

**CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**9 February 2007 (Friday)**  
**Misner Room**

Present: Suzanne Barnett, Brad Dillman, Mary Rose Lamb, Grace Livingston, Lynda Livingston, Paul Loeb, Bob Matthews, John McCuiston, Brad Richards, Elise Richman, Michelle Salter '07, David Scott, Christine Smith, Kurt Walls, Lisa Wood (Chair), Alyce DeMarais, Brad Tomhave, Carrie Washburn, Lori Ricigliano

Not present: Elisabeth Benard, Florence Sandler, Stuart Smithers

**Call to order.** Chair Wood called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. She acknowledged news that Tomhave is now Registrar of the University, and the committee broke into hearty applause.

**Remarks by the Chair.** [Deferred to the end of the meeting but reported here]

- (1) Wood said that she would send a **questionnaire** to DeMarais to send to Working Groups [in the effort to determine procedures and workload of the committee for the report to the Faculty Senate due before the end of this academic year].
- (2) Taking into account the work remaining for this year and remarks by leads of Working Groups, Wood announced that the **committee will next meet on 2 March 2007**. In view of Washburn's reminder of the need to approve departments and programs up for review in time for students to plan ahead, the committee could also meet on 9 March if we have an overflow of materials related to *Bulletin* copy after the meeting of 2 March.

**Minutes. The committee M/S/P approval of the minutes for the meeting of 26 January 2007.**

**Announcement.** DeMarais reminded the committee of the two remaining opportunities for faculty members to meet with Dean Kris Bartanen on the subject of "challenges of global citizenship": Monday, 12 February (4:00 p.m., Murray Boardroom); Thursday, 15 February (12:00 p.m., Murray Boardroom).

**Working Groups (WG).** Wood called on leads of WG for reports of activity under way. Note: In the parenthesized list of tasks for each group NON-BOLD ITEMS show work already completed.

- **WG ONE (Chemistry / Humanistic Approaches):** Dillman (lead) said that responses from the **CHEMISTRY** department as part of the five-year review are coming. The five-year review of the **HUMANISTIC APPROACHES (HM)** core includes distribution of syllabi to members of the group and a questionnaire to be sent to faculty teaching in the HM core. A dinner meeting with faculty is to occur on 21 March (Wednesday).
- **WG TWO (Latin American Studies [with Double Counting Issue] / Fine Arts Approaches / Exercise Science):** Lamb (lead) reported that the group is getting close to completion of the **LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES** five-year review and also the **EXERCISE SCIENCE** five-year review. The group is moving toward consideration of the five-year review of the **FINE ARTS (FN)** core.
- **WG THREE (English / Geology / W&R and SCIS Seminars / Mathematics and Computer Science standard [non-contract] majors):** Loeb (lead) presented a motion to approve a course proposed for the SCIS core and added that the group will be looking at three other course proposals. The **GEOLOGY** five-year review report has come in. (*See expansion, with MOTION, below.*)\*
- **WG FOUR (History / Physics / Connections):** Scott (lead) presented a motion for the approval of a new **CONNECTIONS** core course. He added that the **HISTORY** five-year

review is very close to completion and that the **PHYSICS** five-year review report came in this term. (See *expansion, with MOTION, below.*)\*\*

- **WG FIVE (Internship and Cooperative Education / SIM / ad hoc other core / 3-2 dual degree programs / activity v. academic credit):** Smith (lead) reported that she has been in communication with the Office of Career and Employment Services with regard to the five-year review of the **ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM** and the **COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM**. She added that a **SIM** (Special Interdisciplinary Major) proposal may be coming in by the 15 February deadline.

**3-2 dual degree programs.** Wood said that the committee will revisit this matter in an upcoming discussion to which we will invite colleagues involved in 3-2 programs.

**ACTIVITY v. ACADEMIC CREDIT.** Tomhave and Washburn provided background perspective on this issue, and general discussion followed (*see expansion, below.*)\*\*\*

\***WG THREE.** The committee took the following action:

**ACTION**            **Loeb M/S/P to approve Biology 240 - Mysteries of Biology: Solved and Unsolved, proposed by Mary Rose Lamb (Biology), for the Scholarly and Creative Inquiry core as a section for transfer students.**

\*\***WG FOUR.** The committee took the following action:

**ACTION**            **Scott M/S/P that Connections 372 - The Gilded Age: Literary Realisms and Historical Realities, as proposed by Tiffany Aldrich MacBain (English), be approved for the Connections core for summer 2007.**

Scott commented that assigned readings represent a range of disciplinary perspectives, although explicit engagement of multiple perspectives is not specified. The group has requested added material from the proposer [but the recommendation for approval of the course is not dependent on the added material]. Scott said that a discussion at the level of the general committee of the issue of "how to explicitly show" engagement of multiple disciplines is forthcoming [and can inform reevaluation of the course before it is taught a second time].

