

To: Bill Beardsley, Chair and the Faculty Senate

From: Sue Hannaford

Re: Curriculum Committee Final Report (draft)

Attached please find a complete list of the actions taken by the Curriculum Committee during the 2003-2004 academic year. Rather than discuss each action, I will focus on the big picture. Our work for the year falls into three broad categories: (1) 5-year reviews of departments, (2) continued implementation of the new core and the core assessment process, and (3) other business.

5-year reviews and creation of a new program designation, *Interdisciplinary Emphasis*:

Eleven programs or departments were up for review this year. We completed 7 reviews (Art, Asian Studies, International Political Economy, Economics, Exercise Science, School of Business and Leadership, and School of Music). The other four departments (Environmental Studies, Foreign Languages and Literature, Philosophy, and Physical Education) asked for and were granted a one year extension. The Curriculum Committee will assess these next year along with Biology, Religion and Women's Studies.

These 5-year reviews were generally straight forward. The committee was impressed with the thoughtful nature of the self studies. One thing I have noticed over my three-year term on the Curriculum Committee is that departments are making strides in assessing their overall programs. In previous years, individual courses were well-reviewed as were the overall goals for the department. However, most departments failed to show an assessment of the overall program and on student outcomes. This seems to be changing, and the faculty should be proud of this move – both because it is becoming essential for the University's assessment, but also because such study does strengthen our programs.

One big item grew out of these programmatic reviews and merits discussion here. As the Senators will probably recall, the Asian Studies faculty proposed to change their current curricular structure from a major and a minor and instead reorganize their curriculum to offer an enhancement or overlay for other fields. This change required a new curriculum category, which the Curriculum Committee ultimately adopted and which is designated an Interdisciplinary Emphasis. The guidelines for programs carrying the designation Interdisciplinary Emphasis are detailed in the minutes of the 11/17/03 Curriculum Committee meeting. In brief, this term is reserved for interdisciplinary programs, students must complete 5 to 9 courses, and unlike the guidelines for minors, there must be a distinctive structure that includes a set of common courses or experiences such as gateway or capstone courses or a study abroad experience.

Implementation of the new core and core assessment process:

Much of the committee's work involved reviewing proposals for new core courses, and the overwhelming majority of new courses targets the two freshman seminars; of the 16 core courses approved, 9 fulfill the SCIS core, 4 fulfill the WR core, and the remaining meet the

Connections core. Senators may be wondering why we did not see *any* proposals for the other new core areas, especially given that the current freshmen will be taking courses in the new Fine Arts, Humanistic, Mathematical, Natural Scientific, and Social Scientific approaches to knowing starting this fall. The answer is that since these new core areas are comprised largely of courses previously offered for the old core areas and therefore the committee expected many of these courses to “roll over”, last year we delegated the approval of these courses to the Associate Dean Bill Barry. He, of course, forwards any unusual proposal to the committee for a more thorough review.

In addition to approving new courses the committee also discussed how we might assess the new core. Our plan is detailed in the minutes of the 9/29/03 Curriculum Committee meeting. In brief, we have adopted a 5-year cycle. We will review two core areas each year for the first four years; in the fifth year we will consider the core as a whole. In 2004-5 we will review the two freshman seminars, followed by mathematical and natural scientific approaches (2005-6), fine arts and humanistic approaches (2006-7), and connections and social scientific (2007-8). The committee did not formalize the procedures by which we would implement this assessment, and creating this framework should be a major charge for next year’s Curriculum Committee. Associate Dean Bill Barry has volunteered to host a series of dinners for SCIS and WR faculty in 2004-5. These dinners will be modeled on those hosted by Julie Neff-Lippman this year. We anticipate that these dinners will serve as a starting point for examining our successes and shortcomings in the freshman core areas. One challenge to the Curriculum Committee will be to foster a non-adversarial relationship between the committee and core professors while still carrying out a thorough assessment.

