

Curriculum Committee

Minutes of the September 14, 2018 Meeting

Present: Bill Barry, Peggy Burge, Alva Butcher, Kathleen R Campbell, Julie Christoph, Regina Duthely, Nick Gerard, Kent Hooper, Nate Jacobi, Julia Looper, Gary McCall, Holly Roberts, Doug Sackman, Leslie Saucedo, Jeff Tepper, Courtney Thatcher, Finn Secrist.

The meeting was called to order at 12:04.

Agenda Item 1: The September 7 Minutes were approved without amendment.

Agenda Item 2: Discussion of working group model.

Christoph and Saucedo introduced the model of working groups used last year: "The assignment of Senate Charges and Core Reviews into working groups would follow the model of a steering committee that would get input from/report back to the entire CC throughout the year until completed. Department/Program reviews will be assigned as they come in and distributed such that total workload across working groups is equitable" (From the 9/14 agenda).

There was general agreement among veterans of the CC that this had been an effective and efficient model for accomplishing the committee's work last year. By locating more detailed discussion and analysis in the working group, it spared the time and energy of the CC as a whole. By having the working groups regularly report back to the committee, this model ensured that the CC was kept informed of progress of reviews and charges. It was also noted that the working groups were able to conduct much of their work via email. Sackman moved approval of this model for the coming year and the motion was passed.

Agenda Item 3: Proposal of process for integrating CC feedback into regular departmental reviews and annual reports.

Saucedo and Christoph introduced the issue. There currently is no mechanism to determine whether feedback and recommendations from the CC are being integrated into departmental decision-making processes for developing curriculum between reviews. How could the CC help to close the feedback loop?

A wide-ranging discussion followed. Concerns were raised about whether chairs would remember goals of their last review (when they were not chairs). It was generally agreed that simply sending a department its previous review the year it was to conduct its next review would not permit enough time for curricular reform to be significantly influenced by CC recommendations from the last review.

Other suggestions were floated. Perhaps the Provost could ask chairs to provide annual updates on curricular developments as they relate to the CC recommendations from the prior review.

These updates could be made a part of the annual report on assessment that chairs are required to submit at the end of each academic year. Alternatively, such an update could occur perhaps only in the third year after the last curriculum review. Or, perhaps we could make the curriculum review a two-year process, with year one consisting of the review and CC response and year two consisting of follow-up. Or perhaps not make the follow-up a requirement of all departments but only of those who anticipated significant curricular changes in the wake of their curriculum review. External reviews were also discussed, and were generally felt to be very valuable, but costly. It was also noted that the faculty had declared itself in strong support of reducing the burden of curriculum reviews by moving from a five- to a seven-year rotation, and thus might not be supportive of midterm checks on progress towards curricular revisions based on the last review.

A consensus appeared to emerge around a “reminder” approach. The Associate Dean would periodically remind chairs to include the CC’s response to their previous review in any upcoming departmental discussions of curriculum. She would also send with that reminder a copy of the Committee’s response to the department’s prior review. The Provost at chairs meetings could also periodically send and reinforce the same message.

Agenda Item 4: Request for integration of CC members into Wednesday at 4 planning group and SSI faculty group. (Julie Christoph)

Julia Looper agreed to be the CC representative for the Wednesday at 4 Planning Group. Regina Duthely agreed to be the CC representative on SSI Faculty Group.

Agenda Item 5: Discussion of task for next week: reviewing and updating the Introduction to the Curriculum Committee and the Functions of the Associate Deans Office in Curricular Matters documents. With minutes remaining, Christoph gave a brief preview of the task for next week, among other things the delegation to the Associate Dean of limited authority, with CC supervision, to approve certain types of courses.

The committee adjourned at 12:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Barry