\*\*\***WG FIVE: ACTIVITY v. ACADEMIC CREDIT.** Of this matter the committee engaged in fairly wide discussion but concluded that no policy proposal is needed. At the end of the discussion Wood declared that the matter as an agenda item is now "done."

Tomhave provided background information on the distinction between activity and academic credit by referring to the 1973-74 *Bulletin*, which announced that four semesters of P.E. (Physical Education) activity would no longer be a requirement for graduation. This change brought a transition from *mandatory* activity credit for P.E. courses prior to 1973-74 to *allowance* for activity credit and prompted activity credit for other things, for example, for performing groups. *No written guidelines exist to distinguish what is activity credit and what is academic credit.* Forensics, P.E., and performing groups are not in the academic program but are in the co-curriculum as activities. No written guidance informs what to do with, for example, Model UN (Model United Nations). Is an activity unit meant to enhance the academic program to allow a student to *do* certain things or to deal with theoretical issues? All "activity" courses, however, involve theory.

Washburn noted that the elimination of Winterim (January term) in 1985 and the reduction from 36 to 32 units required for graduation changed the limit on total activity units allowed to count for graduation from 2 units (of 36) to 1.5 units (of 32).

In response to Matthews's inquiry as to whether the committee has a specific issue before us, Tomhave explained that faculty colleagues have argued that the work of Model UN is *academic*.

Wood said that the issue should not be whether Model UN is "activity" or "academic"; instead, Model UN should be proposed as a course and thus judged as a course. DeMarais said that a proposal for Model UN as a course *did* come in, and it is a good proposal that makes clear that Model UN is different from something like "bowling" (which of course may have a theoretical basis in physics). Students put a great deal of work into preparation for the Model UN conference. In response to Smith's inquiry about the credit line, DeMarais said that it is .25 unit, with weekly meetings and lots of reading. The course originally was proposed and approved as *academic* credit, but DeMarais withdrew that categorization upon realizing that the course seemed similar to some other "activity" courses, for example, forensics.

Dillman said that Model UN *is* "academic," but most institutions do not give grades, which would be inconsistent with the objectives of the enterprise, which involves debate about competing policy proposals. The program is thus more likely to be "activity." Scott asked if an institutional Model UN body has guidelines for academic v. activity credit. Dillman said no, but he has observed that "academic" status credits "winning" v. "learning"; the objective of the enterprise is *learning*.

Washburn brought up two other issues connected with activity courses, (1) "repeatability" and (2) the "financial component." A lot of activity courses are repeatable, but an academic course usually means that a student can take the course only once. A student can take 4.25 units of anything (academic and/or activity) *plus* .25 activity unit at no added tuition cost. This arrangement accommodates sports and other activities.

As the discussion wound down various ideas surfaced: Non-graded status can serve the educational purpose of a course (Wood). "Academic" categorization offers an advantage; perhaps some partial-credit courses could be identified as academic but designated mandatory Pass/Fail and repeatable (L. Livingston). Good idea, but do we need guidelines? Perhaps better would be to deal with proposals case by case, assessing each situation. (Matthews)

Wood thanked Tomhave for his "semi-liturgical" explanation of the history and context of the matter of activity v. academic credit and, hearing no objections, declared the matter concluded.

**Adjournment.** At 9:47 a.m. McCuiston M/S/P to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted  
Suzanne W. Barnett  
(submitted 26 February 2007)

## APPENDIX

### Curriculum Committee Working Groups 2006-07 (UPDATED LIST, 2/26/2007)

Note: NON-BOLD ITEMS in the list of tasks represent work already completed.

#### **WORKING GROUP ONE: Chemistry / Humanistic Approaches**

Brad Dillman (Lead)  
Florence Sandler  
Brad Tomhave  
Alyce DeMarais

**WORKING GROUP TWO: Latin American Studies (with Double Counting issue) / Fine Arts Approaches / Exercise Science**

Mary Rose Lamb (Lead)  
Grace Livingston  
Stuart Smithers  
Alyce DeMarais

**WORKING GROUP THREE: English / Geology / W&R and SCIS Seminars / Mathematics and Computer Science standard (non-contract) majors**

Paul Loeb (Lead)  
Elisabeth Benard  
Bob Matthews  
Elise Richman  
Alyce DeMarais

**WORKING GROUP FOUR: History / Physics / Connections**

David Scott (Lead)  
Lynda Livingston  
Brad Richards  
Kurt Walls  
Alyce DeMarais

**WORKING GROUP FIVE: Internship and Cooperative Education / SIM / ad hoc other core / 3-2 dual degree programs / activity v. academic credit**

Christine Smith (Lead)  
John McCuistion  
Brad Tomhave  
Alyce DeMarais