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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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### Curriculum minutes 05/06/2008

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## **UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

### **MEETING #16 Minutes**

**May 6, 2008, 3:00 p.m., Behmler 130**

Present: Roland Guyotte (chair), Escillia Allen, Ferolyn Angell, Van Gooch, Harold Hinds, Michael Korth, Judy Kuechle, Pareena Lawrence, Jenny Nellis, Nate Swanson, Laura Thoma, Kim Ukura, Sara Haugen, Jeri Squier, Clare Strand, Nancy Helsper

Absent: Gwen Rudney

Visiting: Brenda Boever, Jim Cotter

*In these minutes: Proposal for new major in environmental science, three new courses in environmental science, and course approvals in education, science and mathematics, and interdisciplinary studies.*

Guyotte commended the committee members for their hard work in sixteen meetings of the Curriculum Committee in a non-catalog year. He also congratulated the graduating student members of the committee (Swanson and Ukura).

### **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 15, 2008**

Guyotte asked for approval of minutes from the April 15, 2008 meeting.

MOTION: (Hinds/Thoma) To approve the April 15, 2008 minutes.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

### **2. APPROVAL OF NEW MAJOR IN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

MOTION: (Angell/Lawrence) To approve the new environmental science program.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

Discussion: Guyotte invited geology professor Jim Cotter to speak to the committee regarding the proposal for a new major in environmental science. Cotter began by explaining that the Division of Science and Mathematics has been discussing environmental programs for the past three years. First to come forward was the environmental studies major, approved earlier this year. The division thought it important to also have a STEM field in environmental science. The program is revenue neutral because the courses for the most part already exist. New courses proposed for the major are a field experience (practicum) and a senior seminar. Cotter explained that he would be in charge of the seminars. Electives over the next five years will consist of new courses taught when time allows. It is hoped that they will be funded by an NSF STEP grant. This program was approved by the division, presented to CRPC, and is now before the Curriculum Committee.

Guyotte asked Cotter to explain the terms STEP and STEM. Cotter explained that both are National Science Foundation (NSF) programs. STEP is the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Talent Expansion Program. STEM is the NSF Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics program. The government believes we are in crisis mode concerning the number of STEM graduates produced in the United States. The STEP program is an NSF program funded above and beyond the normal NSF budget. It was created by the U.S. Congress to meet the crisis by increasing the number of STEM graduates in universities around the country. Fifteen to twenty grants are awarded. The University of Minnesota received one for a half million dollars. UMM is trying to establish an environmental science program building on the good publicity generated by the University, UMM's strength in environmental issues, and a high ranking of freshmen declaring an interest in a science major. When you get above 30% you start ranking very high. Four years ago UMM was ranked above 90%. The interest in environmental issues and the attraction of good scientists to campus makes the proposed program a good fit for UMM at this time.

Lawrence stated that when we have majors without designated tenure lines attached to them it becomes problematic when turnover occurs. She asked if there will be a position description that is half environmental science and half geology to prevent that from happening in the future. Cotter answered that one of the things that is being done is to keep in mind the group of courses needed for the program when hiring faculty in the sciences. None of the required courses are outside of the courses that have been taught already. There are courses offered year-after-year that have survived several iterations of faculty. Lawrence

asked if the proposed major overlaps with the environmental studies major. Cotter answered that one required class overlaps: introduction to environmental studies. There are also overlaps with physics, geology, and environmental biology. Electives also overlap.

Guyotte asked if the GIS course taught by a computer scientist will be co-listed down the pike. Cotter answered that a geology faculty member started the course. It is owned by geology now but how it will evolve is unknown. The technology is very useful in several disciplines, such as geology, geography, political science, and biology. However, it might make better sense for a computer scientist to teach it the course. The other disciplines could send their students to the class to get the basic computer science knowledge, while the discipline-specific applications could be taught in the various other disciplines.

Kuechle asked if the NFS STEP grant will go away if the proposed major is not passed. Cotter answered that it would not because all the grant requires is development of interdisciplinary courses within an environmental science orientation. Courses that would qualify are “Physics of Atmosphere,” and Global Change and Geology Systems,” two environmental science courses listed as physics and geology courses.

Ukura asked how the required practicum would work. Cotter explained that it would involve some kind of research internship or field course experience. The intent is to get students doing something other than sitting in a classroom. How the individual student chooses to fulfill that course will have a lot to do with career aspirations. The practicum is a broad umbrella.

Swanson asked if it is common for other schools that have an environmental studies program to offer an environmental science track. And, if so, does it help students in graduate school? Cotter answered that a lot of students first start with a science track. The Twin Cities campus has both, but they don’t communicate. St. Olaf has environmental studies with a science track, and a great deal of overlap, but the junior year diverges. At the heart of this proposal is a STEM field. We could not do environmental studies with a science track and end up qualifying for STEM. Environmental graduate programs are relatively new. A lot of times graduate programs wonder if students choose the environmental studies program simply because they haven’t yet decided whether they prefer biology or chemistry. Hopefully, in this program, the field experience (practicum) will help students decide by their junior year which track to follow. Cotter added that the intent is not to have students shifting from other majors, but to create new STEM majors. If there is a problem, it will be identified in the first five years of the program.

Guyotte asked who are defined as members of the environmental science advisory group. Cotter responded that the advisory group includes representatives from each discipline involved and a student representative; it cannot have fewer than five members. Each discipline assigns their representative.

Lawrence asked why a minor is not being proposed. Cotter answered that a minor would consist of a number of 1xxx courses, which wouldn’t get a student anywhere. Hinds noted that someone majoring in environmental studies may appreciate that option. Cotter answered that tracks are defined in environmental studies. Angell added that there is the option of creating an area of emphasis in environmental science. Hinds stated that it might be interesting to see what the impact would be on students who major in both environmental studies and environmental science.

