaller (peer advisor): students are informed but choose to do something fun instead. Tomhave: It is contrary to expectations that students do not take advantage of the exam. Two years ago 64 took it; last year, 67 took it. About a 50% pass rate.

WG#2: received a good response to survey on freshman seminar, digesting and summarizing, bring to the committee later.

WG#3: **M/S/P** Conn 341, Asia Pop!. Ready to discuss activity credits.

WG#4: almost finished with Business review, working on Gender Studies, and nothing has been received yet from Religion.

WG#5: Fine Arts rubric changes to be addressed at next meeting, same with Asian Studies review.

Buescher opened a discussion on the patterns of use of Independent Studies (IS), bringing the following issues from the ASC:

- 1) Quality control of the proposals: Do the proposals contain the appropriate amount and level of work?
- 2) Are IS merely being used to fulfill graduation requirements? In the view of the ASC this is not the purpose of IS.
- 3) Are courses occurring off of the books?
- 4) Are professors being overburdened and essentially teaching overloads

without being paid?

Tom have reported data collected on patterns of use for IS. Art and Studio art have had very high numbers of IS courses; they have recently restructured how they handle them and will be using IS much less. In the faculty at large, there are a few specific professors who do several a year. Most professors only have an occasional IS.

Buescher framed a question from the ASC to the CC: should the CC review each IS proposal?

Walls: Faculty are not required to take on IS?

Buescher, Tom have: not a requirement, but there is pressure.

Warren: Is pursuing further research an appropriate use of IS?

Tom have: What is the intent - to pursue IS out of interest, or to make up units? The latter burdens faculty with the student's problems, especially in spring of a senior year.

Buescher: Are IS usually fractional units?

Tom have: No, the bulk are for a full credit.

Dillman: A full unit should represent a lot of work, the quantity and quality of the work is up to the individual faculty to enforce. It is reasonable for there to be some kind of review by the CC.

Tom have: When a professor constructs a course it is carefully done in advance and reviewed by the CC. Students can think up an IS on a Monday and have it approved on a Tuesday with no oversight, and without anywhere near the care in preparation. If there is a review of each proposal it will decrease the number of them, increase the quality, while maintaining the IS for its intended purpose.

Zopfi: Are they reviewed by the ASC or elsewhere?

Tom have: If the proposal comes to the ASC for some other reason, e.g. to waive the GPA requirement, then the ASC takes into account the quality and breadth of the proposal. Otherwise no.

Zopfi: Agree with Dillman on need for review

Buescher: How does one go about structuring this kind of review? What would the timing look like?

Tom have: This would take perhaps a year to put in place. Develop guidelines, send to the Senate etc. This is essentially a faculty decision: do they want IS to be solely between them and a student, or have oversight. Jokes, laughter. Senate will decide if it needs to go to the full faculty for a decision.

Buescher: Like to get this started this year rather than charge next year's committee. Discussion tabled until April 16th.

M/S/P meeting adjourned 9:50 AM