

Curriculum Committee Minutes  
April 26, 2004

**Members Present:** Richard Anderson-Connolly, Bill Barry, DeWayne Derryberry, Sue Hannaford (chair), Christine Kline, Lynda Livingston, David Lupher, Ken Rousslang, Brad Tomhave, Melissa Weinman-Jagosh, Carrie Washburn

**Visitors Present:** Lori Ricigliano

Hannaford called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

**approval of minutes:**

**Washburn M/S/P minutes of March 29, April 5, and April 12.**

**announcements:**

Barry commented on the “blatant power grab” described at the end of the April 12<sup>th</sup> minutes: He is only trying to “protect new faculty from exploitation by the Curriculum Committee ☺.” (ed. note: The Associate Dean specifically requested that the smiley face be appended to his comments.)

Barry also noted that Academic Vice Presidential candidates are “all over the place.” See them Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 4 p.m. in the rotunda.

Weinman-Jagosh hyped the “really great show” (a.k.a. the senior show) on from 5-8 p.m. in the Kittridge Gallery.

Hannaford wondered about the size of the incoming freshman class. Barry, Tomhave, and Washburn said we should have some idea around May 1.

**Connections subcommittee report:**

Derryberry reported that the subcommittee had reviewed five proposals, three of which still need work before their final fate can be determined. The other two, however, do meet the core guidelines; each involves several disciplines and requires students to integrate those disciplines throughout the coursework. These courses are:

- ◆ Science in Context 348, “Strange Reality,” proposed by Gregg Elliott and Mark Largent, and
- ◆ Humanities 315, “Drama, Film, and the Musical Stage,” by Geoffrey Block.

Barry interjected with an update: He reminded us that an advisory board for Connections was to have been generated out of the Connections faculty dinners, but then the subject never actually came up. For proposals not coming from special interdisciplinary programs, the approval process therefore remains the Curriculum Committee and its Connections subcommittee. Thus it shall remain unless the faculty (the Senate, that is, not the Curriculum Committee) decides to create the advisory board.

Derryberry noted that the two courses at hand have come from interdisciplinary programs, so they would not have been affected by the existence of the advisory board. However, a proposal from religion is affected, having been put “on the back burner” pending a decision about the advisory board.

Anderson-Connolly wondered just how interdisciplinary these courses are. Tom have asked why Block’s class was a Humanities class instead of a theater or music class. Derryberry said that the courses’ assignments involved topics that required students to synthesize material from different areas.

**Derryberry M/S/P approval of SCXT 348, “Strange Reality,” and HUM 315, “Drama, Film, and the Musical Stage,” for the Connections core.**

Anderson-Connolly asked to return to a discussion of the “institutional mechanism” for Connections approvals. Derryberry said that our subcommittee specialized in assessing a proposal’s adherence to the core guidelines, not in evaluating its rigor. If the subcommittee undertook rigor policing, membership could be “a lot of work, and its composition may be critical to ensure diversity.” Hannaford suggested that perhaps other members of the Curriculum Committee lend their disciplinary expertise as “pinch hitters.”

Anderson-Connolly asked how many Connections course proposals we might expect. Washburn predicted a lot in the next two years. Barry thought that lots of SCXT courses would “slip right over”; next year, we might expect 10-15 proposals in addition to those. He announced a mental note to send out a letter reminding faculty of the proposal deadline.

Tom have gave us additional background: We have needed 24-25 SCXT courses per year; we will probably need 30 Connections. The enrollment limit for SCXT was 22, while it will be 20 for Connections.

Anderson-Connolly, in desperation: Perhaps we need two subcommittees for Connections?? Derryberry foresaw problems (and extra work for Barry), and worried about the potential for inconsistencies.

**Boldly punting, we put further consideration of these issues on the agenda for next year’s Curriculum Committee.**

**Special Interdisciplinary Major (SIM) subcommittee report:**

Barry opened a discussion about an upper limit for units included in a SIM.

