

Curriculum Committee Minutes October 19, 2005

Members Present: Brad Dillman (secretary), Alyce DeMarais, Linda Williams, Christine Smith, David Lupher, Jim Jasinski, Suzanne Barnett, Ashley Gray (student), Richard Martin, Brad Tomhave, Zaixin Hong, Karim Ochosi, Grace Livingston, Carlo Bonura, DeWayne Derryberry (chair).

Derryberry called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. The committee approved the minutes for its September 28, 2005 meeting.

Announcements:

Derryberry said that in the interest of making committee minutes available in a timely fashion, they should be posted to facultycoms after the secretary prepares them.

Demarais announced that the Faculty Senate had approved calendar revisions. Barnett asked if the Senate's decision was final or if it would be voted on by the full faculty.

Demarais said that curriculum review documents for the Mathematics Department and the Center for Writing, Learning, and Teaching were available.

Report of the subcommittee for Fine Arts, Humanistic, and Social Scientific Approaches Courses:

The Subcommittee for Fine Arts, Humanistic, and Social Scientific Approaches moved approval of the following course for the Humanistic Approaches core rubric:

- Gender Studies 201 - Introduction to Gender and Feminist Studies, proposed by Priti Joshi (English), Suzanne Holland (Religion), and Mirelle Cohen (Comparative Sociology) and submitted by Nancy Bristow, Director, Gender Studies Program.

It reported: "This new course proposed by a team of faculty members in the Gender Studies Program has multidisciplinary origins and readings and will be taught by one faculty member at a time. The course will be available to all students as a general elective and will also serve as a requirement for the minor in Gender Studies (which offers a minor but no major). The subcommittee judges the course in compliance with stated

guidelines and appropriate as an introductory course for lower-division students while also having appeal for upper-division students.”

The course was unanimously approved.

Report of the First Year Seminar subcommittee:

The First Year Seminar sub-committee moved approval of Physics 104 proposed by James Bernhard and Comparative Sociology 117 proposed by Andrew Gardner. Both courses are seminars in Scholarly and Creative Inquiry.

The subcommittee noted: “In terms of content, the sub-committee believes that the two classes will present challenging material and topics that meet the requirements for the respective seminar types. Bernhard’s “Symmetry in Scientific Thought” introduces students to the emergence of symmetry as a primary theme in 20th century science. Gardner’s “Anthropology of Food and Eating” asks challenging questions about the relationship between food, society, political economy and culture. In response to both proposals the sub-committee inquired further as to how students would receive feedback on their written assignments. In both cases, authors provided the sub-committee with detailed responses regarding the envisioned structure of feedback. The sub-committee would like to highlight the clarity of Gardner’s proposal that comprehensively addressed each aspect of the Writing and Rhetoric guidelines.”

The courses were unanimously approved.

Report of the Connections Courses subcommittee:

The Connections Courses subcommittee moved approval of the following course for the Connections core rubric:

- Honors 401 – Some Classics of Asian Civilization, proposed by Mott Greene.

The course was unanimously approved.

New Business:

Barnett raised the issue of the tendency of some faculty not to schedule any exams or final activities during the “15th week” of class, i.e., during the reading period and final exams period, thus denying students the benefit/use of the final week. She invited the committee to take a few minutes to discuss the issue.

Derryberry asked committee members if they were concerned that some faculty did not schedule any assignments or exams during the “15th week,” and most responded in the affirmative. Jasinski explained that it should be up to Chairs—when they sign off on new courses—to address the issue.

Demarais offered to convey the committee’s “sense”—that there is a concern about use of the 15th week—to a chairs & directors meeting.

Barnett remarked that the issue was not about forcing every course to have a final exam, but, depending on the discipline, about encouraging perhaps at least a final project or “graded conversation” in the 15th week.

Dillman observed that if some faculty members schedule no final exam but make a paper or other final assignment due on the last day of classes, students will tend to spend the last week of classes working on those assignments and neglect other courses which have exams during the final exams period. Lupher concurred with this sentiment. Bonura observed that the committee does not know what percentage of faculty regularly schedule exams during the final exams period.

The committee adjourned at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bradford Dillman