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Curriculum Committee

Campus Governance

Fall 10-9-2017

Curriculum Minutes 10/09/2017

Darla K. Peterson

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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

2017-18 MEETING #3 Minutes

October 9, 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, Annika Nelson, Mitchell Scanlan, Karyssa Scheck, and Sarah Severson

Members Absent: Judy Korn

Visitors: Nancy Helsper, Ray Schultz, and Jeri Squier

In these minutes: Provisional approval of courses procedure changes, Course revision proposals, Theatre Arts Program Review Report

Announcements

Ericksen announced that the committee's next meeting would be held in two weeks.

Approval of Minutes from Meeting #2, September 25, 2017

Minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Proposed Changes to Provisional Approval of Courses Procedures

Ericksen asked the committee to review the proposed changes that were discussed at the last meeting, reviewed again by the division chairs and others, culminating in the following proposal:

- 1) Requesting regular approval remains unchanged.**
- 2) Requesting provisional approval for new courses remains unchanged.**
 - a. Notification gets sent to Jeri and she circulates the course to the division chairs for a vote.
 - b. If approved, PCAS must be updated so that it can be reflected on the students' APAS report (Jeri is available to assist with updating PCAS if necessary).
- 3) Re-activating an inactive course will be allowed to go through the provisional approval process.**
 - a. It was determined that changes can be made to these courses as they are not visible anywhere (printed or online).
 - b. Notification is sent to Jeri and she circulates the course to the division chairs for a vote.
 - c. If approved, PCAS must be updated so that it can be reflected on the students' APAS report (Jeri is available to assist with updating PCAS if necessary).
- 4) Requesting approval for revisions to an existing active course has changed.**
 - a. These requests will continue to go to the Curriculum Committee for review.
 - b. As before, besides doing ECAS entries, you will need to submit a Multiple Course Revision form to Darla stating that you are requesting approval for the proposed changes.
 - c. New: If the Curriculum Committee deems the change will benefit students and not impede their progress, they may approve it, although they may decide that it won't take effect until the next catalog. Almost no changes will be allowed, with the exception of summer courses.

Ericksen noted that requesting regular approval of new courses remains unchanged. The procedure to request provisional approval of new courses remains unchanged as well. The changes to the procedures relate to provisional reactivation of an existing course in a non-catalog year. Also, reactivating an inactive course will be allowed to go through for provisional approval by the division chairs, since a reactivation does not impact students negatively. The change that would affect the Curriculum Committee is item #4 above: requesting approval for revisions to an existing active course. This would be allowed during a non-catalog year, but will be approved by the committee only if the change will benefit students and not impede their progress. The committee may approve it, but they may also decide that the change won't take effect until the next catalog. The new language at the end of #4 is important to note: "Almost no changes will be allowed, with the exception of summer courses."

In the past, in order to reactivate a course, it had to go through the entire approval process. This proposal will allow faculty to reactivate a course to teach in the spring without waiting for a catalog year. If someone wants to change a course description for a course that's already in the printed catalog and already part of students' four-year schedules, the course change would have to come to the Committee in the catalog year.

Ericksen stated that any proposed course changes would be submitted on a Multiple-Course Revision (MCR) form, and if the change benefits students and does not impede their progress, the change would go forward and not be seen by the Curriculum Committee again unless further changes are requested during the catalog year. Summer courses are not built into the schedule year-to-year, so summer course revisions are not likely to impede students. In summary, almost no changes should be allowed. Everyone's workload could be fairly significantly increased if the committee allowed all changes. Helsper works on the catalog every other year, budgeting her time for the job. She has other priorities on off-catalog years. Rudney added that it's also easier to plan courses coherently when there is a normal schedule of changes. It's better for the program and a better practice, as well as a workload issue.

Ericksen noted that revisions of two courses will be considered for approval if the proposal is approved. One example is Anth 2501, which is decreasing from 4 to 2 credits. Kildegaard stated that the course is currently inactive. It will be reactivated, and according to the procedures, should be eligible for approval.

Ericksen noted that the second course, Hist 2451, is a revision of the course description. Kildegaard explained that the course will not be taught the way it was taught in the past. The change reflects how the current faculty member will teach the course. Severenson noted that she had never seen such a long course description. Anderson stated that she didn't think students would be disadvantaged by the committee not making this change. Courses evolve, and often go through modifications and faculty find new content and less relevant content becomes dated, but course descriptions often remain unchanged. Ng added that policy dictates that what's in the syllabus is what counts. The course description isn't required to include the complete contents of the course.

Ericksen noted that the Committee cannot vote on the examples before first voting on the proposed changes to the approval process. Neither of the courses would come before the Curriculum Committee if the proposal isn't approved.

