

Curriculum Committee Minutes April 21, 1999

Present: Barnett, Cannon, Goleeke, Grunberg, Hooper, Livingston, Mehlhaff (Chair), Pinzino, Proehl, Stevens, Warning, Washburn

Absent: Kirkpatrick, Kline, Sugimoto, Bartanen, Tomhave, Heavner

Mehlhaff began the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

Minutes. Warning M/S/P to approve the minutes for the meeting of 14 April 1999 as posted.

Announcements

1. Mehlhaff said that next week's meeting, on 28 April, might be the last meeting of the year *unless* some "awful event" prevents our meeting on that day; not meeting on 28 April would necessitate a meeting on 5 May.
2. Mehlhaff pointed out that in considering the committee's charges for next year we should keep in mind the current faculty discussion of the core curriculum. The results of faculty deliberation could affect the committee's planned review in 1999-2000 of all courses currently in the core. Washburn added that the committee would need direction from the Faculty Senate in this matter. Proehl commented that instead of reviewing the current core we might be writing guidelines for the new core. Barnett offered the thought that the committee might not necessarily be the group responsible for new guidelines; original guidelines for the current core were the work of *ad hoc* task forces working with a fast deadline.

Subcommittees

CLASSICS. Proehl said that the subcommittee is not yet ready to report because of the need to review new information submitted by the chair of the Classics Program. The subcommittee looks favorably on the proposal and can provide materials for the committee next week.

SCIENCE IN CONTEXT. Stevens distributed a document about SCXT 325E – Science and Policy: Hormonal Mimics in the Environment, proposed by Heather Douglas and Alexa Tullis and pre-reviewed by the SCXT Advisory Committee. Stevens characterized the proposal as a "well-organized, well-presented course plan"; the course, to be offered in spring 2000, will explore chemicals in the environment and their effects on living organisms.

ACTION: Stevens M/S/P that SCXT 325E – Science and Policy: Hormonal Mimics in the Environment be accepted for the Science in Context core.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR. Pinzino reported that subcommittee members met to consider the results of informal polling of their own departments and to recommend a formal survey of the faculty. The objective would not be a specific proposal for calendar change but information-gathering to determine concerns about the current calendar. The draft survey drawn up by the subcommittee points out three issues, all connected with the fall semester: (1) More class days after the Thanksgiving break, (2) a longer fall break, and (3) whether Wednesday of Thanksgiving week should be part of the Thanksgiving break. Pinzino pointed out constraints on changing the fall calendar, namely, the need to maintain a certain number of class days as required by accreditation and the apparent desire of the faculty in general to avoid shortening the summer by starting the fall semester earlier. Pinzino asked for advice on the phrasing of the questions on the proposed poll (distributed to the committee by email prior to the meeting) and when to issue the poll to all faculty.

Hooper, a member of the subcommittee, favors a switch to a quarter system but said that no one he consulted in an informal poll seems interested in this possibility. Pinzino agreed that a quarter system is not a general faculty interest and stated that the subcommittee decided not to include it among questions on the proposed poll. Goleeke offered a creative solution: "A *fall quarter* and a

spring semester. Stevens said that his informal poll of departmental colleagues indicated “very lukewarm” interest if any interest at all in changing the calendar. Hooper and Stevens both found in informal surveys that although faculty members have concerns about calendar issues any interest in changing the calendar disappears upon consideration of the “price” involved in any change (for example, an earlier start of the fall term).

Further discussion concentrated on whether the poll of the faculty should occur now or in the fall. Done now, the survey could inform our consideration of the guidelines for the academic calendar early in the fall (Washburn) and also would precede a similar survey of students (Livingston). Goleeke suggested doing the poll in the fall, between the fall break and Thanksgiving [the part of the semester when concerns about the calendar came out last fall]. Hooper countered that this timing might not give us a full picture of whether colleagues really would be willing to pay the “price” of calendar adjustments. Hooper’s offer to tabulate the results of the poll helped lead to the decision to do the poll now (in fact, right away).

ACTION: Stevens M/S/P to do the calendar poll by paper ballot to be returned to Mehlhaff.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE CHARGES FOR 1999-2000. The focus of preliminary discussion of charges for next year was whether or not to send out the memorandum to all faculty members teaching in the core curriculum requesting course materials for the scheduled core review. The committee previously decided to send this memorandum late this spring (minutes, 3 March 1999), but the movement of the faculty toward a revised core prompts reconsideration of this timing. The committee seemed to reach an informal consensus to delay the request for materials for a review of the current core curriculum.

At 6:00 p.m. Stevens M/S/P that we adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne W. Barnett
22 April 1999