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Curriculum minutes 02/20/2015

Curriculum Committee

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**UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
2014-15 MEETING #12 Minutes
February 20, 2015, 2:15 p.m., MFR**

Members Present: Bart Finzel (chair), Sarah Ashkar, Mary Elizabeth Bezanson, Donna Chollett, Mark Collier, Stephen Crabtree, Janet Ericksen, Pieranna Garavaso, Sara Haugen, Judy Korn, Peh Ng, Gwen Rudney, Emily Sunderman, and Sonja Swanson

Members Absent: Pilar Eble, Maryanna Kroska, and Ricky Rojas

Visitors: Nancy Helsper and Jeri Squier

In these minutes: Task Force on Credit Counts in Majors/Minors - Membership; EDP Review Committee Recommendation; Online Catalog Changes due to “The Upgrade”

Announcements

Finzel welcomed back Mark Collier, who was on fellowship leave during fall semester; he welcomed Mary Elizabeth Bezanson, who is replacing Carol Cook who has retired; and he welcomed Judy Korn, who is the ex-officio member as director of the office of the registrar.

Finzel noted that this semester is the ideal time for the committee to think large about larger initiatives. Discussions can take place this spring and proposals can be entertained in the fall, giving the Campus Assembly deliberation time before we begin the next catalog cycle. He encouraged members to go back to the previous discussion on the general education program. At that time the entire academic community was asked, in the format of division, staff, and student forums, the simple questions of what aspects of Gen Ed were working, not working, redundant, essential, and potential problems, or how essential aspects might be strengthened. Minutes of those reports were on the Digital Well (see minutes from November 7, 14, and 21, 2011). A summary of those conversations will be shared with the group. Those conversations led to writing requirements and stripping redundant Gen Eds from 3xxx- and 4xxx-level courses.

Finzel stated that the committee will also hear reports this spring from programs that have undergone program reviews, such as statistics, art history, and philosophy. Collier stated that reports are presented to the committee, but the committee is not given access to review the program review documents. He asked if there was any way that the committee could have access to the reports. Finzel answered that with the model that is being used for program reviews, the full report is not widely shared. The self-studies are shared only with the faculty in the program and the reviewers. This practice allows the faculty to be as candid as possible. Collier asked what the point is to present the report to the committee if the committee hasn't seen the full report. Finzel answered that the report to the committee becomes public record, and the committee is given the opportunity to learn about the program. Rudney noted that a discipline could post its self-study report on its website if it wants to share it publicly. Ng stated that, by-and-large, when the program representatives come to this committee to report, they are asked to verbalize what is in the context of the report. There is nothing secretive. Collier answered that he would have to take her word that there is nothing secretive because he hasn't seen a report. Is it possible to add it to the

agenda if they are willing? Garavaso added that a discipline could then answer yes or no to a request, but the purpose of the verbal report allows them to be self-critical and aspirational, which they would be reluctant to do if the entire campus had access to the entire report. She suggested that we wait to have this discussion again after we have gone through a cycle of program reviews. We may want to make changes to the process later. Finzel added that a part of the reporting phase includes a report by the discipline as well as a second visit to the committee to provide an update on progress made toward goals.

Approval of Minutes – December 4, 2014

MOTION (Rudney/Chollett) to approve the December 4, 2014 minutes. Minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Requests for Gen Ed Designators on Directed Studies

Three requests for Gen Ed designators on directed studies were considered:

Directed Study: Mathematical/Symbolic Reasoning (M/SR)

Directed Study: Fine Arts (FA)

Prior Learning Directed Study: Physical and Biological Sciences (Sci-Lab)

Rudney explained that all of the requests stem from one incident involving an international student who had a bachelor's degree, completed the work for secondary education, and was not granted a license. The student's degree from a Spanish university was not accepted. An error had been made in interpreting the degree. She is already employed and is no longer a student here. After consultation with the registrar as well as faculty across campus, these Gen Eds will allow the student to be granted a teaching license while meeting the high standards of UMM.

Ng asked if the lab experience took place on campus. Rudney replied that the lab work took place in the requester's high school class with her students and was observed. Chollett asked to what degree that meets the requirements of doing the lab. In devising experiments, is the student she is teaching getting lab experience? Rudney answered that in addition to this lab experience, she is being given credit for prior experience. That has to do with educational experience with three full years of science plus a full year of lab in high school. Her senior year included two full years including labs. Her prep was given learning credit. Work done in consultation with our biology professor was applied as well. The proposal for the Gen Ed designator has to do with learning on top of the lab experience.

MOTION (Rudney/Garavaso) to approve the three requests for Gen Ed designators on directed studies. The motion passed (11-0-0).

Task Force on Minimum/Maximum Credit Counts in Majors/Minors

Finzel reminded the committee that the primary charge of the Task Force will be the role of fact-finding and reporting the results back to this committee. He stated that in discussions with Sunderman he had learned that students are concerned about what the recommendations might be and how it will affect their individual majors/minors. Sunderman added that she spoke with the MCSA, the student government, and students particularly in the sciences and in LAAS feel strongly about the number of credits in their majors. She recommended that the committee proceed with caution when making recommendations. Because of the hidden credits concern, she would like to see a student from the sciences on the Task Force. She will represent Education on the Task Force, and suggested that there be three student reps on the Task Force. Finzel stated that his initial intention was to have a small group.

