

# Curriculum Committee Minutes

October 22, 2014

**Committee members attending:** Richard Anderson-Connolly, Bill Beardsley, Luc Boisvert, Nancy Bristow, Gwynne Brown, Lisa Ferrari, Sara Freeman, Nick Kontogeorgopoulos, Tim Pogar, Elise Richman, Brad Tomhave

**Also attending:** Lisa Hutchinson

Meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m.

## 1) Remarks from the Chair

Freeman spoke to Faculty Senate liaison Jonathan Stockdale about the charge regarding interdisciplinary minors and emphases. He noted that this charge was given because the Curriculum Committee has run into questions about this and asked for the charge. Our conclusions are for our own uses, not for the enjoyment of the Senate (although the Senate supports our efforts to differentiate the two). The CC is interested in the distinction because we want to evaluate existing program reviews, programs for future minors and emphases, and have a clear sense of how the CC should deal with such programs.

Knowing that this is for our own purposes, we have the option, but not an obligation, to create a document for our own records and future use. We could choose to enact a particular policy to guide programs that may be developed in the future. Freeman will continue following up and the CC will have more discussion.

2) **M/S/P** to approve the voluminous minutes from the 10/10/14 CC meeting.

## 3) WG Reports

**WG1:** Bristow reported a productive meeting.

M/S/P to approve Classics 310, Theories of Myth (Brett Rogers), for the KNOW requirement. The exemplary proposal is both thorough and brief: only a couple of pages long.

M/S/P (1 abstention) to approve IPE 311, Political Economy of International Development (Nick Kontogeorgopoulos), for the KNOW requirement. It's another succinct and excellent proposal, and another obvious fit for KNOW.

Bristow reported that WG1 also looked at 2 Special Interdisciplinary Majors. In both cases, the students had been thorough but the WG had some concerns. A letter addressing these will soon be sent to the students and their advisors. Bristow sought and received clarification that such letters need not be shared with the CC chair.

## WG2

Kontogeorgopoulos reported that the WG met last week and discussed the upper division graduation requirement, because there was a request from the Registrar's Office to communicate to departments to clarify whether their 200-level courses should count or not. The WG also discussed departments' ability to opt out. The WG got info over Fall Break from Tomhave, and will keep talking about this and will have a motion at the next CC meeting.

Kontogeorgopoulos will go to WG4's meeting next week to learn about their work on the curricular impact statement.

Most of the WG's meeting was spent on the charge to review the entire core, a charge carried over from last year. WG members reviewed the most recent reviews of core areas to identify patterns, and discovered much variation. The reports don't generally assess a core category's objectives and whether they are being met. The CC could talk about guidelines for this. The WG also discovered that survey response rates and attendance at focus group meetings are very low. Doing them during the fall semester instead of spring might help.

The charge to review the entire core is potentially overwhelming, but the minutes from a 2003 CC meeting offered guidance: rather than focusing on design, these 5-year whole-core reviews should examine the overall coherence and appropriateness of the core categories. This seems manageable. The WG will revise a survey developed by Alan Krause last year. This could sow the seeds for tinkering or wholesale reconfiguration of the core; it has been 10 years, so maybe it's time. Such an endeavor could start next year. Or not.

Connolly commented that he liked this broad scope, and looked forward to conversations about the core as a whole. He expressed qualms about the SSI courses, and suggested that history and global perspectives might be considered for addition to the core.

Kontogeorgopoulos said that this year's WG will collect such opinions and ideas, which a future CC could carry forward. The current core was created through a faculty-driven process, and a large-scale revision could be approached similarly. WG2 wants to avoid taking on too much.

Freeman noted that Priti Joshi and Alisa Kessel set up a series of conversations about the core at the Faculty Club two years ago, have done a lot of thinking about it, and would undoubtedly be worth contacting for ideas.

Beardsley commented that previous surveys were aimed at departments, whereas making contact with individuals is likely to yield more worthwhile results. The process of data-gathering will be as stimulating for the faculty as any report the WG could generate.

Bristow noted that faculty are keen to talk about the core, and that in many discussions leading up to the approval of the new KNOW requirement, faculty were asking why the core wasn't being considered more holistically.

Kontogeorgopoulos said that last year's WG with this charge compiled a heap of information. WG2 is going to work hard to avoid mission creep and stick to examining the current core's overall coherence and appropriateness.

### **WG3**

Boisvert reported that WG3 met last Friday and had every bit as good a meeting as WGs 1 and 2.

