

Minutes for the Curriculum Committee meeting of February 14, 2005

Members present: Ken Rousslang, Beckie Bailey (Student Representative), Sam Armocido (Student Representative), Lynda Livingston, Joyce Tamashiro, Christine Smith, Suzanne Barnett, Jim Jasinski, Michael Nanfito, Brad Tomhave, David Lupher, Bill Barry, Carrie Washburn, Richard Anderson-Connolly (Chair), Karim Ochosi, Carlo Bonura (Secretary)

The meeting was called to order at 2pm.

The Committee approved the minutes for both December 1, 2004 and January 31, 2005.

Announcements

Barry reminded the Committee that it had given him authority to approve seminar courses when the Committee does not have time to act, namely those courses developed by new faculty over the summer. The authority originally granted was temporary.

A **motion** was forwarded to renew this temporary authority over the summer to approve core courses.

Jasinski and Barnett asked about courses that were approved over the previous summer (whether Barry had reported back to the Committee regarding these courses). Barry and Washburn replied that there were no examples of courses approved over the summer.

The motion passed with only one abstention.

Departmental Reviews

Barnett **moved** acceptance by the Curriculum Committee of the Religion review report, thereby affirming the program and accommodating the following incremental changes as proposed by the department:

- Some modification of the four current curricular areas and the addition of a fifth area labeled "Comparative Approaches"
- Refinement of the conditions for Honors in the Major to include specification of "faculty discretion"
- Allowance of one more, for a total of three, Religion department courses that fulfill University core requirements to count for the major

The review process involved interaction with the chair of the department and affirmation of evidence that the department has reconsidered the departmental program in the context of a period of transition in faculty personnel.

The report states departmental interest in a faculty position in Islam, but at present this idea is a point for ongoing consideration and is not yet a proposal to the Dean.

Anderson-Connolly raised the issue of three core requirement overlaps.

Barnett explained that the department is overwhelmed by students needing entrance into core classes. Core overlaps refers to students using classes to fulfill both major and core requirements.

Washburn asked if this issue relates to the new or old core. Barnett responded that this portion of the report was premised on the old core but relates to new core as well.

Barry stated that bigger issue was not related to how much a department teaches in the core, but to the effort of suggesting to students that they find courses outside of the major. The aim of the core is to distribute courses across the curriculum rather than having students taking all courses from within their major.

Washburn restated her earlier point that the 2005-6 bulletin will not reflect the old core and that the wording of the report will be confusing for students. The point was made that if the wording is limited to old core students it does not need to go into the bulletin.

Jasinski asked if three (courses) was at the top end of “double-counting.” Barry responded that there may be departments that don’t make any statements about this practice and therefore do not limit it at all.

Jasinski said that he was philosophically against double counting, but was uncertain that there was anything the Committee could do about it. Barry suggested that the Committee could decide to make it an issue in which it should be involved.

Anderson-Connolly asked the practical question of whether the Committee should approve the Department Report before this issue is resolved or go ahead with the approval and then address an upper limit for double-counting. Jasinski argued for approving the report at this time.

Barnett reminded the Committee that under the new core there would be only two core areas besides SCIS; a connections course could count as an elective (humanistic approaches plus one social science approaches).

Jasinski inquired into the expansive curricular reach of the Department of Religion in that each faculty member has their own “area.” Five curricula areas in one Department sounded to him to be too wide a scope.

Smith asked why double-counting was allowed at all? Barry explained that it must be allowed because it is sometimes difficult for students to create schedules. Bailey (one of the Committee’s student representatives) has double counted across major and minor requirements (not across core requirements). Smith continued by suggesting that counting may in fact actually

create a breadth of classes if students are looking outside their home departments in order to fulfill requirements.

Rousslang stated that Departments that require courses outside of major must be considered if a limit were to be set by the Committee.

Jasinski asked Barry and Washburn if they could gather information about how departments handle this issue and report back to the Committee.

Anderson-Connolly suggested the approval of the report before the resolution of this issue by the Committee.

Livingston stated that 100% of the double counting in my experience (i.e., among my students) has been to allow the students to take more courses within the business school. She said that she was sure there are plenty of other business students who have different motives.

Anderson-Connolly said that he would highlight the Committee's action to the Faculty Senate.

Washburn said that the Bulletin only discusses double-counting when there is a departmental limit in place.

Tomhave argued that if this portion of the report is to be published in the Bulletin settling this issue must come before the Committee votes on the report itself. Religion wants this issue to apply to limited number of students, yet once it published it will affect all students (not only old core students).

Barry suggested that this matter be dealt with this clerically. The Department must figure out if it must allow three overlaps or if it can manage with just two overlaps.

Jasinski asked for an amendment to delete this line from the report. But the issue then arose as to whether the Committee has the ability to change a motion related to a department's major. Barry said that he was wary of changing a department statement of its major.

Tomhave then raised the question of the meaning of the phrase "faculty discretion." After an explanation from Barnett, Tomhave said that the phrase was not a significant change but just a clarification.

The motion (in its original form as a report) passed unanimously.

Continuation of the freshmen seminars discussion:

The question left unsettled from the last meeting related to whether freshmen must complete two seminars within their first year.

A brief discussion reaffirmed that the Freshmen seminars must be taken in their first year.

Connections subcommittee report:

Barnett **moved** approval by the Curriculum Committee of the following course for the Connections core rubric:

CONNECTIONS 305 - The Idea of Archeology, proposed by Douglas Edwards
(Religion)

This course has been a well-established Science in Context course in the old core curriculum, which helps to serve expectations of the Connections core. The course involves readings from multiple disciplinary perspectives and assures the engagement of the interdisciplinary process in the context of participation in an archeological dig on site. The course is a Summer Session offering as part of the Study Abroad Archeology Program.

The course was approved unanimously.

SCIS subcommittee report:

Rousslang **moved** Curriculum Committee approval of the following two courses for the Seminar in Scholarly and Creative Inquiry core category.

1. HIS 135, Success (and failure) in American Culture, Terry Cooney, History
2. HIS 131, Literature and History in the Civil Rights Era, Nancy Bristow, History

Both courses meet the spirit and letter of the rubric of the SCIS core area. They both seem to be excellent courses that (I) address a scholarly topic at the (II) freshman level, (III) with a substantive written component, and with intellectual exchange between the students and the instructor. Terry's course explores the notion of what, in American culture, it means to be a success, or what it means to be the close relative: a failure. The course seems almost equally suited to the Writing and Rhetoric core, since argument is a significant component of the course. Nancy's course is a concerted evaluation of the history and artistic expression of the civil rights era, with a deep exposure to the freedom-struggle of African Americans.

These courses were approved unanimously.