As determined by the faculty, the upper limit for all majors is currently 16 units. This would continue to be the limit for SIMs, as published in the bulletin. However, SIM proposers could appeal to the Curriculum Committee to include up to 18 units in their programs. For us to concur, we must be mightily persuaded: the proposal would “have to be extraordinarily strong in every other aspect.” Students would be apprised of the appeal possibility through the negotiation process that always accompanies a SIM proposal.

Anderson-Connolly wondered about a not-so-strong proposal whose principal wanted to take two extra units “just for the hell of it.” What do we gain from this? Weinman-Jagosh asserted that the strength of a proposal does not come from the number of units it contains. However, Hannaford

believed that there could be very good justifications for needing 18 units, and added that she expected the number of these types of proposals to be small. Barry noted that we allow 9 units in a [student's] major department, but that we can go to 10 if there's a compelling reason (such as a senior capstone course).

Anderson-Connolly worried that the "extraordinarily strong" language might set up perverse incentives; he suggested we remove it.

Washburn noted that once 3-courses-outside-the-first-major kicks in, students may not be able to use as many courses towards a SIM anyway.

Barry and Hannaford stressed that there have been some very good proposals in the past that have involved more than 16 units. SIMS may get content from seminal courses. However, these courses do not focus on the topic of the SIM. Since the SIM is a major created from several different areas, it may require additional units.

However, Hannaford noted that we do expect SIMs to comply with university-wide rules. Can't we just enforce the existing rules without adding more words for SIMs? Barry replied that he wanted to clarify that we would say 16 in the bulletin, that a student could negotiate for up to 18, but that there would never be more than 18 ever.

**Barry M/S/P the published 16-unit maximum for SIMs** (with caveats as noted in previous paragraph).

### **random thoughts to fill the awkward silence:**

ART 150

Bill Barry reported that ART 150, Constructions of Identity in the Visual Arts, is being proposed as a W&R core for Fall. The proposer (an incoming tenure line faculty member) has only provided a sketchy syllabus, but will submit a full syllabus in the summer. Chris Kline, as chair of the W&R subcommittee will work with the proposer.

To the question of "Where is the Philosophy review?" Bill Barry replied that it will come in the Fall.

### **chair's final report to Senate:**

Hannaford reminded us that it is the duty of the Chair of the Curriculum Committee to make to the Senate an annual report of our awe-inspiring progress. She handed out a three-page "Disposition of 2003-2004 Agenda" report for our perusal. She then asked for our input on the following issues that she wants to address in her cover letter:

1. Did the Curriculum Committee address its charges?
2. Which of our really important accomplishments should she highlight (e.g., approving the "interdisciplinary emphasis")?
3. What charges would we suggest for our successors next year (keeping in mind that there will be 14 departmental reviews, plus Connections' course approvals)?

Lupher proposed that suggestions for adding to our burden should only be made by people serving on the committee next year (a joke!).

Kline agreed that our Asian Studies review was quite an accomplishment. She also noted that 14 reviews make next year a busy one.

Rousslang said that we are not the “rigor police.” It’s the department’s job to review its faculty.

Barry said we need to ASSESS the first-year seminars, and we have already begun to create mechanisms to do that. We will send out letters to collect assessment data for these seminars, and can expect some responses to them. In addition, there will be a dinner next year to discuss the success of the core areas.

Hannaford said that we don’t expect a big bolus of things for Fine Arts, Humanistic, Historical. Washburn said that we should expect some seminar proposals to trickle in.

Hannaford asked if our foreign language and transfer student deliberations/discussions/decisions were Senate-worthy. Weinman-Jagosh said yes!

**other business:**

We have one person (who will be a junior next year) signed up for English 101. However, we’re dropping that class! Accommodating this person would be a “horrible waste of a class.” Bill Barry proposed that we cycle this person into WR, taking advantage of our new core to complete the old core.

Hannaford: Could this person take ENG101 somewhere else?

Tomhave, ruminating: That’s not impossible... arguments could be made... The ASC does its best work in cases like this.

**Barry M/S/P letting WR substitute for the old core’s Comm I requirement.**

Sorrowfully bidding each other adieu for the year, we **adjourned at 2:58 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Your humble svt. and former secretary,  
(with grateful acknowledgement of the assistance I got from Carrie Washburn)

Lynda S. Livingston