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MINUTES-1997-98 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING #10

February 17, 1998; 8:00 a.m.; Behmler Conference Room

Present: Asmus, Beiswenger, Farrell, Frenier, Korth, Kuechle (for Kissock), Lee, McIntosh, Nylander, Schuman, Taylor

Absent: Ballou, Ellis, Leroux, Thielke

Guest(s): Jim Gremmels, English

[In these minutes: continued discussion of semester GER designator proposals]

CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF SEMESTER GER DESIGNATIONS:

Mooney distributed copies of a response from the economics and management faculty to the CC questions concerning the GER proposals from those disciplines. Schuman indicated that the first item on the agenda was to review the GER proposal for interdisciplinary studies.

Interdisciplinary Studies

These are the courses with an "IS" discipline designator. Schuman asked if there were questions about the GER proposal. There were none. He assumed that the IS proposal was unanimously approved.

Latin American Area Studies

Schuman noted that none of the courses with the LAAS discipline designator (there are only 4 courses) were being proposed with a GER category. He asked if anyone was uncomfortable with that proposal. There were no comments.

Women's Studies

Schuman indicated that there is only one course with the WoSt discipline designator. That course has been proposed with a GER category of "HDiv." There were no comments about the proposal.

English

Schuman said that the CC had now completed the first "pass-through" of the GER proposals. He referred CC members to the table of GER questions and issues prepared by Mooney which had been distributed after the last meeting. The first discipline in the table with action needed is English. He noted that Gremmels was present at the meeting to answer questions. The problem with the English proposal was that there were a lot of courses which had not been designated.

Farrell said there is some contention about the idea that all courses are supposed to have a GER designator. He had asked Mooney to research where this idea originated. In the short time she had, she discovered the following statement in the CC minutes of 3/11/97:

Togeas said the GEC intended that all courses would fit someplace in the GER unless they are specifically excluded.

Schuman said the question remains of whether excluding courses because they are intended for majors is an acceptable rationale. Farrell said the English discipline faculty believe they have followed procedures. Schuman agreed that no

specific action had been taken that said every course must have a GER designator. However, English has used a somewhat different approach from other disciplines. Their approach is not "illegal."

Frenier wondered what the enrollment level was for the non-designated English courses. Schuman said the classes are large--30 or more students. Farrell said some of the classes have 90 students.

Lee was concerned that English majors might be disadvantaged by not having more of the GER fulfilled with courses in the major. Schuman said the undesignated courses would mostly be "Hum" courses if they were designated, a category that English majors will have no difficulty fulfilling. Frenier wondered if double majors in English would be disadvantaged. Farrell wondered why they would be. Frenier had heard that English double majors have trouble meeting all of the requirements now. Farrell said that it is the University's policy to require one major; students who take more than one major cannot expect to graduate in four years.

Schuman was bothered by the fact that some of the multicultural courses, like 3301--Multicultural Literature and 3311--Native American Literature, do not meet the "HDiv" category. Farrell commented that students still have flexibility to take electives. Schuman thought that students should be invited to think about studying English and American literature outside their majors as a way to meet the GER. Farrell thought that was an advising function.

Lee wondered if the undesignated courses might be restricted to majors only. Farrell said that is an option, but not currently done.

McIntosh said it has been his interpretation that every course should be accurately designated. The GER designators should not be used for enrollment control.

Gremmels said that English has a unique major. Ten percent of students are in the English major--180 students--and the number is growing. During an evaluation with outside reviewers, concern was expressed that we have upper division classes that are too large. The discipline added prerequisites so that there were three prerequisite courses on the upper division courses. That helped reduce the enrollment, but those classes are still large. The discipline feels it is devoting a considerable effort to the GER in courses which it sees as appropriate. He was on the General Education Committee (GEC) and doesn't know where the idea came from that all courses should have a GER category. There was brief mention of the idea, but he did not believe it was the intention of the GEC to say that. English does have an "HDiv" course and could add more. English faculty do not want the 3xxx-level courses filled with non-majors. However, non-majors are not restricted from the classes. The discipline has more majors than it can handle.

Kuechle wondered if the three prerequisites are required for the semester courses as well. Gremmels said there aren't enough staff resources to do that under semesters. The upper division semester courses have only one prerequisite, with the exception of Shakespeare, which does have a GER category. Kuechle said she had also served on the GEC and thought it was agreed that the discipline and Division would be making the decisions about GER categories. Gremmels thought there was lots of disagreement across the campus about what the GER means. For example, people seem to agree about the 1/3/1/3 split for credits in the major, GER, and electives, but some feel the GER should be completed in the first two years and others think it should be spread out over the four years.

Lee could understand the concern with overcrowding of courses. On the other hand, is there another way to limit enrollment without sacrificing the GER category? Gremmels said they could add the prerequisite of consent of the instructor.

Farrell emphasized that English is one of the few disciplines which has gone through an outside evaluation. The opinion expressed by the discipline is also given by the outside reviewers. The reviewers will be back and if we haven't met their concern, it will reflect on the program. Schuman noted that the next outside review will be the one for the NCA.

Gremmels noted that, of the 28 courses offered by English in one year, 9 will carry the "Hum" designator the first year and 10 the second year. English is also responsible for the College Writing requirement of the GER.