Kuechle commented that the new program is described as being budget neutral, but new courses are being proposed. Cotter answered that in the geology discipline a number of the courses currently taught every year will be offered every other year. The diversity of courses will double, but the number offered will not.

Swanson asked for clarification on what the senior seminar will entail, e.g., will it build off of what the student has learned in the practicum? Cotter answered that it would and that students will start thinking about their senior seminars their junior year.

Helsper noted that under required courses, “EnSt 2101 or Biol 1111” is listed. But then Biol 2101 is also indented under Biol 1111. Squier explained that it formats like that in the executive summary of PCAS. Korth explained that the intent is EnSt 2101 or both Biol 2101 and Biol 1111. Cotter added that there was a concern that environmental students couldn’t jump into courses higher in biology without prerequisites. Other minor corrections were noted that will be fixed before forwarding the proposal on.

### **3. APPROVAL OF NEW COURSES FOR NEW MAJOR IN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

**ESci 3196-Environmental Science Field Camp. (Sci; 4 cr)**

**ESci 4901- Environmental Science Senior Seminar I. (1 cr)**

## **ESci 4902-Environmental Science Senior Seminar II. (1 cr)**

MOTION: (Hinds/Korth) To consider the three courses as a package.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

MOTION: (Hinds/Korth) To approve the three courses.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

Discussion: Lawrence: asked if ESci 4901 is a prerequisite of ESci 4902, and if they are in sequence. Squier replied that it does state that ESci 4901 is a prerequisite.

## **4. OTHER COURSE APPROVALS**

### **Education**

#### **WSS 1305-Beginning Taekwondo. (0.5 cr)**

MOTION: (Kuechle/Korth) To approve WSS 1305-Beginning Taekwondo.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

Discussion: Kuechle explained that the proposal changes the credits from 1 to 0.5 credits. Squier asked when it would be effective, since students who have already registered have registered for a 1 credit course. It should not be effective until spring 2009. Korth added that it won't go to Campus Assembly until fall 2008 anyway. Swanson asked if the course can count toward a major. Kuechle answered that it can only count as credits toward graduation.

### **Science and Mathematics**

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#### **Biol 4172-Plant Systematics. (Sci-L; 4 cr)**

MOTION: (Korth/Gooch) To approve Biol 4172-Plant Systematics.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

Discussion: Korth explained that this course will replace an existing course, reverting to the curricular structure in place in the quarter system. Kuechle asked if a course is being inactivated as well. Korth answered that the new course won't be taught for about two years. The old one will be inactivated by the time this is activated. Korth added that the course is being brought forward at this time as a component of the environmental science major electives.

#### **Phys 2301-Atmospheric Physics. (Env; 4 cr)**

MOTION: (Korth/Angell) To approve Phys 2301-Atmospheric Physics.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

Discussion: Korth explained that this new course in physics is being proposed in order to contribute to environmental studies on campus. As a result, something else will not be taught to make room for this. Guyotte added that the development of this course is supported by the STEP grant that Cotter had discussed.

#### **Stat 4671-Statistical Computing. (M/SR; 4 cr)**

MOTION: (Hinds/Korth) To approve Stat 4671-Statistical Computing.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

Discussion: Lawrence stated that this course and a survey sampling course are interesting courses that she would like to see offered during the regular year so they are available to students who cannot stay over the summer. Korth explained that faculty members have enough to teach in the regular school year and would have to drop something else in order to teach this.

Ukura asked why it is a 4xxx course when the only prerequisites are a 1xxx and 2xxx. Korth answered that the first letter is supposed to indicate the level of students you encourage to take the course, thus a 4xxx course is intended for seniors. Squier

added that the rationale suggests the higher level course would be helpful for students interested in graduate school. Korth stated that the course is scheduled to be offered this summer, and if so, provisional approval will be requested.

### **Interdisciplinary Studies**

#### **IS 1001-First-Year Seminar: Human Diversity. (FYS; 2 cr)**

MOTION: (Korth/Ukura) To approve IS 1001-First-Year Seminar: Human Diversity.

VOTE: Motion passed (10-0-1)

Discussion: Guyotte explained that this is a proposal to remove mention of the Jamboree from the course description. It had been included in the course description to follow the University policy requiring notification when any aspect of the class will meet outside the regular class hour. The First Year Experience Task Force had proposed getting rid of the Jamboree. The First-Year Seminar faculty members have concurred and are preparing their syllabi for fall 2008 to reflect the change. Thoma mentioned that it will need to be removed from the online calendar. Ukura asked who sent the change forward. Guyotte answered that the Dean's Office sent it forward.

#### **IS 1037-Unleashing Your Creativity: Words, Movement, and Images. (2 cr)**

MOTION: (Angell/Hinds) To approve IS 1037-Unleashing Your Creativity: Words, Movement, and Images.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

Discussion: Angell asked if this Summer Scholars course proposed for this summer has received provisional approval. Helsper answered that it did on April 21, 2008.

#### **IS 1042-Psychology of Excellence. (SS; 4 cr)**

MOTION: (Ukura/Thoma) To approve IS 1042-Psychology of Excellence.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

Discussion: Swanson stated that the title sounds like the title of a Dr. Phil book. Lawrence explained that it is intended for students who want to become coaches. Hinds stated that the title would suggest a psychology discipline course instead of an interdisciplinary studies course. Kuechle responded psychology of sport science is in the wellness and sport science discipline. Music history is in music, not history. Guyotte answered that the expectation is that it would not apply to a psychology major and would only apply to someone intending to be a coach. Hinds asked if it was correct to presume that the instructor has a background in psychology. Guyotte answered that the instructor has a Ph.D.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Submitted by Darla Peterson