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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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9-16-2013

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## **UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

### **2013-14 MEETING #1 Minutes**

**September 16, 2013, 1:00 p.m., MFR**

*Members Present:* Bart Finzel (chair), Joe Alia, Donna Chollett, Mark Collier, Carol Cook, Pilar Eble, Eric Gandrud, Pieranna Garavaso, Sara Haugen, Zach Johnson, Leslie Meek, Peh Ng, Jeri Squier, and Emily Sunderman

*Members Absent:* Clare Dingley, Mitchell Moe, Gwen Rudney

*Visitors:* Nancy Helsper, Judy Korn, Kellie Meehlhause

*In these minutes: Introductions and discussion of the committee's charge and process, recap of 2012-13 academic year, UMM Action Plan from AAC&U General Education Institute, topics for academic year 2013-14, EDP timeline, directed study requests for Gen Ed designators, and course changes in Education, the Humanities, and the Social Sciences.*

### **Announcements**

Finzel welcomed the members of the committee, asked members to introduce themselves, shared the committee's charge as defined by the campus bylaws, and stated that the committee has a busy year ahead. This is not a catalog year. Last year (a catalog year) the committee met regularly and acted on an enormous amount of material related to catalog changes. This year the committee will have a chance to be a bit more deliberate and think strategically. Meetings will be held monthly in fall semester. Some members may be asked to work outside the committee and bring work back to the committee for discussion and action.

### **Approval of Minutes – April 30, 2013**

MOTION (Ng/Cook) to approve the April 30, 2013 minutes. Minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote, with one revision.

### **Recap of 2012-13 Curriculum Committee Accomplishments**

Finzel stated that hundreds of curricular changes were reviewed last year, with submissions from all academic divisions. Notable changes included the adoption of the WLA general education requirement. A request was also put out to all disciplines asking them to look hard at 4000-level courses for redundant or unnecessary Gen Eds. They were asked to submit proposals to remove Gen Ed designators from those courses. The timeline for the Educational Development Program (EDP), where the Dean's Office has some funds available to guide curricular development in areas important to campus priorities, was moved to the fall. The EDP priorities last year were 1)

courses that integrate sustainability across the liberal arts; 2) intellectual community (IC) courses; and 3) innovative “hybrid” courses. Courses that address a significant need within the curriculum or that will benefit large numbers of students were also considered. The priorities will be revisited each fall before the call for proposals goes out. Disciplines that have completed the academic program review process are given the opportunity to meet with the committee, and in 2012-13, three academic programs reported to the committee (history, physics, and sociology). There was a preliminary discussion of the prior learning credit. The committee recommended that a proposal from the Dean’s Office come back to the committee this year. A team of people from UMM (Joe Alia, Ted Pappenfus, Tisha Turk, Wes Flynn, Bart Finzel, and Nancy Helsper) attended the AAC&U Institute on General Education & Assessment in June. They came back with a timeline and report which was distributed to the committee. Pappenfus, chair of the Assessment of Student Learning Committee (ASLC), met with the Curriculum Committee to report on ASLC plans and discuss what the two committees can do to help facilitate the assessment of Gen Ed.

### **UMM Action Plan from the AAC&U Institute on General Education & Assessment**

Finzel brought a couple of items from the UMM Action Plan to the committee’s attention. He has asked division chairs to encourage disciplines to streamline Gen Ed by reducing the number of upper division courses with Gen Ed designators. It is difficult to assess a curriculum where everything has a Gen Ed designator. The goal is a more manageable number of samples to assess, and he hopes to see course changes coming forward as fall unfolds. New course proposal forms will be revised to provide information regarding assessment and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). The Higher Learning Commission has asked UMM to assess whether students are learning our SLOs. It would be helpful to know which courses address those outcomes. Another plan is to work with the Advising Office in informing students about the SLOs.

### **Topics for Academic Year 2013-14**

The Action Plan from the Gen Ed Institute will be addressed at the October meeting. The Educational Development Program (EDP) will be addressed at that meeting as well. Priorities for EDP funding will be determined, and a subcommittee will be formed. The ASLC has requested a document that recaps the initiatives that this institution has taken over the last decade or so, including: the change from First Year Seminar (FYS) to Intellectual Community (IC); the move to change the college writing requirement to Writing for the Liberal Arts (WLA); and campus-wide forums on the state of general education held in 2011, which resulted in a discussion of what was working and what wasn’t working. Darla will gather that information in order to generate a succinct report on what was done, when, and why. That will be shared at the end of this semester or early spring semester. That report will begin the Gen Ed discussion that will dominate spring semester meetings. The committee will continue to hear reports from

disciplines that have completed their academic program reviews. If anyone has agenda items in mind, they should let Finzel know.