M/S/P (1 abstention) to approve IPE 201, Introduction to International Political Economy (Nick Kontogeorgopoulos), as fulfilling the KNOW requirement. This course is already in the Social Scientific core.

M/S/P to approve HUM 288, The Ideas of the Bible (Florence Sandler) for the HUM core. This course overlaps somewhat with other courses, but has a unique scope in that it covers the whole Biblical corpus.

M/S/P to approve CONN 375, Exploring Animal Minds (Erin Colbert-White) as a new CONN course. It is impressively interdisciplinary, including philosophy, neuroscience, psychology, and law and ethics.

M/S/P (1 abstention) to approve CONN 370, Rome: Sketchbook and Space (Elise Richman), as a new CONN course. This culminates in three weeks in Rome.

Boisvert asked for clarification of the jurisdiction of the CC vs. the International Programs Committee (IEC) over such cases. It was explained that it is up to the instructor to work with Roy Robinson to plan and handle logistics. The IEC does not vet courses that include international travel as a supplementary component; it is only involved with the logistics. Courses taught by Kontogeorgopoulos and Gareth Barkin, by Rachel DeMotts, and by John Lear and Don Share were brought up as examples. Richman commented that she has been working with Robinson for over a year on logistics.

### **WG4**

Ferrari reported that thanks to Freeman's hard work, WG4 is now ready to start discussing the curricular impact statement at the upcoming meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Once this is done, the WG will be ready to work on the Biochemistry and Theater Arts reviews.

#### **4) Delegated Actions**

Ferrari passed out a list of 29 actions taken by the Associate Deans Office (ADO) on behalf of the CC between 7/1/14 and 10/17/14. Of these 12 were approvals of new courses, 3 were courses removed from the curriculum, and the others involved approving assorted changes such as title, number, description, or prerequisites.

In discussion, members agreed that such an overview of ADO actions on behalf of the CC, provided monthly as an e-mail attachment and summarized by Ferrari at the second meeting of each month, would be welcomed. CC members can ask questions as needed. These overviews will be added monthly to the Archived Curriculum Reports folder on SoundNet. The actions of the CC will continue to be listed, separately, in the Curriculum Action Report that comes out at the end of each semester. Hutchinson is also keeping a separate list of approved KNOW courses

Based on the handout, a member inquired why Japanimals was removed from ASIA cross-listing, and Ferrari explained that it was because of miscommunication that it was cross-listed in the first place.

- 5) **Discussion** of how to ameliorate the annual SSI-approval time-crunch will happen at the next meeting, when members of WG4 are present.
- 6) **Feedback** on Robin Jacobson's proposal (under construction) to create a package of classes in P&G that would facilitate student participation in the Washington Legislative Policy Internship.

Freeman presented the proposal under development, which will be proposed formally later. In discussion:

- Member expressed support for the idea of enabling students to do this internship without having to put their academic progress on hold.
- Member expressed concern about the logistics of students commuting back and forth between Tacoma (for coursework) and Olympia (for internship).
- Members wondered about the academic heft of the internship itself, and about how an associated seminar would integrate with the internship experience.

Freeman will circulate Jacobson's 2-page description and get further feedback from CC members.

## **7) Collaboration between CC and Committee on Diversity (COD)**

Freeman has met with George Tomlin, chair of the COD, to discuss mutual interest in KNOW requirement and proposals, and in things we learn in departments' and programs' self-studies from Question 6. This question has been changed several times, most recently last spring. Freeman and Tomlin discussed the possibility of separating out the answers to the different versions of the question that have been asked over the past three years (after letting the involved department/program chairs know that this is being done) and making these available to the CC and COD, in the interests of finding out whether the different questions prompt different kinds of answers.

In discussion:

- Member expressed concern about setting a precedent for other committees to be overly involved in CC business.
- Member noted that the CC meeting with three members of the COD last spring was quite heated, and in concluding that meeting there was agreement that continued communication would be desirable.
- Member opined that collecting this kind of information would not be problematic, as long as chairs were notified.
- Member said that a Question 6 fishing expedition, especially with no particular question in mind, would not be a worthwhile use of time. The CC has enough work to do; diversity is the COD's territory, and if they want to look at the Question 6 answers and share their thoughts about it, that would be fine.

Freeman said that she was happy to meet with and talk to Tomlin, and that making Question 6 answers available to the COD is a reasonable first step; these are the CC's materials and we have the right to be involved in conversations about them.

The next CC meeting will occur on **November 5 at 8 a.m.**

M/S/P to adjourn at 9:01 a.m.

Submitted by Gwynne Brown