

**Curriculum Committee Minutes
March 5, 1998**

Present: Barnett, Bruce, Cannon, Fikes, Goleeke, Hooper, Kline (Chair), Lupher, Mehlhaff, Neshyba, Proehl, Bartanen, Washburn, Morgan
Absent: R. Fields, Ralls

At 1:08 p.m. Kline called the meeting to order.

Minutes. **Cannon M/S/P approval of the minutes for the meeting of 26 February 1998 with the following addendum:**

It is the practice of the Curriculum Committee to grant permanent or ongoing approval of new courses submitted during a year in which a department is undergoing its five-year review as part of the approval of the five-year review report. Consequently, the motions reported in the 26 February 1998 minutes regarding Religion 111 and 204 for Historical Perspective core status and Religion 112 for Society core status and the motion to bring Religion 108, 112, 204, 207, 335, and 455 into the University curriculum need to be limited by the following language: "Approval is for fall 1998 only; affirmation for ongoing status will occur at the time of approval of the Religion Department curricular review package."

Bartanen proposed the addendum; Cannon (and Goleeke) accepted it as part of the motion to approve the minutes.

Hewlett proposal. Bartanen reminded the committee of the open discussion to occur at the Faculty Club on 6 March with regard to the University's opportunity to apply for a Hewlett Foundation "Pluralism and Unity" grant to support the intellectual components of the "theme years" program.

Subcommittees:

ACCREDITATION REVIEW OF THE CORE CURRICULUM. Kline reported that just after the spring break the subcommittee will report and present an "action plan" toward an ongoing plan for demonstrating students' understanding of the core. In response to inquiry, Kline said that the committee is responsible to the Faculty Senate, who assigned us the task of reviewing the core, and also to RASCAL (the reaccreditation steering committee) group II.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE. Bruce reported that the department has been working hard on the five-year review and also has new faculty and a search in progress. Michel Rocchi, Chair, expressed the hope to have the review in by or on 15 May 1998. In effect, this is a request for a postponement of the review until next year.

ACTION: Cannon M/S/P that we postpone the Foreign Languages and Literature review until fall 1998 with the expectation that we will receive the report in mid-May 1998.

SPECIAL INTERDISCIPLINARY MAJOR (SIM). Kline reported that the subcommittee has met to consider a proposal and will move this ahead "shortly," after clearing up some matters.

Departmental Curriculum Self-Study document. Bartanen proposed revisions in the document used by departments in preparing five-year review reports and distributed copies of the document showing suggested changes; the document is for action at the meeting of 12 March. Bartanen explained her effort as working toward a document at the departmental-review level that also meets what is expected for reaccreditation purposes; she drafted some language that could be incorporated in the self-study guide and would suit expectations of the NASC (Northwest

Association of Schools and Colleges). Bartanen said that she shared the language suggestions with RASCAL, whose members thought the self-study document thus revised to be a good idea and suggested some additional language.

Bartanen added that revising the self-study guide for accreditation purposes offers the opportunity to make some points more clear. We also can consider whether, for example, we want syllabi for *all* sections of a course such as Calculus.

Introducing the issue of whether the document should be more explicit in demanding an account of the *results* of ongoing assessment, Fikes offered the view that the proposed revision may not include "outcome assessment" as a consideration, although it does call for explanation of "instruments" of assessment; we would be showing the availability of instruments but not data gathered from assessment. Mehlhaff stated that under "Review Questions" the proposed revision *does* ask for "evidence gained from ongoing assessment efforts," but Cannon pointed out that such evidence is mentioned in a list of items that the report *might* include." Proehl noted an apparent redundancy of proposed item (D) in the list of the parts of the departmental report and proposed review question #10. Bartanen affirmed that the NASC wants us to be conscious of the assessment process and to be *using* results of that process.

Approval of core courses by the Associate Dean during the summer months. After discussion at this meeting in continuation of discussions at the meetings of 29 January and 19 February 1998, the committee by consensus declined to take action on the proposal to add, effective 1998, the following to the list of "Delegated Actions" the Curriculum Committee provides to the Associate Dean: "approval during the summer months when the Curriculum Committee is not in session, for one-semester only, new courses proposed for Core" (Bartanen to Curriculum Committee, 26 January 1998).

In opening the discussion Kline put to the committee that the issue is the need for a contingency for approval of core courses in the summer months and pointed out that no provision for *preventing* "late approvals" is in place. Several committee members affirmed that the committee has no requirement to meet in the summer; if the committee does not meet, then "by default" we already have a "policy" for late submissions of core course proposals (Barnett, Mehlhaff, Fikes). Morgan, Kline, and Cannon explored prospects for assembling some committee members in the summer and approving core courses on a "one-time-only" basis.

In response to Lupher's call for clarification of the problem that prompted the proposal, Bartanen noted the occurrence of instances in which continuing faculty had fall courses with pre-enrollment of only one or two students; one "solution" to the low enrollment, especially for a course available to incoming freshmen, would be to make the course "core." Another situation would be if we need additional courses in an existing core area because of anticipation of students likely to enroll in that core area. Also in a couple of cases incoming new faculty with low enrollment in a new course might have made the course viable by making it a core course. Bartanen added that the University would be better served by turning to full-time faculty for new core courses than by hiring adjunct faculty to teach existing core courses. In all, only two or three courses were likely candidates for core proposal last summer.

Barnett expressed concern that the "one-time-only" designation would be difficult to un-do, that incoming new faculty will assume getting a course into the core to be easy, and that the core curriculum will weaken if courses enter the core too easily. Neshyba asked why incoming faculty could not teach existing core courses. Goleeke called attention to the importance of consultation between faculty members on the Curriculum Committee and proposers of core courses as part of the approval process, and he said that new faculty members whose courses recently have been approved had not realized earlier how serious the core is.

Bartanen observed that the committee does not seem to wish to extend the Associate Dean's role to include summer approval of core courses. Mehlhaff said that one of the good points of our

procedures is that while we rely on subcommittees we require discussion of proposals by the whole committee; the proposed provision would by-pass the full-committee deliberation, and a skeleton committee in the summer would not suffice. Hooper said he would be comfortable with a summer skeleton committee, but this seemed to be a minority view.

Bartanen expressed an apparent consensus: We should do more work to match faculty with existing core courses.

The committee adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne W. Barnett
7 March 1998

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