

Curriculum Committee Meeting Minutes
March 30, 2011

Members present: Roger Allen, Terry Beck, Derek Buescher, Kent Hooper, Tatiana Kaminsky, Alisa Kessel, Amanda Mifflin, Emelie Peine, Brad Reich, Jonathan Stockdale, Brad Tomhave.

Call to Order

Derek Buescher called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

Approval of the Minutes

Minutes from March 9, 2011 were distributed and were M/S/P as per amended.

March 2, 2011 minutes will be distributed for approval at the next meeting.

Opening Remarks from the Chair

In response to a question from the group, Buescher said that he anticipates two more meetings of the full Curriculum Committee this year, depending on the work.

Reports from Working Groups:

Group One: No report

Group Two: Working on the Humanities review and anticipates having a report in a few weeks. All other reviews are finished.

Group Three. Working on the Physical Education review and hope to be done by the 13th or 20th of April.

Group Four: Natural Science review and Philosophy review are both in process.

Group Five: Group five met with faculty teaching in the mathematical approaches core. The group consensus was that the currently language does not account for calculus. The following language was created by a representative group after consultation with the departments of Math, Computer Science, and Philosophy.

Brad Tomhave presented the following language (new language is italicized) and moved that it be adopted. Kent Hooper seconded.

Draft of suggested revisions to Mathematical Approaches core area rubric:

Learning Objectives

Students in Mathematical Approaches courses develop an appreciation of the

power of Mathematics and formal methods to provide a way of understanding a problem unambiguously, describing its relation to other problems, and specifying clearly an approach to its solution. Students in Mathematical Approaches courses develop a variety of mathematical skills, an understanding of formal reasoning, and a facility with applications.

Guidelines

1. These goals are met by courses that treat formal reasoning in one or more of the following areas.
 - a. Mathematical reasoning: The ability to use such techniques as abstraction, definition, symbolic computation, calculation, and proof.
 - b. Data-based reasoning: The ability to work with numeric data, to reason from those data, and to understand what can and cannot be inferred from those data;
 - c. Logical reasoning: The study of formal logic, at least to the extent that is required to understand mathematical proof.
 - d. Algorithmic reasoning: The ability to analyze a problem, to design a systematic way of addressing that problem using an algorithm, and to implement that algorithm in a formal language such as a computer programming language.
2. Where these skills or methods are taught within the context of a discipline other than mathematics or computer science, they must receive greater attention than the disciplinary material.

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Discussion:

Those teaching in the Mathematical Approaches core believe that the current language does not adequately accommodate calculus. Language added to 1.a would better describe what is the current practice.

The term "mathematical reasoning" would replace "quantitative reasoning" at the beginning of 1.a. Faculty teaching in this core felt that "mathematical" better represents the scope of the courses that qualify as Mathematical Approaches.

Tomhave stated that this is language that is intended to better describe what Mathematical Approaches faculty are already doing. It would not open up changes in this area of the core.

Committee members asked about the process if we adopt this motion. Buescher stated that the language change would go to the Senate and then to full faculty.

Tomhave would like to get this change in the next bulletin. But he recognizes that this might not be possible and since the language doesn't make something occur that isn't already there, the change can wait until next year if necessary.

Motion passed unanimously.

Calendar Modification:

Two calendar changes were brought before the Curriculum Committee.

The first would change to 2011-2012 academic year calendar.

The suggested change would move the due date for final fall grades from January 2, 2012 to January 3, 2012 and the Probation/Dismissal meeting for Fall 2011 from January 3, 2012 to January 4, 2012. This change is necessary because January 2, 2011 is a university holiday in 2012.

Changes were M/S/P.

The second change involves a change to the guidelines to avoid the problem created in the 2011-2012 calendar. Committee members discussed a variety of ways to word the guidelines so that they might work in every case.

Some examples are:

Original suggestion (addition in italics): Fall Semester grades shall be due on the Monday immediately following the second Friday after the end of finals or January 2, *whichever is later, unless January 2 is an official university holiday.*

Fall Semester grades shall be due on the Monday immediately following the second Friday after the end of finals or January 2, *unless January 2 is an official university holiday, grades shall be due on January 3.*

Fall Semester grades shall be due on the Monday immediately following the second Friday after the end of finals or January 2. *If January 2 is an official university holiday, final grades are due the following day*

Fall Semester grades shall be due on *the first business day following the second Friday after the end of finals.*

Fall Semester grades shall be due on *the first business day following the winter recess.*

Fall Semester grades shall be due on *the first business day following January 1.*

Tom have offered to look at the possible calendar permutations of the suggestions. He will bring a suggestion to the next meeting.

Core Curriculum Discussion:

Buescher has been gathering information requested by committee members but hasn't gotten as far as far as he would like.

One issue is the definition of diversity. As was suggested, Buescher is looking at moving away from a diversity list to a statement about diversity. He is still working on gathering that information.

Buescher also has looked through faculty minutes from when the last core revision was done. The fact that the discussion spanned 8-10 years, makes this a difficult task

He hopes to have additional information by the next meeting.

Kaminsky asked if another university group is working on a definition of diversity. She suggested that the Curriculum Committee might wait for a university definition.

Stockdale ask Buescher to state again his rationale for bringing this question to the committee. Was it, Stockdale wanted to know, to give voice to something we are already doing or to mobilize faculty to do things differently.

Buescher made the following points in an impromptu manner, responding to the request for a "rousing inspirational speech."

We are living in a multicultural world and one of the university's primary tasks is to help students understand, negotiate, and be critical of, that world. He stated that a diversity core requirement is consistent with the goals of the institution.

It is important for us to think about diversity, not as a list, but to think about it as the norms and structures that are created through social interaction. Giving students critical readings on those issues is important.

Engaging questions of diversity is happening and many classes engage the questions. Many students get some exposure. It would be helpful for the university to acknowledge that work, making it at least aspirational in the core. He suspects that students can navigate their time here without exposure to that line of thinking.

Buescher is most interested in engaging questions of difference and the outcomes of difference. Our student base will be increasingly diverse and our students need greater knowledge of that world. This is not to say that such questions are not engaged on this campus.

Allen asked what kind of change does Buescher wants to see in this community? He wondered if the Curriculum Committee is the right starting point and if the timing was right.

Buescher responded that since the Curriculum Committee is charged with overseeing the curriculum, the Curriculum Committee is a natural place for this discussion to begin.

Allen suggested that this question be a charge from the Senate for next year.

Buescher will explore connections with the Diversity Committee and will raise the issue one more time this year.

Other business:

A change to the Curriculum Committee bylaws has been suggested to add a member from the library.

The process for a bylaws change was discussed as were the possible implications for the library director.

Meeting adjourned at 8:46.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Beck