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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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University of Minnesota, Morris  
Morris, Minnesota

**MINUTES-1997-98 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING #14**

March 31, 1998; 8:00 a.m.; Behmler Conference Room

Present: Asmus, Ballou, Farrell, Frenier, Korth, Kissock, Lee, Leroux, McIntosh, Schuman, Taylor

Absent: Beiswenger, Ellis, Nylander, Thielke

Guest(s): None

[In these minutes: Continued discussion of topics courses and repeatable course lists]

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Schuman noted that he is teaching a class this quarter at 9:00 a.m. and will need to adjourn CC meetings by 8:50. Meetings will need to start promptly at 8:00. He welcomed CC members back for spring quarter.

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**TOPICS TEMPLATE:**

Schuman indicated that the first item on the agenda was a continued discussion of topics courses. He tried to write down, with a lot of help from Mooney, what he thought should be our policy on topics courses. He asked CC members to take a minute to read through the eight points of the proposed topics template.

Korth thought that, overall, the proposed template did accurately capture the CC discussion. However, he thought that #5 bordered on the nonsensical. It says that "umbrella" topics offerings can be repeated with no limit, but #2 says that it is not possible to register for an "umbrella" course number. Schuman understood what he was saying. The intent of #5 is to say that students can register repeatably for courses under one umbrella, but specific topics cannot be repeated. Korth thought that may not need to be spelled out. Schuman thought it was worthwhile to try to describe all of the details; he will try to reword #5.

Ballou said she had missed the winter quarter discussions on this, but she would appreciate understanding the difference between variable topics and variable subjects. Schuman said that Engl 1100, a real course which was used as an example, is a variable topic course. It serves to define a rubric of courses. However, the variable subject course may have, for instance, a reading list that differs each year, but is essentially the same course. Students would not be allowed to repeat it. That is a fine distinction; some disciplines might want to allow such a course to be repeated. Ballou wondered if students would be able to tell the difference because they would be able to take several courses under the variable topic courses but the variable subject courses would probably not be repeatable. Schuman said some courses have titles like "Selected Topics in Sociology," but the idea is that you would only take it once. Ballou wondered if, in the future, that course would not be allowed to use the word "topics." Schuman agreed that, under the proposed scheme, we would like to have people avoid the word "topics" for courses which do not have umbrella courses. However, if someone insisted that the only word that would work was "topics," we would allow it.

Schuman noted that the major requirements might limit the number of specific topics that can be applied to the major. Ballou commented that the major requirements would have to make that clear to students.

Kissock wondered if Schuman was looking for a motion. Schuman offered to rewrite #5 before having the CC take a vote, unless CC members trusted him to make the change appropriately.

**MOTION** (Kissock, Farrell): To approve the "topics template" subject to a rephrasing of item #5.

**VOTE:** Unanimous in favor (9-0-0).

Schuman indicated that Mooney had culled all of the courses that look like topics from the semester bulletin copy. How should we find out which ones should be variable topics? He wondered if the lists should be given to the Division Chairs. There was agreement to have the Division Chairs work with the list.

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### **CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF REPEATABLE COURSES:**

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Schuman hoped that many of the concerns about the repeatable lists would be solved by the clarification of topics courses. The CC should begin its review of repeatable course proposals with Anthropology.

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#### Anthropology

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Schuman wondered if the maximum credits on the directed studies was correct at 15 credits. It seemed like it might be "quarter slippage" and should be 12 or 16 credits instead. Lee agreed and said he would check on that.

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#### Economics

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Schuman wondered since the 2-credit courses are not repeatable, are they to be packaged with another course? Lee said yes. Farrell wondered if students might have two different instructors for each 2-credit course. Lee said it is possible.

Farrell wondered if four credits would constitute a "course" in terms of faculty workload. Schuman said yes, emphatically.

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#### Geography

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No comments.

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#### History

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Lee said the history proposal is problematic because of the number of courses which appear to be topics courses. The topics template should help. He intends to go over the history curriculum with the history faculty.

[Frenier arrived at the meeting at this point.]