In addition to implementing the first stage of the core assessment, the Curriculum Committee anticipates a busy load with 7 department/program reviews and a slew of course proposals to satisfy the Connections core. As noted above, we approved only 3 such course this year, we have 3 proposals pending review, and we approved a handful of courses for this core area last year. Thus, we anticipate seeing 20 to 30 connections proposals next year. This number will challenge the committee, particularly given the interdisciplinary nature of the proposals which may require the committee to consider not only if the course meets the core guidelines but also to assess the content of the course. The latter point merits further discussion, since the Curriculum Committee anticipates that this will be a major headache next year. One of the responsibilities of the committee is to evaluate courses for content (difficulty, currency, and rigor of the course; choice of textbooks; reasonableness of assignments). In recent years this hasn’t been a problem. For departmental courses this is handled informally within the department. Similarly, for interdisciplinary courses this is usually handled by an advisory committee. Thus, for example, the SCXT advisory committee screened proposals for the old SCXT core, allowing the Curriculum Committee to focus on whether or not the course met the guidelines without undue review of content. With the new Connections core we face the potential problem that the committee will receive proposals from individuals (not associated with an interdisciplinary program) and that we will have to assess content as well as whether the course meets core guidelines. Will a Curriculum Subcommittee (possibly composed of a historian, a physicist, and a business professor) be expected to evaluate the difficulty, currency, and rigor or the material and assignments for all Connections course proposals? If not, how will the committee handle this challenge. The current committee members felt it was important to defer this decision to those who will actually do the work next year. Thus, establishing mechanisms to consider both the core guidelines and the course content of Connections core proposals should be a charge to the committee. We refer members of next year’s Curriculum Committee to the summary of this year’s committee discussions in the 11/24/03 minutes.

Other business:

The Curriculum Committee handled a mix of other business. A few of these actions were substantial and merit a mention here. We clarified the language regarding the upper division graduation requirement; we approved a 16 unit upper limit for the Special Interdisciplinary Major; we voted to require all transfer students entering in Fall 2004 to fulfill the new core requirements; and, we approved language stressing that students wishing to satisfy the WR core with transfer credit “must demonstrate work in written communication, oral communication, and argumentation.”

**Charges for the 2004-5 Curriculum Committee might include:**

1. Continue the on-going business of the Committee including the 5-year reviews for Biology, Environmental Studies, Foreign Language and Literature, Philosophy, Physical Education, Religion, and Women’s Studies.
2. Continue implementation of the core assessment process with particular emphasis on assessing the first year seminars.
3. Establish guidelines to ensure that Connections course proposals will both satisfy the core guidelines as well as have appropriate content.

## Curriculum Committee

### Disposition of 2003-2004 Agenda

#### I. Departmental Reviews

- 09/22/2003 Art Department curriculum review approved.
- 10/27/2003 International Political Economy curriculum review approved.
- 11/17/2003 Asian Studies curriculum review approved.
- 02/09/2004 Economics curriculum review approved.
- 03/08/2004 Exercise Science curriculum review approved.
- 03/29/2004 School of Business and Leadership curriculum review approved.
- 03/29/2004 School of Music curriculum review approved.

#### II. On-going business

##### Academic Calendar

- 09/29/2003 Academic Calendar for 2004-2005 approved.
  
- 10.27/2003 Basic calendar for 2007-2008 approved and sent to Faculty Senate. This calendar begins the Tuesday after Labor Day (9/3/07) and ends the 21<sup>st</sup> of December

##### Action on core courses

- 09/22/2003 ENGL 135, Architectures of Power, approved for Writing and Rhetoric seminar core
  
- 09/29/2003 PHIL 103, Atrocity and Moral Responsibility in the 20th Century, approved for the Scholarly and Creative Inquiry seminar core
  
- 09/29/2003 MUS 121, Musical Film Biography: Fact, Fiction, and Art, approved for the Scholarly and Creative Inquiry seminar core
  
- 09/29/2003 CLSC 105, Homer, approved for the Scholarly and Creative Inquiry seminar core
  
- 9/29/2003 Affirmed the five-year cycle for assessment of core curriculum adopted by 2002-2003 Curriculum Committee.
  
- 10/13/2003 REL 107, Galilee, Religion, Power, Politics, approved for the Scholarly and Creative Inquiry seminar core
  
- 10/13/2003 CSOC122, Sociology of Consumer Culture, approved for the Scholarly and Creative Inquiry seminar core
  
- 10/27/2003 HUM 306, Cultural Identity in Japan and the United States, approved for the Connections core
  
- 02/09/2004 CSOC130, Murderous Neighbors, Compassionate Strangers: Disparate Responses to Genocide, approved for the Scholarly and Creative Inquiry seminar core
  
- 02/09/2004 HIST 130, Race, Education, and the Law: The Brown Decision and its Legacies, approved for the Scholarly and Creative Inquiry seminar core
  
