

Curriculum Committee
Minutes
September 16, 2013

Members Present: Rich Anderson-Connolly, Bill Beardsley, Luc Boisvert, Gwynne Brown, Jane Carlin (Library Director), Jim Evans, Lisa Ferrari (Associate Dean), Lisa Johnson (Chair), Alan Krause, Paul Loeb, Julia Looper, Janet Marcavage, Brett Rogers, Brad Tomhave (Registrar), Lisa Tucker (student), Mike Spivey

1. Call to Order :

The meeting was called to order by its chair at 4:03

2. Remarks from the Chair:

The Chair will attempt to locate a suitable room that is available for meetings on a regular basis.

3. Minutes of September 9, 2013:

M/S/P: Approve the minutes of 9/9/2013 as read.

4. Ferrari distributed and discussed the working group assignments (attached).

5. Consideration of the document "Functions of the Associate Dean's Office in Curricular Matters" (attached).

Motion: To strike the section titled "Delegated Actions #4" dealing with petition referrals from the Academic Standards Committee.

The motion died for lack of a second.

M/S/P (Ferrari abstaining): To amend the section ("delegated actions #4) by replacing the phrase "petition matters" with the phrase "individual petitions" and by adding the sentence "Policy matters should still be referred to the Committee" to the end of the section.

6. Consideration of the document "Knowledge, Power and Identity Rubric"

After some discussion of the scope of Committee responsibilities in this matter

M/S/F: To table discussion of the rubric until such time as the matter is officially referred to the Committee through a charge from the Senate.

The discussion that ensued was conducted under the general understanding that the Committee was not “vetting” the document but merely raising questions and offering suggestions that might provide guidance to the working group as they present the proposal to the faculty.

- Some members wondered whether this proposal was truly an “overlay” or whether it might in fact constitute an “additional course requirement,” especially for students of science.
 - Some praised the working group for the openness of their procedures and for the flexibility of the proposal. They suggested that this proposal, in part by sharing responsibilities among many Departments, did much to avoid the feel of “indoctrination” that plagues many similar programs offered at other institutions. They also praised the working group for its work in refining the language of the guidelines.
 - Others suggested that the proposal was still overly “ideological” and was still too “narrow” and “restrictive” in its requirements regarding both course content and pedagogy. They saw the possibility of a more open and general requirement.
 - Some wondered whether the “ideological” appearance of the requirement might have a negative impact on enrollment.
 - Some wondered whether training in facilitating discussions of identity and difference would be necessary for faculty teaching in the program and others suggested that such training is of great value.
 - This lead others to remark that implementing the overlay would require a much greater commitment of curricular, fiscal and faculty resources than is being acknowledged. Some went on to wonder about the extent to which adding the overlay would “distort” the curriculum.
 - Others raised more technical questions regarding implementation (What would happen if there are two regular sections of the same course and one instructor wished it to count for the overlay and other didn’t?)
 - Some members worried that requiring students in these courses to publicly “locate their own social position” might impinge upon their right to privacy, particularly in matters regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.
 - Others complained about the focus on the United States (“US-centrism”) while still others suggested that this did not worry them.
7. Other business:

Johnson reminded the Committee that the minutes of May 2, 2013 were approved via email on May 20, 2013.

8. M/S/P: To adjourn at 4:55
9. The Committee will reconvene at 4:00 pm on September 30 in a room to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,

William H. Beardsley