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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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## **UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

### **MEETING # 17 Minutes**

**February 21, 2007, 8:00 a.m., Behmler Hall Conference Room**

Present: Judy Kuechle (chair), Ferolyn Angell, Van Gooch, Harold Hinds, Michael Korth, Jooinn Lee, Jenny Nellis, Gwen Rudney, Ray Schultz, Sara Haugen, Nancy Helsper, Jeri Mullin, Clare Strand

Absent: Escillia Allen, Amanda Jasken, two students yet to be named

Visiting: Bryan Herrmann, Paula O'Loughlin, Brenda Boever, Tom McRoberts

Kuechle opened the meeting.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 14, 2007**

Kuechle asked for approval of minutes from the February 14, 2007 meeting.

**MOTION** (Hinds/Schultz): To approve the minutes of February 14, 2007.

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously.

### **REGULAR APPROVAL OF A COURSE**

PHYS 1063 Physics of Weather

**MOTION** (Gooch/Rudney): To approve the new course (Phys 1063)

**VOTE:** Motion passed (7-0-0)

Korth explained that it is a new course for non-majors.

### **SPRING CELEBRATION EVENT**

Kuechle invited guests Bryan Herrmann and Paula O'Loughlin, members of the Retention Work Group, to present a proposal for a UMM Spring Student Experience Celebration Event. Hermann handed out a written proposal (attached). The proposed date of the initial event is Wednesday, April 16, 2008.

O'Loughlin explained that the event is being proposed to be in line with the campus strategic plan of celebrating UMM's student/faculty relationships and accomplishments. Another goal is the retention of students. UMM has a number of events in April already, and this would help to tie them together and emphasize their importance. The proposal is coming before the Curriculum Committee because the event would involve the cancellation of classes during the event.

Rudney voiced support for the idea but suggested that another date be chosen, since many of the senior education students would still be student teaching that week. Gooch also stated that he liked the idea but was concerned about the science courses that would be disrupted if a lab or related lecture was canceled. It would not just involve canceling one lab, but all the labs for all the sections. Korth agreed that for most science faculty, cutting out a Wednesday would mess up the entire week of classes. Angell stated that it would be a problem for dance courses as well, since the courses only meet once a week. It would create a problem for any one-credit course that meets once a week on Wednesday.

Haugen suggested that O'Loughlin and Herrmann share with the committee the goals of the proposal so committee members can weigh whether it would be worth making such a sacrifice. O'Loughlin stated that a major piece of the Strategic Plan is to enhance co-curricular and curricular activities. The event would be a way to encourage and inform students about challenges outside the classroom. Retention of students between the sophomore and junior years is a big issue that this may address by allowing students to see all of the opportunities they can be involved in. It would also help juniors and seniors to see that their work is honored by the campus.

Nellis voiced a doubt that more students would be involved if the events were combined into one day. What she has

observed over the years is that the same students are involved in multiple events. She did not see how ambivalent students will be enticed to take part. Nellis also stated that she does not like to receive e-mails asking her to give extra credit for things that she believes is just a part of being a good campus citizen.

Lee stated that he felt it was a good idea but the program organizer has to come up with a worthy program that would be worth upsetting the classroom. Eventually, it would be institutionalized and built into the academic calendar.

Angell asked who will make the decision about what will be presented. O'Loughlin answered participation of units or programs showcased will be decided by the units themselves. Participation by units or programs will not be mandatory.

Korth asked if the Retention Work Group had considered exempting classes that only meet once a week from the dismissal. O'Loughlin cautioned that once exemptions are given, everyone will want one.

Hinds stated that retention at UMM is a serious issue and everyone is acutely aware of it. A program that will retain even a handful of students is significant. It has been his experience that the majority of students leave for very different kinds of reasons. They leave because our curriculum does not match their need or they enter pre-professional programs elsewhere. It has been his observation that people dissatisfied with the UMM campus experience leave much earlier than the end of their sophomore year.

O'Loughlin replied that data collected over the last six years does show that a loss to pre-professional programs is one of the reasons, but our lack of retention does not have a single driving reason. Our involvement in the National Student Exchange has helped us keep ten students a year. Every year we try to come up with something that will help retain students. A significant group of students who don't stay are academically successful and meet our profile but haven't felt that they had an academically rigorous experience. This specific initiative is geared toward them.

Kuechle asked why we have students at the sophomore and junior levels who are not aware of programs such as Service Learning or the Undergraduate Research Symposium. Haugen answered that people might know about something but unless they catch the excitement from someone else they might not think it's a big thing. The idea of students getting other students excited is a big part of it. O'Loughlin shared the example of the Truman Scholarship. Social Science has been nominating people for the Truman Scholarship for the last ten years. It didn't take off until students who knew about it started to share their experiences with other students and got them excited about it. Students are learning something by talking to winners of the scholarship, even if they don't receive it themselves. Student-to-student socialization is exactly what we're looking at. Strand suggested providing an opportunity for freshmen or sophomores to interview people who have participated in the events and programs.

Rudney asked if prospective students might be asked to attend the event. Herrmann answered that they would definitely be invited. It would be a good way to showcase what we do here.

Nellis said that the Honors recital has not been well attended. The best attendance occurred the year it was held right after the awards ceremony because people were already here. The students do an excellent job and it's lost when it's an event that's not connected to something else. Hinds questioned whether putting so much in the same day might actually diminish the honor of some of the activities. The proposal lists at least three things scheduled in the evening. He suggested spreading it out over the week and holding a number of things over the course of a week. Knowing that some students will take the Wednesday off and not attend the event, spreading it out as part of an entire week might diminish that from happening. Herrmann answered that the idea is to begin with one day but eventually build the event to become a full week. Angell stated that the World Touch Cultural Heritage Week goes on in the spring already, and asked where this week-long event might fall in the calendar. Haugen replied that Student Activities does not encourage people to have week-long events.

Schultz stated that he saw the proposal as having good potential. It would need to be packaged in a way that would entice people to get under the banner of it. The challenge becomes trying to coordinate all of it. Kuechle asked what the timeline or expectation is. Herrmann stated that the timeline involves presenting to the committees listed at the bottom of the proposal, to get their input and approval. Four committees have given their approval. After presenting to the Curriculum Committee, it will be brought to the Campus Assembly this spring.

**MOTION** (Nellis/Rudney) To support the continuation and development of the idea of a UMM Spring Student Experience Celebration Event.

**VOTE:** The vote was tabled.

Hinds suggested that the Retention Work Group take the suggestions into consideration and refine the proposal into a more specific proposal before taking it to Campus Assembly. Korth agreed that the proposal is too vague to vote on at this time. Angell stated that she was not comfortable saying that she approves of something that's just an idea. Gooch added that he would also vote no if he had to vote at this time. Noting a reluctance of the committee to vote at this time, Kuechle tabled the vote and thanked Herrmann and O'Loughlin for coming. She asked them to return with a revised proposal.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.  
Submitted by Darla Peterson