Collier asked if the Task Force would be solely charged with fact-finding, or would they be asked to make recommendations as well. If the role is fact-finding, then eight people might be too large a group. Sunderman stated that if the same group that does the fact-finding is also asked to bring recommendations to the committee, then those students would need to be involved in both. Finzel noted that the Task Force could be split into two groups: one to do the fact-finding, and one more policy-minded to craft a recommendation. Ng stated that there is more to fact-finding than going to a website and downloading a catalog. Different institutions have different definitions for familiar terms such as Gen Ed, units, credits, etc., and a comparison is needed. Ericksen stated that it is important to have student involvement in fact-finding because we don't want it to be seen as only something faculty found. Sunderman stated that she is in Spanish and education, and she did not want to speak for students in the sciences. Ericksen asked her if she would be okay with having a representative from the sciences involved with fact-finding. After discussion it was agreed that the charge to the Task Force will be fact-finding. Any recommendations will come from the Curriculum Committee after review of the Task Force report and discussion.

Finzel stated that the Task Force membership needs to be revisited. The original membership had only one student representative, Sunderman. He asked Sunderman to suggest a second student from MCSA. Professor Korth from Science and Mathematics will serve. Ericksen stated that Professor Rose will represent the Social Sciences. Demetriou volunteered at the end of last semester. Since he is not on the committee this semester, Finzel asked Garavaso to ask Demetriou if he will serve. Korn stated that the Office of the Registrar (OTR) subscribes to a transfer evaluation system, and they have all of the catalogs that the Task Force would need. Collier stated that it would make sense to have a rep from the OTR on the Task Force. Finzel agreed and added that it would be helpful to identify catalogs from appropriate institutions that are a subset of our peers. He asked Korn to talk it over with her staff and provide a rep from the OTR. Ericksen added that if an advanced course doesn't appear to require a prerequisite, it will require involvement from a faculty member to identify unstated implied prereqs.

The Task Force will consist of six members:

Michael Korth, faculty member from Science and Mathematics
Emily Sunderman, student representing the Humanities and Education
Student TBD [Sunderman will suggest a student from the sciences]
OTR rep TBD [Korn will suggest a staff member]
Roger Rose, faculty member from the Social Sciences
Dan Demetriou (or replacement) [to be confirmed by Garavaso]

The timeline will involve fact-finding this spring with a report back to the committee early in the fall. Finzel will ask Korth to convene the group.

Discussion of Distribution of Curricular Changes

Finzel stated that there is a concern that there is too much material brought to Campus Assembly for review during catalog years. What do people need to know to be reasonably informed and make sound judgments on whether to agree or disagree with the curricular proposals? We appear to be swallowed up in the process.

Bezanson stated that she had asked for the item to be placed on the agenda because there is both not enough information and too much. Because she doesn't read screens well, she must have the material printed, and she was unable to locate the forms.

Finzel stated that with the current process of reviewing course and program changes, the ECAS and PCAS forms are shared with the committee and with Campus Assembly, along with the Multiple Course Revision Form for small changes or deletions of courses. Not asking divisions to fill out a short summary form in place of ECAS or PCAS would require additional redundant work by division staff. Since this isn't a good solution, is there a way to query PCAS and ECAS to pull out the information we think is relevant and thus create a summary report for this body and the Campus Assembly? Squier answered that she did not know if that is a possibility. Helsper noted that the catalog editors in the Twin Cities do just that. They have technical people in their office who extract out of ECAS the information that results in the course descriptions for the catalog. Finzel stated that a small group of people could look at ECAS and PCAS, come up with the fields that are necessary, and ask our technical people if it is feasible. He suggested that Bezanson and Squier meet with Matt Zaske in Computing Services to find out what can be done.

Crabtree stated that every change in ECAS requires approval. Could it be possible to set up a query with a default to pull the most recent changes, instead of every one that has come forward (as it appears in the full ECAS form)? Ericksen added that she is envisioning a summary list of new courses, rationales, and substantive changes, which would result in a much slimmer document. Bezanson stated that Assembly might need something instead of merely a list. Garavaso stated that now they have either a list or everything. Finzel agreed and stated that we are looking for some middle ground. Collier noted that it would be difficult in advance to know what kind of questions people might have about the proposed changes, and the query might result in incomplete information.

Finzel replied that the full proposals would be still available online for the Committee and the Assembly to reference. Bezanson asked if it would be reasonable for her, Squier, and Helsper to come up with a proposed list to bring to this committee to respond to so that we know what we ask Matt Zaske about the feasibility of such a query? If Zaske isn't sure if it can be done, Helsper can put him in contact with people who can help him.

Campus Committee Minutes

Rudney asked if a slightly different but related topic could be discussed. She stated that she missed receiving email notifications of posting of minutes from committees. Some came attached or included in the email. She used to glance at them. If they are available, she now needs to hunt in the Digital Well to find them. People are less informed now because they have to take the extra step to look in the Digital Well. Finzel stated that this is an agenda item for the Steering Committee to consider. Ng stated that they should be asked to send out minutes from all of the campus committees from the previous month. Sunderman added that students should also receive them. Bezanson noted that it would be nice if MCSA could be added to the list of minutes for the Steering Committee to disperse. Korn noted that once a month she receives a message from the Digital Well telling her how many people have downloaded the minutes from the Scholastic Committee. Collier asked if the Digital Well was a place where you can see all the minutes on one page. He would like to get them once a month. Finzel noted that each committee has a site where the minutes are posted. Bezanson noted that access to minutes would encourage more people to have minutes.

Ericksen asked, as a member of the Steering Committee, who is going to do it? They can't ask Carrie Grussing, staff to the Steering Committee, to do it.

MOTION (Ng/Crabtree) to recommend that the Steering Committee consider sending monthly notices with minutes from all campus committees. The motion passed (11-0-0).

Submitted by Darla Peterson