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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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University of Minnesota, Morris
Morris, MN

MINUTES 2004-2005 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING # 10

February 9, 2005, 8:00 a.m. Behmler Conference Room

Present: John Schwaller, Mike Korth, Judy Kuechle, Jooinn Lee, Jenny Nellis, Mary Elizabeth Bezanson, Harold Hinds, Carol Marxen, Dave Roberts, Sarah Black, Blair Jasper, Jeri Mullin, Ruth Thielke, Dorothy DeJager, and Nancy Helsper.

Absent: Joe Basel, Lee Thao, and Sara Haugen.

Visiting: Janet Ericksen, Paula O'Loughlin

ENGLISH

Ericksen stated that Scholastic Committee had wanted the goals to match the course description. Students often think they have already had a college writing course when in fact they have not. The statement listed was written in response to this concern. When the CC returned it to English for clarification, the faculty members worked on rewriting the sentence in question. They diagramed the sentence and felt that the current version was best. They spent too much time trying to re-write the sentence and even asked for feedback from students and faculty candidates that were here for interviews. Ericksen asked the committee what concerns they had about the wording. A member stated there was concern over the wording "reading closely" indicating that the public might not know what that means. Ericksen explained that it makes the point then that if a student did not know what "reading closely" meant they would not have had that in a previous course and would not have met the GER. Ericksen also noted that many course descriptions have terms that not everyone will know. There was discussion among the members and Ericksen regarding specific wording. Ericksen explained that it is detailed in order to be clearer. A member expressed concern and said it seems backwards to re-write the GER description to fit what is currently practice. This should have been brought up earlier. The GERs are campus-wide and do not belong to one discipline. Ericksen stated that the intent was to clarify the description making it more specific, not to change the goals. There was more discussion about specific wording. Nellis explained that she did not see a problem with this proposal earlier and consequently had not taken the English discipline up on their request to attend the previous meeting. A member stated that when it was first viewed it appeared there were problems with parallelisms but that has now been clarified. Another member agreed.

MOTION: (Black, Jasper) To approve the English changes as proposed.

DISCUSSION:

Ericksen noted that they are bringing in a new writing faculty member. This specific issue was discussed with each candidate. This issue has received an enormous amount of time and will again come back for the next catalog. It can be looked at again at that time. A member stated that it was her understanding that this change will not be in the new catalog and Schwaller concurred. A member noted that incoming faculty would have this updated version to work from for further changes. Ericksen also noted that English has two full detailed pages of goals.

CALL THE QUESTION: (Nellis, Black)

VOTE: Motion passed (9-1-0)

AREAS OF CONCENTRATION:

O'Loughlin explained that these items are being brought for information and not for action. Over the last year and a half several faculty members along with Ruth Thielke, Registrar, have worked to prepare templates or prototypes for several different Areas of Concentration. This was a result of retention studies to find out why students leave. It is a way to keep some of those students and will also possibly be a new recruiting tool. These are not intended to lead the way to new majors, they would continue to be Areas of Concentration requiring the student to complete the rationale statement as to why it should be considered an Area of Concentration and will also continue to require the necessary approvals by faculty, Division Chairs, and the Dean.

Schwaller explained that the work that was done was not arbitrary or a haphazard assemblage. The templates were put together as a good point of departure for students. Thielke noted that one area that may cause a problem is the Journalism Area of Concentration. Some newspapers and other employers require a certified program. Some colleges removed their journalism programs because of this requirement. It is an area that may need to be revised. O'Loughlin agreed that there were significant concerns and that sharing that information with the students is important but the Journalism title is needed and she would stand by the decision for that specific title. A member suggested that we indicate that our program is not certified somewhere on the document. It was discussed that one additional year in a certified masters program would take care of this requirement and a member suggested stating it that in a positive way.

A member asked if more areas of concentration will be added to this list. O'Loughlin explained that at this time there is no plan to add more. A member noted that this is not a complete list of those available, as students can design their own areas of concentration; there is no limit. O'Loughlin did note that with the

exception of Native American Studies, that may be proposed as a major sometime in the future, there are no plans to propose any of these prototypes as majors.

A member noted that Art Therapy has similar issues as Journalism. Art Therapy contains a sentence that journalism could have as well; "... is intended to prepare students to pursue a Master's degree in art therapy (recommended to obtain board certification in this field)." Other members agreed that this is a positive way to address the issue.

A member asked if Division Chairs will still be involved in the approval process. Dean Schwaller indicated that they would continue to go through the current process requiring faculty and division approval, review by the Registrar and approval by the Dean. The member stated that by listing these templates students may assume they are pre-approved. Dean Schwaller explained that the prototypes do not deny approval by the faculty, Division Chair, and Dean. O'Loughlin stated that the member was correct that this went directly to the Dean however, it was discussed with the Division Chairs last year during a meeting with the Dean, but the Division Chairs did not sign their approval. O'Loughlin explained that the intent was not to undermine the authority of the Division Chairs; she was following the instructions in the catalog that they go to the Dean. The member questioned some of the prototypes in his area stating that they suggest courses could be re-arranged to have 2 or more majors. Dean Schwaller indicated that when others have come to him that way they have been sent back to be changed, they would not be approved. A member stated that the evolution of this is similar to LAAS where there was an incidental emphasis created by courses taken for the major. O'Loughlin stated that she had discussed this with the faculty in that area who had taken lead with the project. She asked for suggested changes to alleviate the concern raised. The member stated that he did not have problem with the minors or emphases created, his concern was with two or more majors received for the price of one and stated that option should not be suggested. O'Loughlin asked if he would prefer those in question be withdrawn. The member stated they should be re-written. O'Loughlin agreed and asked if the member would communicate that to the faculty in his area. He stated he has been not involved in the discussions and O'Loughlin responded that she would be happy to communicate the concerns and suggestions with the faculty involved.

Meeting adjourned.

8:55 a.m.

Submitted by Karen Van Horn