

Curriculum Committee Minutes  
January 19, 2006

Members Present: Suzanne Barnett, Carlo Bonura, Alyce DeMarais, Brad Dillman, Ashley Gray, Wade Hands, Zaixin Hong, Jim Jasinski, David Luper, Richard Martin, Lori Ricigliano, Christine Smith, Brad Tomhave, Carrie Washburn, Linda Williams

New Chairman Jasinski called the meeting to order at 8:00. Minutes for the December 7, 2005, Curriculum Committee meeting were distributed, inspected, and approved unanimously.

### **Announcements**

Chairman Jasinski welcomed the new and old members of the committee and noted that he will continue to serve as chair of the Environmental Studies and Politics and Government Review Subcommittees. He also announced that the next meeting of the Curriculum Committee will be in two weeks, viz. Feb. 2.

### **Report of the African American Studies Review Subcommittee**

Luper reported that the Subcommittee unanimously advised acceptance of the African American Studies Program's Five-Year Review Report.

Accordingly, it was M/ S/ P to accept the AFAM Program's Report.

In subsequent discussion, Barnett and Jasinski expressed an interest in what questions were raised by the Subcommittee and what the Program's responses were. Luper identified the following as the main issues:

- Subcommittee members were concerned that one and the same class (AFAM 401) serves as a capstone class for AFAM minors and as a Connections Core class. The Program in response indicated that the double-duty served by AFAM 401 is a service to both the Program and the University, and that the tensions feared by the Subcommittee are not in fact evident in the teaching of the class. In the full Committee's discussion of this issue, Chairman Jasinski observed that such "double-duty" courses are quite acceptable when they occur in interdisciplinary programs such as African American Studies and Law and Social Justice (which is currently considering just such a "double-duty" course). Jasinski also suggested that it would not be inappropriate to require students hoping to take such a course to first take certain preliminary courses. Pre-requisites for Core classes, while rare, are not unheard-of.

- The Subcommittee suggested that the Program consider raising its requirements for the minor from 5 to 6, in part to insure that capstone classes are taught by Program faculty. The Program responded that "the idea of six units is one we have considered and we are willing to take a second look. We will revisit the idea in our next meeting."

- The Subcommittee had questions about the development of assessment tools for the minor. While not persuaded that "exams, finals papers and projects, and other end-of-semester student assignments...function as assessment tools," the members of the Subcommittee was cheered that the Program is developing an exit questionnaire and expects that this will be reported on in the Program's next five-year review.

### **Occupational Therapy Review Subcommittee Report (Continued)**

Jasinski moved to un-table the motion moved and amended in the last meeting, and Barnett moved its acceptance in the following words:

I move acceptance by the Curriculum Committee of the Occupational Therapy five-year review report, thereby reaffirming the program. Included in the motion is an expectation that separate from acceptance of the review report will be a discussion by the Curriculum Committee of the implications of the 3-2 arrangement in OT.

Jasinski raised the question of who currently has the authority to decide what courses count as electives for the MA in OT. Does this matter fall under the jurisdiction of the Curriculum Committee at all? He also asked about the nature of the "discussion" called for by the motion: should it be conducted by a subcommittee, or should it be a general discussion, informed by comparative data on 3-2 programs and the like gathered by Washburn and DeMarais? Barnett argued in favor of a general discussion, perhaps with a time-limit.

Bonura feared that there might be a problem with accepting the OT Review now and then perhaps subsequently discovering that the general discussion of the 3-2 issue reveals that the CC believes that the OT Program's curriculum departs from the university's mission. Accordingly, he suggested delaying the vote on acceptance of the Program's Report, especially since no changes in the Program's curriculum are being proposed. Jasinski countered that a later decision that a 3-2 program is problematic will not constitute an immediate difficulty for OT, given that this is a wider issue (there being also a 3-2 program in engineering), one that will undoubtedly take some time to fully resolve.

Barnett urged that the 3-2 issue indeed be entered in the CC's future agenda, and it appears that this will be done. Also, Washburn and DeMarais were instructed by Jasinski to commence gathering comparative information about 3-2 programs and the like.

At this point, the question was moved, and the amended motion was passed, with one abstention.

### **Other Business**

- Washburn observed that the course in Music History which the School of Music intends to add to the requirements for the BA in Music will raise the requirements from 9 to 10 units, thereby automatically necessitating the deliberations of a new subcommittee. This committee has now been formed, with Barnett as chair.

- Barnett and Jasinski now resurrected the issue of concurrent enrollments for Freshman Seminars. While the principle of "one student in one FS per semester" is not a formally enunciated policy, it has been a standard operating assumption, and greater clarity on the issue may be welcome. Jasinski had proposed last semester that a student could indeed take two Freshman Seminars in one semester if there were sufficient seats. Barnett, however, urged us to consider the Founding Faculty's "original intent" that the Freshman Seminars be experienced as a sequence. In her view, the matter is not merely an administrative issue, but a central feature of the conception of the Freshman Seminars. Bonura expressed the suspicion that there have been more cases of "concurrent enrollment" than have met the casual eye. Tomhave noted that there are two main species of students who find themselves concurrently enrolled in two Freshman Seminars: 1) those who fail a FS in the fall and then take two in the spring in order to complete the seminars as freshpersons, as intended by the Founder's "original intent"; 2) those who craftily enroll in a FS in the fall, only to strategically drop it in order to maneuver their way into a coveted seminar in the spring term, thereby ending up with two Freshman Seminars in the spring. Tomhave darkly hinted that his office "has ways" of dealing with such artful dodgers. He also declared that he enjoys his current flexibility and would prefer not to be constrained by rules chiseled in stone. Jasinski then asked the full Committee if it was eager to generate a firm rule and curtail Tomhave's coveted arbitrary power. Glancing at their watches, they tacitly agreed to let the status quo prevail.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50

Respectfully submitted,  
David Luper