

Curriculum Committee Minutes September 30, 1998

Present: Barnett, Bruce, Cannon, Goleeke, Hooper, Kirkpatrick, Kline, Livingston, Mehlhaff (Chair), Pinzino, Proehl, Stevens, Sugimoto, Warning, Heavner, Bartanen, Tomhave, Washburn
Absent: Grunberg

At 5:06 p.m. Mehlhaff called the meeting to order.

Minutes. **Kline M/S/P to approve the minutes for the meeting of 23 September 1998 with correction to show reference to the "1997-98" minutes in the section on "core curriculum assessment."**

Approval of core courses during the summer. Mehlhaff checked with Bill Haltom, Faculty Senate Chair, who affirmed the addition of a fourth charge to the committee for 1998-99: "Study ways in which to approve provisionally courses for the core during the summer."

Academic calendar. Washburn distributed three documents: (1) "Guidelines for Setting Academic Calendar," (2) "Basic Academic Calendars" through 2002-2003, and (3) "Academic Calendar 1999-2000." The committee's considerations of documents (2) and (3) at this meeting are "first readings" to be followed at a subsequent meeting by votes of approval for the basic calendar for 2002-2003 and the filled-in calendar for 1999-2000.

Washburn explained that setting the academic calendar is the work of this committee, which each year submits a filled-in calendar for the next academic year and the basic calendar for the third year thereafter to the Faculty Senate for ratification. If the Faculty Senate does not like the committee's recommendations, the Senate will send them back to the committee for reconsideration and re-submission.

In preliminary discussion of the documents Stevens raised the question of whether the winter break needs to be so long, and Hooper pointed to the difficult timing of the Thanksgiving break, which leaves very little class time afterward. Hooper suggested alternative scheduling, including the possibility of ending the semester prior to Thanksgiving or the possibility of ending classes beforehand and instituting a longer Reading Period after the break. Washburn explained the circumstances of the fall semester, which actually is 3 days short of the spring semester, and suggested that we can cut no more time from the fall. An earlier end of term could mean starting classes in the second week of August; shortening the semester would threaten the value of the unit, about which Registrar John Finney would have concern.

Subcommittees. Mehlhaff stated that the committee has more time than originally expected to consider proposals of new core courses planned for Spring 1999.

MATHEMATICAL REASONING. For the subcommittee Warning reported approval of a proposed course for Spring 1999 after satisfactory resolution of one question addressed to the proposer, Doug Cannon (who left the room and was not present during the committee's deliberation of the proposal).

ACTION: Warning M/S/P that we approve the Mathematical Reasoning course Philosophy 108: Infinity and Paradox (a freshman seminar in Mathematical Reasoning).

In discussion Barnett asked if as a "freshman seminar" the course could count toward the major in Philosophy, and Stevens pointed out that no 100-level course in Philosophy counts toward the major. Other members of the committee also raised questions about the "freshmen seminar" designation; in particular, Tomhave said that keeping non-freshmen out of such a course in the

spring term would be difficult. Barnett pointed out that this may not be a problem, for it is the current situation regarding freshman seminars in writing and other freshman seminars and yet seems to have engendered no difficulty. Washburn said that as the faculty as a whole talks about the freshman-year curriculum we will have to deal with the matter of freshman seminars as *only* for freshmen; this will come along in due course. Bartanen reported that last year two non-freshmen signed up for non-English 101 freshman-writing Communication I courses; Jack Roundy contacted the students, and they enrolled in other courses in that core. The issue is the possibility of a change in the nature of the course if upper level students join first-year students.

HUMANISTIC PERSPECTIVE. For the subcommittee Goleeke introduced a proposal from David Lupher for Spring 1999.

ACTION: Goleeke M/S/P to approve Classics 210 - Greek Mythology for inclusion in the core under Humanistic Perspective.

In discussion Tomhave expressed concern about whether the course meets the expectations of the HU guidelines with reference to consideration of the nature of human existence, to which subcommittee members replied in the affirmative. Tomhave explained that approval of this course for the core could have an impact on the core status of "mythology" courses as transfer units. Mehlhaff suggested that this course could set the standard in judging such transfer courses for the HU core.

Goleeke pointed out that Classics 210 is not a new course, but is newly proposed for the HU core. Because the course is currently being taught, committee members raised the question of whether retroactive core credit will apply. To clarify, Bartanen M/S/Withdrawn to table consideration of this course until we learn whether in fact it is to be offered in Spring 1999 and, if not, to withhold approval until the spring. Committee members agreed with the established principle that retroactive core credit will *not* apply.

Core curriculum assessment. Mehlhaff would like the core-assessment subcommittees again to meet, with the end goal that the chair of each subcommittee would bring to the full committee a recommendation regarding the pilot project as a valid tool for core assessment in the future. The chair would present a proposal for the committee to make as a recommendation to the RASCAL committee and the Faculty Senate. Mehlhaff stressed the expectation that subcommittees, not the full committee, would write the recommendations. Time is available at the next meeting for renewed meetings of the core-assessment subcommittees. Washburn suggested that in reviewing the pilot project each subcommittee should ask if this data is useful and if the process is valid for estimating "student outcomes." The task before the committee is to recommend a *process*.

At 5:58 p.m. Stevens M/S/P that we adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne W. Barnett
1 October 1998