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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

2008-09 MEETING #9 Minutes

November 12, 2008, 8:00 a.m., Behmler 130

Present: Cheryl Contant (chair), Brenda Boever, Mark Collier, Janet Ericksen, Van Gooch, Sara Haugen, Donovan Hanson, Michael Korth, Judy Kuechle, Pareena Lawrence, Gwen Rudney, Dennis Stewart, Clare Strand, Nancy Helsper

Absent: Veronica Lei, Axl McChesney, Alex Murphy

Visiting: Jayne Blodgett, Dorothy De Jager, Jeri Squier

In these minutes: Inactivation of three courses in CMR; Discussion of "same as" Courses; and Beginning of Discussion of 32-credit maximum for internships.

Rudney reminded the Committee of the upcoming NCATE/BOT visit schedule, which includes a meeting with the Committee on November 17 at 1:00 p.m. Contant encouraged members to attend and announced that she and the education faculty members of the Committee would not be attending the meeting.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 29, 2008

MOTION (Gooch/Lawrence) to approve the October 29, 2008 minutes.

Discussion: Strand's remark on page 3 ". . . any course that exists in PCAS" will be changed to ". . . any course that exists in ECAS or any program in PCAS." Korth also pointed out a change on page 4. His name should be removed from the subcommittee list under "cluster headings."

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote (with corrections as noted).

2. COMMUNICATION, MEDIA, AND RHETORIC MULTIPLE COURSE CHANGES

MOTION (Ericksen/Kuechle) to approve the inactivation of three courses in CMR.

CMR 3211-Public Address (Hum)

CMR 3311-Social Uses of the Media (E/CR)

CMR 3341-Communication Technology and Society (Hum)

Discussion: Contant stated that these courses were inadvertently left out of the list of courses to be deleted that went to the October Campus Assembly meeting.

VOTE: Motion passed (9-0-0)

3. DISCUSSION OF "SAME AS" COURSES

Contant asked subcommittee members Strand and Stewart to begin the discussion. Lawrence asked if someone could first explain what the issue was, since it had been brought up so long ago in a Committee meeting that she had forgotten. Strand stated that there were two slightly different perceptions of what "same as" means. One meaning is that the courses are the exact equivalent and the other is that they are not exactly equal but similar enough to not receive credit for both. To qualify for a "same as" course, courses must meet three qualifications:

1. Courses have content sufficient in two disciplines to count in either
2. Course descriptions are identical, published in both disciplines.
3. Courses are taught at the same time, in the same classroom, by the same instructor.

Stewart stated that the issue originally came up in the context of a discussion about WSS/Biol 2102-Human Anatomy. Education had presented a change in the length and number of lectures in the course. Helsper recalled that Committee members had questioned the need for double-listing it. Stewart added that the issue of where it is counted and who pays

the instructor came up as well.

Strand shared the history of “same as” courses. Reference to “same as” courses can be found as far back as the 1967-69 catalog. At that time, biology wanted to offer courses but had neither the faculty nor the funds to do so, so when a faculty member outside of the discipline was qualified and willing to teach “same as” courses were created. Based on conversations Stewart had with faculty, the information about “same as” courses somehow ended up in folklore, but not in the catalog. Strand stated that the recommendation of the subcommittee is to maintain the historical and most common definition of “same as” and to include it in the catalog.

Collier stated that his “same as” course is one course taught by different people. Erickson mentioned that “same as” courses entice history students, for example, to take an English course they would not otherwise take, and *vice versa*. She gives different assignments to students who take the course for history credit than for English credit. Kuechle added that human anatomy is a course with one instructor and the exact same course content regardless of which course designator a student chooses. If a biology major had a transcript with a course in human anatomy that was listed as wellness and sport science, it may make a difference to an employer or graduate school when looking at the transcript. Lawrence added that the same can be said for a sociology major who has a lot of anthropology courses listed on the transcript. Stewart added that it would make a great difference how a course shows up on a transcript. He currently teaches a Mgmt/Psy course. If the “same as” went away, he would choose the Psy course designator because that’s his discipline. Management majors would not like to see a bunch of psychology courses showing up in the middle of the management major on a transcript. Lawrence added that she didn’t think she could get her management students to take a psychology class, but they would take it if it carried a management designator. Strand told her that UMM is a liberal arts school and management students should be advised to take other than management courses. Lawrence answered that she knew how students would react based on her experience advising management students. Contant agreed that how courses are listed on a transcript does make a difference.