Anderson stated that the only changes that might fit #4c might be a request to remove a prerequisite that would help students achieve a particular requirement. Kildegaard noted that the last sentence in #4c makes it clear that almost no changes will be allowed mid-catalog with the exception of summer courses. Anderson asked what happens to a course change that is approved but doesn't go into effect until the next catalog. Squier answered that she will change the effective term and leave it sit in ECAS at the department level. Anderson wondered if the number of requests received by the committee will increase if word gets out that revisions can be considered off-cycle. Ericksen answered that is why the last sentence was added. She would like the division chairs to tell faculty that it is not likely revisions will be approved. Helsper stated that it could be worded in a more positive way: the expectation is that almost all course revisions will happen during a catalog year. Rudney stated that part of our procedure is to do clean-up of courses in the spring before a catalog year. Squier replied that most course revisions come through in the fall of the catalog year. Helsper noted that when changes get approval in the spring, people forget that the course has already been revised, and it is looked at, revised, and comes through again anyway.

MOTION was made to approve the revised course approval process. Motion passed unanimously (14-0-0)

Course Revision Approvals – Division of the Social Sciences

Anthropology

Anth 2501 – Medical Anthropology – An Overview (revised course)

Rudney stated that this course fits the criteria for a course change that can be approved. The changes have already been discussed: the credits are reduced from 4 to 2, and the description has been updated. Ericksen added that the course has been inactive. Kildegaard noted that the faculty member who is no longer at UMM last taught the course at least five years ago.

Ericksen stated that if approved, this course would have regular approval, and would not be returning to the committee in the fall unless additional changes are requested. It will go into the online catalog now. Squier stated that she will send it all the way through. Anderson suggested that all approved course changes wait to go Campus Assembly in the spring. Rudney stated that if approved, it is given full approval. Squier repeated that she will give it regular approval in order to run it all the way through. Ericksen stated that it is not coming back to the Curriculum Committee, but will be pending Campus Assembly approval. Squier added that a course with unanimous Curriculum Committee approval will be normally approved by the Campus Assembly, so she will note Campus Assembly approval as well. If Campus Assembly does not eventually approve it, she can then change it back.

Scanlan asked if the course has to be considered a revision to an inactive course, or if we could consider it a new course. Ericksen stated that if a student took the older class, it would stay on their transcript, and if the same student came back to campus in 10 years, they could

take it again if the number has changed. We don't want to do that. It's cleaner to reactivate and revise the existing course.

MOTION (Rudney/Meehlhause) to approve the proposed course changes to Anth 2501. Motion was approved by a vote of 14-0-0.

History

Hist 2451 – The American West (revised course)

Ericksen stated that this request is for a revision of the course description, to include the indigenous inhabitants of the West. Deane asked if it is a minor adjustment or if the course could factor into the Native American and Indigenous Studies program. If it's not the primary theme of the course, and would not affect the program, then there is no need to hold it up. Ericksen asked for separate votes on 1) whether to approve the course changes, and 2) if approved, when the changes will take effect—in spring 2018 (mid-catalog) or fall 2019 (new catalog). Scheck asked what will happen to the course if it is not approved to be effective immediately. Ericksen answered that the course would still be taught in the spring, but the description would not be updated until the new catalog is produced. If the motion passes, we change the online catalog, but the printed catalog is not updated until the next catalog cycle. Crabtree reminded the committee that the course description is not binding. That not how it has to be taught. The title is general enough for students to decide whether they will take the course or not.

MOTION (Odello/Kildegaard) to approve the proposed course change to Hist 2451. Motion was approved by a vote of 13-0-0.

MOTION (Crabtree/Odello) to activate the changes to Hist 2451 mid-catalog, taking effect spring 2018. Motion failed by a vote of 0-13-0. The change will be effective in the next catalog.

Theatre Arts Program Review

Ericksen explained that academic programs are required to conduct program reviews. In the process, they receive data from Institutional Research, Briggs Library, and Career Services, and prepare a Self-Study Report. It's then reviewed by a review committee, which shares its comments with the discipline. The discipline coordinator meets with the dean and the division chair to review and discuss the comments made by the review committee. Finally, the coordinator is invited to a meeting of the Curriculum Committee to talk about the program review, what kinds of things the program does well, and what kinds of things are on the horizon. Ericksen welcomed Ray Schultz, professor of Theatre Arts, to the meeting.

Schultz stated that the discipline submitted its Self-Study Report in late spring 2016. The comments the review committee provided to the discipline touch on strengths, challenges, and recommendations. He shared with the committee a summary of those comments.