- 03/08/2004 ENGL 136, Imagining the American West, for Writing and Rhetoric seminar core
  
- 03/29/2004 ENGL 135, Travel And The Other, for Writing and Rhetoric seminar core

- 04/05/2004 ENGL 137, Representing Multiculturalism, for Writing and Rhetoric seminar core
- 04/12/2004 REL 120, Communities of Resistance and Liberation, approved for the Scholarly and Creative Inquiry seminar core
- 04/12/2004 CHEM 150, The Great Flood, approved for the Scholarly and Creative Inquiry seminar core
- 04/26/2004 HUM 315, Drama Film, and the Musical Stage, approved for the Connections core
- 04/26/2004 SCXT 346, Strange Realities: Physics in the Twentieth Century, approved for the Connections core

### III. Other Curricular Business

- 09/05/2003 Approved the continuation of the current authority delegated to the Associate Dean.
- 09/15/2003 Approved deferral of Foreign Languages and Literature department curriculum review to 2004-2005
- 09/15/2003 Approved deferral of Physical Education program curriculum review to 2004-2005
- 09/15/2003 Approved the following in regard to requirements for graduation:  
A score of 5, 6, or 7 on the IB Higher Level foreign language exam will satisfy the foreign language graduation requirement.
- 10/13/2003 Approved the following in regard to requirements for foreign language proficiency examination:  
1. Students who opt to take the proficiency exam in order to meet the foreign language requirement may retake the exam one time only.  
2. High school students who have successfully completed the first-year course sequence in a foreign language at the college level or the equivalent of at least one unit of Puget Sound credit of foreign language at the second-year level or above will have satisfied the foreign language requirement, even if such courses are credited towards a high-school degree. Such courses must be regular college offerings and cannot be special courses for high-school students. We will ask students who've completed self-paced or distance-learning courses to demonstrate proficiency by taking the exam, i.e., these courses will not be considered satisfactory. (Note: the registrar's office will screen courses with regard to formatting.)  
3. The language in the curriculum document should be edited to say "University of Puget Sound approved" proficiency examination in referencing the test (G2 in the curriculum statement).  
Note:: The curriculum committee is satisfied with the current process for selecting foreign language tests. This selection process involves the collaboration of the foreign language faculty, administration, and Learning Center staff. We also note that the committee views the exam as an indicator of proficiency in all areas.
- 10/13/2003 Approved the following in regard to the upper division graduation requirement:

Earned at least three *academic* units outside the first major at the upper-division level.

- 10/27/2003 Revisions to Self Study Curriculum Review Guide approved to clarify the option for departments to report on their long-range plans for continued curriculum development.
- 11/03/2003 Approved the Special Interdisciplinary Major in Religious Literature of Ancient Societies approved for Alison Gray.
- 11/17/2003 Guidelines for a new program designation, Interdisciplinary Emphasis, approved.
- 03/08/2004 Approved listing Connections courses as follows:  
1. All Connections courses proposed out of interdisciplinary programs will carry an interdisciplinary program label.  
2. All Connections courses proposed out of other (i.e., disciplinary) departments will carry a generic label.
- 03/29/2004 Approved that all entering transfer students starting with Fall 2004 will fulfill the new core requirements.
- 04/05/2004 Approved the Special Interdisciplinary Major in Religion and Literature approved for Chai Blair-Stahn
- 04/12/2004 Approved the following guidance for evaluating transfer transcripts regarding the Writing and Rhetoric core requirement:  
  
Students wishing to satisfy the Writing and Rhetoric core with transfer credit must demonstrate course work in written communication, oral communication, and argumentation.
- 04/12/2004 The committee agreed to grant to the Associate Dean the (summer) authority to provisionally approve freshman seminars (WR and SCIS) for a one-time-only offering the following fall.
- 04/26/2004 Approved a 16 unit limit for the Special Interdisciplinary Major, with the option of appeal up to 18 units.
- 04/26/2004 Approved Seminar in Writing and Rhetoric as a substitution for Communication I (old core).

#### **IV. Business to be carried over to 2004-2005**

Consideration of the following courses for Connections: HUM 320, AFAM 401, REL 369, and ART 150 for Seminar in Writing and Rhetoric.

Formation of subcommittee to address Connections proposals not from interdisciplinary programs.

#### **V. Departmental reviews scheduled for 2004-2005**

Biology  
Environmental Studies  
Foreign Languages and Literature  
Philosophy  
Physical Education  
Religion  
Women Studies