### **Educational Development Program (EDP) Timeline**

Finzel reported that the deadline will be November 25. That is the Monday before Thanksgiving. The subcommittee will present their recommendations to the committee at the December 9 meeting of the committee.

### **Directed Study Requests for General Education Designators**

Two directed study requests for Gen Ed designators were considered. The first was an IS 3993 course with a request for the HUM Gen Ed designator. The second was an Engl 3993 course requesting the Artistic Performance-Skills for the Liberal Arts (ArtP) Gen Ed designator.

Finzel asked Squier to explain the history of the approval process of Gen Ed designators on directed study courses. Squier explained that some years ago they were submitted to the Scholastic Committee, after-the-fact. The task was moved to the Curriculum Committee in an effort to have a student get approval before they got too far into the directed study.

Collier commented that the first directed study seemed to have a narrow focus for an IS course. Alia stated that, as with upper level courses with Gen Eds, more advanced and narrowly-focused courses should not have Gen Eds. In this case, however, in terms of narrowly focused, it sounds like this directed study might address a piece of the student's education that is giving it a different perspective.

**MOTION** (Meek/Garavaso) to approve the two requests for Gen Ed designators on directed studies.

The motion passed unanimously (12-0-0)

### **Course Changes**

#### **Division of the Humanities Course Changes**

##### **English**

Garavaso explained the request to remove the 1601 (WLA) prereq from seventeen 2000-level courses. The English faculty brought forward this proposal last year and it wasn't moved on because it wasn't clear the consequences were fully understood. With 1601 a prereq for all English courses, no students can register for 2000-level courses. Pilar Eble asked if they wanted someone to come in without any college writing background and register for a 2000-level English course. Collier agreed that it struck him as odd that although students cannot opt out of the WLA Gen Ed requirement, they can take a 2000-level course without having taken 1601. This is inconsistent. Garavaso explained that everyone will take 1601, but not allowing anyone to take a 2000-level course caused low enrollment in those courses this fall. Eble stressed that allowing students to register for a 2000-level course without the prereq would set them up for failure. Judy Korn asked if the 1601 prereq is being enforced. Squier noted that the prereq of 1011 was never enforced because there were so many exceptions. They aren't enforcing 1601 because it hadn't been offered yet. Ng stated that the enrollment issue may be caused by something other than the prereq. Zach Johnson asked if the students coming in under the current catalog who have had college writing are being told that it doesn't count. Eble explained that it will count as credit toward graduation, but it doesn't exempt the student from the WLA Gen Ed requirement.

Garavaso stated that the requested change was proposed because there is also a concern that students will not be able to start the major in the fall. Eble stated that most advisers would advise students to take 1601 in the fall and a 2000-level course in the spring. Meek agreed that it would make sense to do so. Garavaso noted that before there was a prereq, the 2000-level classes in the fall were filling up with students needing to take them for their major. Meek stated that she is more concerned that students are coming in unprepared. Eble suggested that 1601 be listed as a coreq for 2000-level courses. Korn noted that the catalog lists 1601 as a prereq for admission to the major. If the prereq is removed or revised, the major requirements in the catalog would have to be changed.

Finzel stated that after students have taken 1601, and are at the point when they can take the 2000-level courses, those courses will populate again. Carol Cook suggested waiting a year to see if there is a pattern. Finzel asked Garavaso to bring the proposal back to the discipline for discussion, and if it is brought forward again in the future, someone from the English discipline should be asked to attend the meeting.

## Division of the Social Sciences Course Changes

### **History**

Meek stated that there are two history courses on the agenda. The first is *Hist 2251-American Indians and the United States: A History*. The course description has expanded to better describe the content of the course. This course is offered in both American Indian Studies and in History. It includes a wide diversity of information about many Native Americans and does not just focus on Native Americans in the United States, but also includes South American and other indigenous people. Chollett asked why the course title is not being changed as well to something

like “American Indians in the Americas.” It was decided to table the course and bring it back to the discipline for more discussion.

A second course, *Hist 3451-Facing West*, was pulled from consideration after the agenda was sent out. The proposed change would have deactivated it because the instructor who created it has left Morris, but another instructor is planning to teach the course.

#### Division of Education Course Change

Carol Cook explained that *ED 2301-Environmental Science and Place-Based Education*, is being inactivated. It was only offered during May session, required a lot of participation, and was held at the prairie wetland in Fergus Falls.

MOTION (Meek/Ng) to approve the Education Division proposed course inactivation.

The motion passed unanimously (12-0-0)

Submitted by Darla Peterson