

Curriculum Committee Minutes September 26, 2001

Present: Barry, Beck, Clark, Derryberry, Greene, Hannaford, Kerrick, Kline, Kontogeorgopoulos, Neff-Lippman, Oldis, Pasco-Pranger, Sable, Sackman, Tomhave, Warning (chair), Washburn, Weinman-Jagosh.

Visitor: Ricigliano

Kontogeorgopoulos called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

In the minutes of 9/12/01, Pasco-Pranger corrected the spelling of the student member's name in the list of members present from Oldes to Oldis; Barry corrected the spelling of Ivey West's first name in the discussion of Foreign Language requirement waivers. With these corrections, minutes were approved for 9/12/01.

Communications I Subcommittee report:

Kline reported on the Subcommittee's favorable review of CLSC 103, Roman Decadence: A Freshman Writing Seminar.

- **Action: M/S/P approval of this course for the Communications I Core category.**

Comparative Values Subcommittee report:

Greene reported on the Subcommittee's consideration of two courses (PG 345: The American Founding, to be taught by Glenn and Goldberg; and HIST 354: Comparative Eugenics Movements, to be taught by Largent) for one-year approval under the Comparative Values Core rubric; the Subcommittee was satisfied that both fit well into the rubric.

- **Action: Kline M/S/P approval of PG 345: The American Founding for the Comparative Values Core category.**
- **Action: Greene M/S/P HIST 354: Comparative Eugenics Movements for the Comparative Values Core category.**

Resumption of discussion of course substitution in cases of disability waiver of Foreign Language Requirement:

Barry reported information supplied by Ivey West on the process she will follow to review an application for a waiver of the Foreign Language requirement in the new core. She will review the student's documentation of a diagnosed learning disability, consult with the diagnosing professional, interview the student, consult with the Foreign Languages Department about possible accommodations and if necessary consult with a local expert on learning disabilities. Barry also responded to a concern raised in the discussion of this issue on 9/12/01 that granting waivers for the Foreign Language Requirement would open the floodgates to applications for waivers for other graduation requirements including Core courses; he reported that West said that students have applied for waivers of the present Mathematical Reasoning Core requirement, but such requests have not been granted due to the availability of courses that allow students with disabilities in that area to be accommodated (e.g. MTH 103, PHIL 108).

Warning suggested that Committee not take a position on whether there should be a course substitution when a waiver of the Foreign Language requirement is granted. Tomhave pointed out that the Academic Standards Committee, when petitioned for a waiver of any graduation requirement, considers the question, "Does the request involve a reasonable alternative rather than a lowering of the academic standards?" Tomhave said that this question suggests that a

course substitution would be appropriate. Greene observed that it appears to be within the sphere of the Academic Standards Committee to make a decision to substitute a course if it grants a waiver. Barry then reiterated Warning's suggestion that the Committee take no action on this question, and the Committee consented to that plan.

Discussion of the limit to the number of required units in majors:

Barry brought up a question raised by Walter Lowrie at the 4/17/01 faculty meeting and referred to the Curriculum Committee by the faculty. Lowrie observed that, although the current Curriculum Statements lists 9 units within the major field and 16 units overall as the limits on required courses in the major, many departments are presently exceeding that number; in light of this and in light of the new Core, the faculty asked the Committee to consider whether a change in these limits is warranted. Hannaford asked how it happens that some departments have exceeded the present limits. Barry answered that any courses beyond the limit are justified in the major proposal which is considered by the Curriculum Committee and that majors exceeding the limit also have to be approved by the Dean for Academic Affairs. Hannaford asked what sort of justifications had been used. Barry said that departments generally made a strong argument for the educational necessity of the extra units, and that in some cases accreditation issues were involved. Washburn pointed out that many of the exceptions to the rule were allowed in order that the department might add a senior thesis or a capstone course. Barry pointed out that one argument against raising the limits is that the current limits act as a brake on the growth of majors; he also observed that increasing the size of majors would eat up the elective units gained by reducing the size of the Core. However, Beck observed that we could increase the limit on departmental courses without increasing the overall limit, thereby making the effect on available electives negligible. After further discussion Beck M/S raising the limit on courses within the major field required for the major to ten; the motion failed. After statements by Derryberry, Kerrick and Weinman-Jagosh supporting the theory that the limits act as a brake on excessive growth by requiring departments to give careful consideration to excess units, the Committee agreed to suggest no change to the present limits.

Report on Core transition plan:

Barry reported to the Committee that the Academic Standards Committee had made a ruling that freshmen matriculating in Fall 2003 will be the first class eligible to use the new Core.

Action: At 8:40 Weinman-Jagosh M/S/P adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Pasco-Pranger