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9-25-2017

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Curriculum Committee

Campus Governance

Fall 9-25-2017

Curriculum Minutes 09/25/2017

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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

2017-18 MEETING #2 Minutes

September 25, 2017, 8:00 a.m., Moccasin Flower Room

Members Present: Janet Ericksen (chair), Arne Kildegaard, Stacey Aronson, Peh Ng, Gwen Rudney, Tracey Anderson, Denise Odello, Stephen Crabtree, Jennifer Deane, Kellie Meehlhause, Stephanie Ferrian, Mitchell Scanlan, Karyssa Scheck, Sarah Severson, and Judy Korn

Members Absent: Annika Nelson

Visitors: Nancy Helsper and Jeri Squier

In these minutes: EDP priorities and review committee; and discussion of provisional approval of courses

Introductions and Announcements

There are four new student members on the committee this year. Ericksen welcomed the three students in attendance and asked the members to introduce themselves. She announced that the committee's next meeting would be held in two weeks. Meetings will not be held every week.

Educational Development Program (EDP)

The application deadline was discussed. The review committee would like to have two weeks to review the applications and prepare the recommendation. They had too little time last year. It was agreed that the application deadline would be Monday, October 30, giving the review group two weeks, with a report due to the committee by November 13. Decisions could then be shared with the applicants well before the Thanksgiving holiday. It will be useful to have EDP decisions made well in advance of course schedule planning.

The EDP criteria/priorities that were drafted at the previous meeting were discussed. The committee agreed on the following final set of priorities:

- 1) Proposals that address a significant need within the curriculum or that will benefit large numbers of students
- 2) New or revised courses that explicitly include some aspect of civic leadership
- 3) New or revised courses that explicitly include some aspect of rural studies that is particular to the rural environment and/or to the local or global rural experience
- 4) New 2-credit courses without prerequisites, especially offered in the second half of the semester
- 5) Co-taught honors courses, especially 2-credit courses
- 6) Proposals for revising existing courses in order to infuse significant Native American content

Volunteers for the EDP Review Committee are: Kellie Meehlhause, chair; Jennifer Deane, Stephen Crabtree, and Sarah Severson.

Discussion of Provisional Approval of Courses

Ericksen stated that she had received a list of courses seeking approval to be offered in spring semester 2018. The majority consist of revisions to existing courses. If they go through the normal process and timeline, they would not be approved before registration advising meetings for spring semester.

Ericksen asked Helsper to explain why we have the current procedures that we have in place for course approvals. Helsper stated that it started with continuing education courses needing the flexibility of quick approval. In January 1999, a motion was made in the Curriculum Committee to create provisional approval for day school courses that would follow the process of provisional approval of one-time course offerings that needed to go to the Curriculum Committee for further approval. In 2003, Dean Schwaller applied provisional approval to topics courses and courses that new faculty would like to teach. In 2003, Associate Professor Korth proposed that provisional approval be allowed for a maximum of two offerings per course. It was then changed to provisional courses remaining active for the duration of the current catalog. In 2005, the dean affirmed the regular and provisional approval processes for the Curriculum Committee as revised in 2003. In 2011, it was reconfirmed that all courses must receive either provisional or regular approval and remain active for the duration of the current catalog.

Helsper stated that her concerns in giving provisional approval to existing course changes outside of the catalog year is that it could affect students who have done two-year planning and then were found that courses they chose have changes such as the Gen Ed category or the number of credits offered. Ericksen added that currently provisional approval is only given by the division chairs and dean to new courses; the courses do not go to the Curriculum Committee for regular approval until the next catalog year.

The question is how to proceed with the eight existing courses seeking provisional approval. Ng asked how significant the changes are to the eight courses. Ericksen answered that the changes involve prereqs, course descriptions, and reactivation. Rudney stated that we have a two-year schedule for course approvals. There is a tremendous amount of work done in catalog years, and there is a value in sticking with something for two years. It's easier for the students. Technology has allowed us to keep changing, but stability to the whole process is at risk.

Aronson stated that new faculty should be allowed to offer a new course in their area of expertise. That's what provisional approval provides for. But changing prereqs mid-catalog would be difficult for students. Severson added that, as a student, it would be frustrating to have a course change in the middle of a catalog, especially if the student is a junior or senior. Deane added that students go through a careful planning process with their advisers. We have to do everything we can to keep that in mind. A new postdoc teaching a brand new class isn't complicating something that's existing. Anderson agreed and stated that a new course is rarely something required for graduation. Ericksen added that activating an existing course is another example of a change that would not negatively affect students because no one has seen it. Helsper added that deans historically have made decisions about editorial or last-minute changes that are not controversial. Rudney asked if provisionally approved changes could be offered more than once. Helsper answered that they could be offered more than once because provisional approval is in effect through the current catalog.

Ericksen stated that the committee is not meeting next week, and the next Campus Assembly meeting is October 30. Provisional approval of the changes could be completed in time for annual planning and advising in the spring. We would have to send a note to advisers that this is coming. Ng noted that advising doesn't happen until after fall break. This committee meets again on October 9. Squier asked if a process could be devised in which course changes come to the committee as a whole and the committee approves them, rather than the division chairs. If the committee would approve them, they could be considered approved pending Campus Assembly. Rudney stated that the decision is whether we support giving provisional approval to the committee, and if we do support it, we can still say no on individual changes or courses. Deane asked if the division chairs could note if a change becomes difficult for students and bring it to the committee's attention. Rudney noted that division chairs currently look carefully at courses that come through for provisional approval. But provisional approval under the current process is only for new courses and wouldn't have this kind of impact on students.

Korn stated that we know the negative impact of the proposal: planning would be thrown off. What is the benefit? Crabtree asked if students would be grandfathered under the prior standards if the prereq is changed. Squier answered that a lot of times the prereq is enforced, so they can't be grandfathered. Ng stated that students are already signed up for courses next semester. Even if we approve, how would students find a course that quickly?

Ericksen stated that if set of changes is allowed to seek provisional committee approval, it would then open the door for all divisions to have curricular changes on non-catalog years. Ng stated that only reason for provisional approval is to allow new faculty to offer new course offerings in the spring. People have to be allowed to plan. Ericksen stated that she wasn't sure there is a perfect solution. We prefer to do most course approvals in the catalog year. Rudney noted that if the committee agrees to review the changes for approval now, the committee has the option of saying no. Ericksen stated that anything outside normal provisional approval for new courses will come to the Curriculum Committee for approval. It would then take effect the following fall rather than spring. Korn stated that she was not comfortable allowing the change. As far as the timeline, she agreed that approved changes should take effect in the fall. How do we communicate with students that something is changing in the fall? There is no quick answer.

[Note: After the meeting, Squier prepared a summary of proposed approval changes that were discussed. The Division Chairs reviewed the summary, made revisions, and it will be presented at the next committee meeting for further discussion and approval.]

Submitted by Darla Peterson