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University of Minnesota, Morris
Morris, MN

MINUTES 2001-2002 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING # 5

November 29, 2001, 8:00 a.m. Behmler Conference Room

Present: Schwaller, Johnson, Korth, Strand, Urness, Carlson, De Jager, Mullin, Mooney, Evans, Thielke, Demos, Kissock, Lee, Hollerman, Gooch, DeVries, and Nellis.

Absent: None

Visiting: Greg Thorson,

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Schwaller asked for a motion to approve the minutes from November 15, 2001.

An amendment was proposed to clarify the failed motion to table the approval of the proposed Theater Courses, page three, third motion. Clarification was made that the motion failed due to lack of a second.

MOTION: (Carlson, Urness) To approve minutes as amended from November 15, 2001.

VOTE: Unanimous in favor (12-0-0)

Schwaller moved to Agenda item # 4 to revisit the Political Science course approvals. Greg Thorson from the Discipline presented the clarification and changes. The request has changed from the proposal of five courses to the proposal of three courses.

Lee explained that in the attached memo from Greg Thorson, number one gives preliminary information about the discipline and how it has evolved. Items two through seven are in direct response to the Curriculum Committee's questions and item number eight explains that this component will be a requirement for the major, effective with the next catalog. The discipline, in response to the concern of the Curriculum Committee, has trimmed the new course offerings from five to three.

Schwaller commented that the structure now is much clearer and asked how to best put them in the catalog as either individual courses or topics under an umbrella. Mooney noted that other disciplines have done it both ways and either is acceptable. Lee stated that they chose variable topics was because they fit well in the discipline and then they were able to cluster courses; however, the Political Science discipline is open to suggestions. Schwaller indicated his preference of individual courses in the interest of avoiding the process of future topic changes going through committee approval. Thorson stated that Political Science has no intent of changing topics and does not object to the courses being approved as seminar courses.

Motion: (Schwaller, Carlson) To approve the three new Political Science courses Pol 4801, Pol 4802 and Pol 4805.

Discussion: A member questioned the description, prereqs and GERs for the new courses. After some discussion regarding the combining of the courses and the prereqs it was suggested by Schwaller to hold off on the vote until the NC forms could be submitted to the committee.

Motion tabled with no vote.

Discussion moved to agenda item two, courses without GER designations. Schwaller explained that after a review of documents about the GERs it was found that there has been no formal vote by Curriculum Committee or Campus

Assembly that each course must have a GER designator; however it has been the intention. Thus the issue of each course having a GER is caught between a formal vote and intended practice. DeJager noted that the Scholastic Committee does receive petitions from students to use undesignated courses to fulfill a specific GER. Schwaller noted that from DeJager's list of the number of petitions, it appears that 1/3 of the total petitions were for undesignated courses to fulfill a GER.

A member brought up the issue of allowing a course to have two designators from which a student can choose one or the other. Thielke agreed that this would be helpful to students so that they can meet all their GERs. A member stated that the complexity of one course being allowed to meet more than one GER requirement is not the solution to the problem. This would only create more problems. Instead this may be a time for the disciplines to re-evaluate all courses and the GERs they currently meet. This may alleviate the problem of limited courses in some GER categories.

A member stated that the system may not be broken but instead has a bottleneck. There is good rationale for courses to have two designators and with the expectation of every course having a GER it might be easier to give courses a GER if they could have two, they may fit two areas better than one. A member stated that having the either/or in place for GERs might alleviate the problem without sacrificing the general education experience. A member brought up the issue that if it is and either/or option the question will be raised "why not both". Schwaller noted his concern in allowing more than one GER per course would compromise the integrity of the GER program and the intent of the committee that put it together. There should be further investigation before operational assumptions are changed. A member stated, and others agreed, that there are two issues at hand. The first being the list of courses with no GERs and the second being the issues of offering more than one GER per course. The member stated that the first issue should be acted on and then the committee should discuss the second issue later. Schwaller noted that in Thielke's study, 30% of this year's juniors still have one Gen Ed requirement left to fulfill, mainly FA or ArtP, with three semesters to do that.

Schwaller stated that he would contact the disciplines regarding the first issue of courses with no GERs and ask for the disciplines to either give a GER or a reason for not having one. The issue of dual GERs per course will be revisited at a later time. A member questioned if Curriculum Committee would accept the notion of regulating enrollment by not indicating a GER. Schwaller indicated that this would not be acceptable to him and that there are better ways to regulate enrollment; however, the request would have to go before the committee. A member questioned if CC is asking the disciplines to repeat the original form request. Schwaller noted that he is asking for explanations from the disciplines only on courses for which there currently is no GER. Disciplines may provide a designator or explain why none should be indicated.

Meeting adjourned 9:00 a.m.
Submitted by Karen Van Horn

Send comments to Karen Van Horn at vanhornk@morris.umn.edu
Send comments to Curriculum Committee at curriculum@morris.umn.edu