

Minutes of Curriculum Committee Meeting, 4/20/11

Members Present: Derek Buescher, Roger Allen, Terry Beck, Jane Carlin, Alyce DeMarais, Kent Hooper, Tatiana Kaminsky, Alisa Kessel, Paul Loeb, Amanda Mifflin, Emelie Peine, Brad Reich, Jonathan Stockdale, Brad Tomhave, Randy Worland, and Steven Zopfi

Comments from the Chair: Buescher noted that this is the last Curriculum Committee meeting of the year. He asked working group chairs to send reports of the working groups' activities. Derek also asked for any recommended charges for the 2011-2012 Curriculum Committee. Derek will compile the end-of-year report and present it to the Faculty Senate on May 2. The Associate Deans' Office will compile the list of curricular changes for the report.

M/S/P approval of the March 2, 2011 Curriculum Committee minutes (no changes).

M/S/P approval of the March 30, 2011 Curriculum Committee minutes (no changes).

Working Group Reports

Working group 1:

African American Studies and Biology/Molecular and Cellular Biology program reviews have been postponed to 2011-2012 as has the Fine Arts Approaches rubric evaluation.

Working group 2:

M/S/P (unanimous with one abstention) to accept the Humanities Program Review, including the addition of a new Humanities Minor. Kent Hooper, Humanities Program Director, will work with Alyce DeMarais to address minor issues raised by the committee:

- 1) staffing issues, especially for HUM 200 and HUM 400
- 2) recommendation that HUM 200 be offered as a core course
- 3) assessment of humanities student learning outcomes through HUM 400
- 4) plan next steps address diversity issues
- 5) integrate digital humanities (broadly defined)

The working group questioned the initial proposal to require application to the minor; this requirement was eliminated by the Humanities Program.

The working group and committee discussed the Humanities Minor:

The working group and Kent Hooper (Humanities Director) provided some explanation of the minor provides some structure to the course offerings through two logical sequences. The minor is composed of six courses, including a gateway course (HUM 200) and a capstone course (HUM 400). The remaining four courses are taken in one of two tracks ("pre-Enlightenment" and "post-Enlightenment") with one course addressing comparative humanities. The Humanities Program intends three distinctive features: 1) "most" courses are team taught, 2) courses include an experiential component, and 3) most courses include a digital humanities component (although not everyone will "do" digital humanities).

Kent noted that the Humanities Teaching collective worked collaboratively on the review and the formation of the minor and all signed off on the review. One major concern of the collective is how we staff the minor. Most courses are already offered regularly.

Jonathan Stockdale asked if there were plans to develop a Humanities major. Kent replied that he does not want to alienate departments and programs that contribute courses and faculty members to the Humanities Program. He hopes the minor will support contributing departments (rather than "poaching" majors) and staffing is always a challenge. In addition, a minor is a good option

for students (such as science majors) who would like to have some good exposure to the humanities. Contemplating a humanities major would take a lot of discussion. Terry Beck noted that the working group was comfortable with a minor because it was well thought out and has a lot of faculty support.

Derek asked how the goals of the minor differed from other “humanities” minors such as Classics. Kent noted that the interdisciplinary approach is key, allowing for breadth and content and historical depth in a particular track. For example, a classics major may want to minor in humanities to extend their coverage and complement work done in other programs.

Derek and others wondered why HUM 200 was not a core course. Kent noted that HUM 200 was linked with the first-year seminar in humanities. Terry asked if a student could take HUM 200 after taking another humanities course. Kent replied that they could and that HUM 200 would provide breadth (“Humanities from A to Z”). Students then finish the minor with HUM 400—a theory-based course, preferably team-taught, addressing the two tracks. Alisa noted that bringing HUM 200 into the core would be a great way to bring students to the humanities minor.

Working group 3:

M/S/P to accept the Physical Education curriculum review. The working group noted that Alyce will work with the Athletics Department to more fully develop student learning outcomes and how to assess those outcomes.

Working group 4:

M/S/P to accept the Natural Scientific Approaches core review. The working group surveyed the faculty members teaching in this core area and had a (limited) discussion with the faculty members. Based on the responses, no changes to the rubric are recommended. There was some discussion about how students select their natural science core classes, especially non-science students. The working group and committee, therefore, recommend that more guidance is provided for advisors regarding the selection of natural scientific approaches core courses.

M/S/P to accept the Philosophy Department curriculum review. The working group commended the Philosophy Department for a thorough, thoughtful, and deliberate review. The department contributes substantially to the university’s curriculum, including the core—it is integral to the liberal arts curriculum. The department has developed a commendable assessment plan. The working group anticipates the department may find they need to change their senior survey to get the information they need.

Working group 5:

M/S/P to approve the modification of the Special Interdisciplinary Major “The Politics of Health Care” (Parecki). The modification involves the substitution of two classes.

Addition of the Library Director to the Curriculum Committee

In 2009-10, Library Director, Jane Carlin, requested the Curriculum Committee consider adding the Library Director (ex officio) as a member of the full committee. The rationale for this addition was to formally recognize the relationship between the library and the University's curriculum.

M/S/P amend the Faculty Bylaws and add the Library Director (ex officio). The Bylaws amendment will be brought to the full faculty in September 2011.

Core Curriculum Discussion

Derek asked about how to include our discussion of the core curriculum to the year-end report and whether we should charge next year's committee to continue this discussion. Terry thought it would be useful to charge the next committee because that would clarify the discussion. Jonathan recommended adding that the committee should open conversation with the Diversity Advisory Council and/or the faculty Diversity Committee. Tatiana noted that we struggled to define diversity and it would be helpful to ensure that all are working with the same definition.

Additional Charges

Derek asked for charges for next year's committee. Jane Carlin suggested exploring ways to incorporate information literacy more programmatically. The librarians would like to work with those departments and programs undergoing curriculum reviews on determining how they integrate information literacy into their curricula. First-year students, starting this August, will take the "introduction to research practices" tutorial prior to their arrival on campus. Students should, therefore, come into their seminars with at least an awareness of some of the standards they will be expected to hold.

M/S/P to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by Alyce DeMarais.