Korth wondered if the English discipline will fail to support student petitions to the Scholastic Committee for GER categories. Farrell thought it was possible that there would be legitimate petitions.

Schuman commented that, although this was not the GER proposal that he would prefer, it is his feeling that the discipline has a right to carry it out. The proposal has been thought out and gone through the appropriate steps. He is not prepared to say the CC should impose its will on the discipline. He is most bothered by the lack of GER for the multicultural courses.

MOTION (Farrell, Nylander): To approve the English GER proposal as originally proposed.

VOTE: In favor--6; opposed--4; abstentions--0 (6-4-0).

McIntosh wondered if the Dean was proposing a new policy of discipline rights. Schuman said he was not proposing a new policy. As he understood it, no explicit proposal was brought to Campus Assembly about the proportion of courses which should meet the GER. His personal impulse is to defer to the people who are teaching the courses unless there is a gross miscarriage or flamboyant misdirection of the GER. Most disciplines have left some courses undesignated.

Farrell commented that the CC had voted on this proposal. The discussion should move on. Schuman thought the idea of seeing how the general education program sifts out in practice makes sense.

French

Schuman indicated that the question in French was that Fren 4200 is a one-credit course but had an Expanding Perspectives category proposed. The discipline decided to remove the GER category from Fren 4200.

Humanities

The Humanities discipline has submitted a revised proposal so that the specific topics do not have different GER categories than the general topic heading. This could be considered editorial.

Theatre

Schuman noted that the theatre arts discipline had submitted a revised proposal. They dropped the Expanding Perspectives category for 1040 and 1050 because those are one-credit courses. They added a GER category to 1111 and 2201. The only course they didn't change as requested by the CC was 2101 and a rationale is attached to the revised proposal. This seems quite responsive to the CC directive. He asked if anyone was uncomfortable with the revised proposal. No one commented.

Computer Science

Schuman said the question for computer science was the adding of a designator to CSci 3901 since the discipline said it belonged there. The discipline has decided to add the designator and require an additional "Hum" course for CSci majors.

Physics

Schuman wondered if the discipline had responded to the CC question. Korth said the discipline has agreed to change the credits on those courses to "2-5" rather than "1-5" and keep the Expanding Perspectives designators.

Economics

Schuman noted that the response from economics and management faculty was distributed at the beginning of the meeting. He gave CC members time to read the two-page response. Lee said he had received a large packet of information from the faculty. He passed around the appendices which had not been duplicated for the CC.

Schuman noted that Korth had raised the question about the "M/SR" category for these courses. Does the response seem a satisfactory demonstration of the three elements in the goals? Korth said he accepted the response.

Schuman wondered if there were other questions. There were none.

Management

Schuman indicated that the same question was asked in management. Is the "M/SR" designation appropriate for Mgmt 3301? The response indicates that the faculty were aware of the goals of the requirement when they chose the designator. He asked if CC members were comfortable with the explanation. There were no objections.

Psychology

Schuman wondered if there had been a response from the psychology discipline. Lee said he had received an email response from the instructor of 3601. The instructor states that 3601 is basically an intermediate statistics course. The prerequisite for the course is Math 1150, which is an "M/SR" course. If the CC is opposed to the designator for Psy 3601, the instructor has no qualms about dropping it since majors will already have gotten the "M/SR" requirement fulfilled with Math 1150. However, if Psy 3601 is denied the "M/SR" designator, then none of the math statistics courses should have it either. All of the statistics courses on campus should be treated the same.

Schuman asked if proofs are done in the course. Lee said yes, but not at the same level as in the economics courses. Schuman thought it was odd to suggest that because a prerequisite course qualifies for the designator, this course should have the designator. Lee read the entire email message aloud. The message said that it is not clear cut whether proofs are actually constructed, but this course is the same as all of the statistics courses in the math discipline and they have the "M/SR" designator.

MOTION (Farrell, Lee): To approve Psy 3601 with the "M/SR" designator.

VOTE: In favor--8; opposed--1; abstentions--1 (8-1-1).

[McIntosh, Farrell, and Beiswenger left the meeting at this point.]

Wellness & SS

Kuechle reported that the WSS discipline had agreed to drop the "SS" designator from Fitness for Life.

Elementary Education

Kuechle said the elementary education faculty want students to come to the program with a broad liberal arts base of courses. They don't want students getting the designators from the EIED courses. Korth commented that it wouldn't do any harm for the EIED courses to carry the designators even if students do come to the program with them fulfilled. Kuechle said the problem would occur if students did not get the basic liberal arts courses knowing they could fulfill the GER within EIED. Only majors can take EIED courses.

Schuman wondered if not having GER designators on the EIED courses says something about EIED that we don't want to say. We could tell majors that they cannot meet the GER with the EIED courses. Kuechle said she would have to take that suggestion back to the EIED faculty.

Nylander commented that EIED instructs on how to teach math and does not teach math per se. Schuman thought that explanation made sense.

MOTION (Kuechle, Frenier): To approve the original elementary education GER proposal.

VOTE: In favor--6; opposed--0; abstentions--1 (6-0-1).

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, at 8:00 a.m. in the Behmler Conference Room.

Meeting adjourned 9:00 a.m.

Submitted by Nancy Mooney

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