Korth wondered about the 60-credit maximum on directed studies. Lee said he would be willing to change it to "no maximum." The 60-credits is not tied to any requirement; it has no meaning. Farrell wondered if a student could get a major entirely by taking directed studies. Frenier said it hasn't been done, but it is theoretically possible. Schuman said he preferred to say "no max." Sixty credits amounts to two years of directed studies.

Schuman wondered if the 10-credit maximum for 4101-4102 was correct. Since that would total one repeat of each course, it was assumed to be correct.

Ballou was concerned about the possible message to students with repeatable courses: if they do poorly the first time, they can take the course again. Frenier said there are standards concerning "D" grades. Schuman read aloud about repeating a course from the current bulletin (see page 38). We need to ask Thielke how she tells if a student is taking the course to get a better grade.

Schuman said the CC would expect a revised proposal from history.

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#### Management

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Korth wondered if 3121 and 3122 were topics courses. Lee thought they were non-variable topics. He said he would

check.

Schuman wondered if the 2-credit courses were going to meet for 1/2 semester. Lee said yes.

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Political Science

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No comments.

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Psychology

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Lee indicated that the empirical investigations courses are individualized courses. Schuman asked Lee to check on the 5-credit maximum for the Senior Honors Project.

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Sociology

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Taylor wondered if 3200 was not an umbrella topics course since it is not repeatable. Lee said he would need to check on that.

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University College

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Ballou wondered about the significance of designating a course as belonging to University College. Schuman said the answer would be different depending on the course in question. He asked Farrell to answer the question for Piano Pedagogy. Farrell said Piano Pedagogy courses are service courses to piano teachers in the region. Schuman said they are continuing education courses. Farrell agreed that each course would have to be discussed separately. Photography was not part of the regular curriculum in art. Schuman noted that people in the surrounding communities ask for some of these courses that are not part of the regular curriculum. Farrell commented that the Division is not obligated to provide the faculty to teach these UC courses.

Ballou wondered who is attracted to these UC courses. Farrell said it is largely special students, but sometimes regular day school students take them. Schuman noted that two of the UC courses on the list are directed to high school students in the Summer Scholars program. The sign language courses are frequently taken by day students, but none of the foreign language disciplines wanted to take on the teaching of sign language. Ballou wondered if they could be described as supplementary courses. Kissock said UC is a way to offer courses that the disciplines don't have resources to offer. Another reason is that people in the community are interested--like karate, dance, etc. Schuman said the dance program had conversations with WSS and Humanities Division faculty about moving into the regular curriculum, but the faculty were not willing to add those courses to the regular curriculum. UC is a sort of catchall--a mechanism for allowing us to do things we wouldn't otherwise be able to do.

Lee wondered if there would be a UC course that is repeatable and the same course in the day school is not repeatable? Mooney said the two courses would have different numbers.

Kissock noted that ELTAP should be on the list and not repeatable.

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Interdisciplinary Studies

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Schuman noted that the Aerobics class, which is being taught as an IS class this year, should be listed as repeatable.

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LAAS

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Farrell wondered if 3100 is a tutorial. Schuman said we would have to check on that course.

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No comments.

Mooney wondered if the repeatability lists should be forwarded to Campus Assembly. Schuman said he was tempted to report to Assembly that we have gone through the repeatable lists. Does that make sense? Kissock said it made sense to him. Korth was not sure what would be going to Assembly. There have been a number of changes which have not been sent forward. Mooney suggested that Campus Assembly could review the Transition Course Catalog as a reflection of the various changes that have come through the Curriculum Committee. Schuman said there have been so many tiny decisions. He liked Mooney's idea. Ballou said, as a faculty member, she would like to see if the semester curriculum will work out. Farrell commented that, in the past, when we have had so much to review, we've put the materials in the library. Schuman said all of the changes would be nicely consolidated in the Transition Course Catalog. Mooney noted that the catalog would be ready by April 24.

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**NEXT MEETING:**

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The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, at 8:00 a.m. in the Behmler Conference Room.

Meeting adjourned 8:50 a.m.  
Submitted by Nancy Mooney

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