Strengths:

The program has a balanced representation of acting, directing, history, program, and design; it's a truly liberal arts based program. It's not a BFA program training people to do one thing. In line with that, our production program is very much wedded to the actual curriculum coursework. The faculty also tries very hard to offer as many course offerings as possible, considering the small size of the program, to satisfy the general UMM population with courses that carry Gen Eds such as FA and ArtP. The program gives student majors and the general student population a well-balanced rotation of productions of different styles and periods. For example, we range from Shakespeare to musicals. One of the things the program is most proud of is how in-tune productions have been to the sustainable mission of the campus. Works have been done using sustainable materials in the scenery and costumes. The program offers its students the opportunity to go to conferences, and it brings in external evaluators to all of the productions.

Challenges:

Because of the remoteness of the campus, it's not always easy to get guest artists to come to Morris. Starting last year, the program is bringing in alums to work with the students. On one occasion, they partnered with the English program. This year, 3-4 guest artists will be brought to campus to work with students, some in conjunction with the musical. Two biggest challenges are 1) limited funding, and 2) limited human resources. Theatre Arts is only a 3-person discipline. There are challenges in terms of expanding offerings, especially when rotating leaves, retirements, and turnover occur in positions. One of the harder challenges is the limited technical support. There is often quick turnover in that area because the positions are highly technical positions offering low pay. It is hard to find qualified people in the area for the jobs. In terms of the lack of money to pay higher salaries, we are all in the same boat.

Recommendations:

The Program Review Committee recommended that Theatre Arts bring more guest artists to campus. A lot of alumni in the Twin Cities area are becoming fairly successful and have been back to Morris. The program is also seeking outside funding to support the program, and was able to secure external support to fund the upcoming musical. It's very difficult to produce a musical, and without sufficient funds, it's impossible. The program is also trying to make a case for consolidating the technical support positions into a faculty position that would enable Theatre Arts to have more flexibility in course offerings, including service courses. One concern of the review committee was that the minor requires 32 credits, which is relatively high. Theatre Arts is looking at the minor and expects to make a case in the next catalog cycle to drop 4 or 8 credits, which will place it in the average number of credits for a minor.

Discussion:

Ericksen stated that one notable thing is the number of nonmajors the program serves in production experience and general coursework that carries the FA and ArtP Gen Eds. Theatre Arts is one of the go-to areas students seek out for their ArtP Gen Ed, especially stagecraft. Ericksen asked how many theatre courses are required by other majors. Schultz stated that he did not know the number. Oral interpretation and Introduction to Theatre are taken by nonmajors, and Theatre History is taken by English majors. Biology students take it as well. There are upwards of 40 or so students participating in the musical this semester. At least half of

the students are not theatre majors. Music is similar in that there are a lot of nonmajors in ensembles. Ericksen noted that if a student goes to a large campus, they can maybe be in one stage production in 4 years. Here, they may be in multiple productions. Schultz added that very often students who start doing productions will add theatre as a double major or minor.

Kildegaard stated that he was a big fan of the program's amazing work. He asked if the faculty workload of 5 courses plus directing a major production is standard. Schultz answered that each institution handles it differently. Some institutions consider directing or designing equivalent to a course release. In that framework, his load would be 3-3. In some places, faculty are given extra compensation for directing or designing. In some places it would count for tenure, and in some it would not. Kildegaard asked if directing a production is considered part of our theatre faculty workload. Schultz answered that it is part of the creative agenda, but a faculty member would have to do outside work as well to be counted toward tenure. Ericksen noted that at UMM it can't count as a course. It would be considered service in the tenure process. Also, if it were considered a course, there wouldn't be enough courses taught. Schultz noted that the philosophy discipline is in the same boat. Senior projects are now considered an overload. Ericksen asked if the productions are rotated so that each year Professor Schultz would direct a play, Associate Professor Bremer would direct a play, and then a third production would be directed by a student? Schultz answered that in some years a guest artist who is an alum would direct a production as well. It is unusual in institutions for an undergrad to get a chance to direct a mainstage production. It's a terrific credit for UMM students to have that experience.

Ericksen asked where UMM Theatre Arts majors usually go after graduating. Schultz answered that he tries to keep track of them via Facebook. The majority stay in Minnesota, and a majority are professionals or stay very connected to theatre even though they have other jobs. We try to teach people to appreciate theatre as an audience. People need art. We have a decent number go on to graduate school as well. A UMM performance major is going to the Guilford School in London for his MFA. One alum who has gone to grad school in theatre administration, worked for the Pittsburgh Ballet, and is now at St. Olaf. A lot of grads go to Minneapolis and are active in the theater scene there. Ericksen stated that she would be interested to see how many continue to be involved in theater. Schultz answered that a lot of grads in the past 4-5 years have gone to the west coast to work in film and television. Ericksen thanked Professor Schultz for coming.

The meeting was adjourned. There will not be a meeting next Monday due to fall break.

Submitted by Darla Peterson