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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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University of Minnesota, Morris
Morris, MN

MINUTES 2003-2004 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING # 2

September 17, 2003, 8:00 a.m. Behmler Conference Room

Present: John Schwaller, Judy Kuechle, Jooinn Lee, Mike Korth,
Jenny Nellis, Mary Elizabeth Bezanson, Chris DeVries,
Dave Roberts, Laura Burbank, Danielle Thibido,
Jackie Thorvaldson, Ruth Thielke, Dorothy DeJager,
Nancy Helsper and Jeri Mullin.

Absent: Tom Johnson, Annie Olson

Visiting: Tom McRoberts

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Schwaller asked for approval of minutes from April 9, 2003 and September 3, 2003.

MOTION: (Bezanson, Korth) To approve the minutes from
April 9, 2003, and September 3, 2003.

VOTE: Motion carried (10-0-0)

ADJUNCT COMMITTEE REPORT:

Schwaller asked Kuechle to address the committee about the Teacher Education Committee report and the recommendation that the committee be disbanded. Kuechle questioned if this report is the opinion of one person, as she had not been consulted or informed of this conclusion. Kuechle has been an Ex Officio member of this committee for one year and does not know the past history of the meeting schedule or accomplishments of the committee. She did indicate that the purpose for the committee was for accreditation and UMM must show a link between the teacher education program and the liberal arts. A member asked how essential this committee is for the teacher education program and Kuechle indicated that it is very essential. Kuechle also stated that she had not been consulted about the recommendation to disband the committee. A member stated that there might be some confusion as to the function of the committee and that may have prompted the recommendation to disband the committee. After additional discussion among the committee members a motion was made.

MOTION: (Bezanson, Nellis) To approve the report and reject the
recommendation to abolish the committee.

Discussion: A member stated that he hated to see any committee exist in name only and that as long as this committee was approved to continue last spring in absence of a report, he would like to see it continue for one year and review its value again. A member stated that the report explains that the committee is necessary for accreditation purposes. Kuechle also reminded the committee that UMM will be impacted by the new K-12 grad standards with the students that come to UMM and how the Education department teaches students. There will be a big problem if Teacher Education is not connected to the Liberal Arts.

CALL THE QUESTION:

VOTE: Motion carried (8-1-1)

Schwaller stated that the actual charge of the committee will be distributed and discussion will continue at the next

meeting.

UPDATE ON ECAS

Schwaller stated that updated forms had been distributed which explain where the information on the current forms will be found on the new ECAS form/page. He discussed the areas on the old form and indicated that the instructions for the Morris campus have been revised to reflect the new ECAS system. These will be posted on the web. The committee discussed the meaning of active/inactive courses and how deleted courses are made inactive, and not actually deleted to retain them for historical needs.

Schwaller indicated that the TC staff are working closely with us to include information our campus requires even though there is no specific section for some of that information such as the rationale and assessment.

There is a practice form available on the ECAS web page. However, at this time the form cannot be sent electronically or saved. A member noted that double entry of the information still exists except it is in the divisions and not in Behmler. Schwaller explained that double entry may exist but triple and quadruple entry does not. He also reminded the committee that this is a work in progress.

There was some discussion among the committee members about the need for assessment information. A member stated that the assessment information was a part of the old form. Schwaller explained that the same information from the old form is on the new form just in different fields, there are no new information requests. Helsper stated that the assessment information is necessary as it is the information that would be used in the assessment process. A member questioned who uses the assessment information and why is it on the form. Helsper explained that faculty members use this information and it reminds them to always think about assessment. Some disciplines have chosen to look at courses and see how they are doing. This information is available on the assessment web page.

TOPIC COURSE APPROVAL AND PROVISIONAL APPROVAL:

These issues came out of the Division Chair Retreat. Topic courses here and at other institutions have been used as a venue for experimental courses. Topic courses, per se, were not intended as on going courses. The problem here is the use of the rubric of large topic course umbrellas. The courses under the umbrella require approval only if they differ from the umbrella requirements, GER, etc. Most institutions use topic courses, as a venue to offer a course twice and then the course would go on for approval to become a permanent course. Currently the majority of topics courses are not subject to approval as are other courses and there is no rationale for that with the rapid course approval process that we have in place. Courses have become a permanent part of the curriculum without ever receiving approval. Two proposals came forward as a result of the discussion at the Division Chair retreat. The first is that topic courses can be offered twice and if a topics course were to be offered a third time, or more, it would require full approval. The second proposal would be that all topic courses would require provisional approval. A member stated that one way topics courses have been used in humanities has been as a place to put special topics outside of the regular curriculum and may be offered more than twice. These are courses that the discipline does not want to exist outside of a topic. Schwaller noted that the functional change will be minimal, the number assigned to a course may not be in sequence but the difference is if a course is going to be taught more than twice it needs full approval. The other option outside of topics courses, of new faculty wanting to teach a course that can be added quickly, will still be available with provisional approval. A member questioned who would track the number of times a course is offered and Schwaller indicated that the disciplines would need to keep track of this information, along with the Registrar.

A member stated that the current umbrella courses/topic courses is a convenient way to organize curriculum and the neat packaging has merit but it is necessary for all courses to be under CC scrutiny. Schwaller indicated that course numbering could be worked out with the divisions to create series of courses or to cluster courses. Schwaller stated that topic courses are necessary for the ability to teach specialized courses on a trial basis but not for packaging courses in a discipline. He explained that there needs to be some control gained over topic courses as many never come to CC for approval and the new proposal gives healthy scrutiny over all courses.

A member asked if CC was to take any action on these proposals at this time. Schwaller indicated that he does not want any action taken at this time.

Schwaller next brought up the issue of provisional approval for courses. All courses will receive regular or provisional approval. Provisional approval would apply to any topic course the first time around and would also apply to courses that new, incoming faculty would like to teach that are not a part of the current curriculum. Schwaller did request that the disciplines not wait until the last minute for approval and set-up. This last year there were several instances where some areas were lax and courses were coming for provisional approval after the semester had started and the course was already being taught.

A member expressed the need for some template or model to rewrite the catalog copy to match the new system. Helsper indicated that the current courses would get new numbers and the variable topic wording would be taken out of the title. Schwaller indicated that in the requirements for major or minor, courses could be listed as selecting from a series of courses listed separately or a range of course numbers.

MAXIMUM CREDIT LIMIT FOR DIRECTED STUDY COURSES:

Schwaller explained that currently the maximum credit limit for directed study courses is entered as 999 and should be more in line with a reasonable amount for a maximum. Helsper explained that this was not a problem to begin with as the information used to be in the background of the setup however now it is shown with the course information on line and needs to be fixed. Helsper has information that will be sent electronically to the CC members for discussion at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned 9:00

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Van Horn