Strand stated that she was not convinced that it makes a difference how a course is listed on the transcript. The original reason for creating “same as” courses was not so a student’s transcript could look good. Squier added that it may benefit some students but also creates confusion for most students. The Register’s Office does a lot of switching after the semester starts when students don’t get registered in time because they don’t know the other discipline is out there. Rudney asked if the registration is typically divided in half. Squier answered no, they are constantly adjusting the max in one or the other to keep the course from appearing filled when only one side is full. Stewart agreed that he had adjusted his psychology course toward management getting more seats. Strand stated that there would be some advantage to eliminating “same as” courses because they can complicate registration. Kuechle commented that although there is an understanding that “same as” courses can cause extra work for staff, the question to consider is whether it helps the students. If it helps students, it would make sense to keep “same as” courses.

Ericksen stated that she was surprised to hear that “same as” courses are separate courses. Strand replied that they are listed in the catalog as separate courses. Squier added that the Ger/Hum courses are on the list as “same as” courses, but they are different because they are taught differently, depending on which course the student registers for. The German course requires written assignments in German. The Humanities course allows written assignments in English. Strand stated that they should be listed as two separate courses that meet at the same time. Kuechle stated that the list could be pared down. Erickson stated that she was interested in the courses that are equivalent but not exactly the same. Helsper suggested that, rather than using the word equivalent, the courses should be listed with a statement in the parenthetical that credit will not be given for one if the other has been taken.

Collier stated that he would like to underline the idea that there is a value in having faculty working together on interdisciplinary courses. There is a reason to continue to find ways to do so. “Same as” courses are a good example. They may cause some problems, but there is a value in cross-listing courses. Stewart agreed and stated that one person he interviewed had the same point. It clearly demonstrates that where one area can’t handle a course, it can be offered in an interdisciplinary way. But IS courses do not often strike students as an option they want to pursue. Ericksen agreed and said that some students forget to even look at IS courses. It also does look better in the catalog to list a course as “same as” as opposed to IS.

Contant stated that there seems to be two circumstances for courses with the same title and content but two different

course designators. The first is where the courses are exactly the same, with identical content and course requirements, and an option to register for it under one of two course designator prefixes. This option covers nearly all of the current “same as” courses. In the second circumstance, the courses meet at the same time, but the assignments are different, depending on which course the student is registered for. The courses are not equal but are similar with substantial overlap. In both circumstances, if a student completes the course, they are not permitted to take it again under the other course designator prefix.

Content then stated that there are number of questions to answer on this issue: Should “same as courses continue to be permitted? If so, are there any on the list that should be eliminated? And, what happens with student rating of teaching when they are taught by faculty across divisions? Stewart answered that evaluations are usually combined. Lawrence stated that it is a divisional decision. Contant asked where forms are sent for an interdivisional course, such as a math/mgmt course. Ericksen answered that she thought they should go to whatever division the instructor is in. It would be wise to share them with the other division as well. The division in which the course counts toward a major would be interested in knowing if the course is a disaster. Gooch asked where the anatomy course evaluation forms are sent. Korth answered that some go to the science and math division. Kuechle answered that she handles those forms since the faculty member who teaches it is in her division. Korth replied that it’s haphazard. Some go to some and some to another.

Rudney state that the ownership question of how the course is counted is a real issue. Who owns the course and who pays for it? Gooch stated that it was a concern with the “same as” anatomy course. Biology would like to own it. Stewart added that ownership isn’t completely monetary. It’s also psychological. Splitting the psy/mgmt course into two courses would result in his appointment splitting between psychology and management. He views himself as a psychologist, not a management professor. Some faculty may not feel they want to appear to have moved to another discipline. Strand stated that French recently changed the Fren/Hum “same as” courses to just be listed in French to accurately reflect the French faculty teaching load.

DeJager stated that the Twin Cities does “same as” courses all the time. She did not check with them regarding staff assignment, pay, or course credit. Strand answered that she did not want to look at the Twin Cities as an example. De Jager answered that it might be worthwhile to have staffing questions answered.

Contant summarized the result of the discussion as follows:

1. The Committee wants to keep “same as” courses.
 - a. The value lies in students being able to list the course with a specific discipline designator on their transcript.
 - b. Encouraging students from two different areas to participate in one course is valuable in a curriculum.
 - c. It is an efficient use of faculty time to teach both sets of students, side-by-side.
 - d. The rule to preclude students from taking both courses should continue.
 - e. Either course will satisfy degree requirements.
 - f. There will continue to be logistical course enrollment issues, but that is a price worth paying for the interdisciplinary nature and other benefits gained by offering “same as” courses.
 - g. The definition will go into the catalog and the staff who work with ECAS in the divisions should be made aware of the definition so they can watch for it when faculty propose “same as” courses.
2. Some courses on the list would be better served as two separate courses with separate course descriptions.
 - a. Disciplines should be charged to look at their courses, and if possible, to split courses that do not have the exact course content and assignments into separate courses that happen to have the same instructor(s) and meet at the same time.
 - b. Students should be precluded from taking both courses.
3. There will be instances about how the “same as” course is counted.
 - a. A contribution from one discipline to another in terms of workload should be noted and tracked for review by division chairs.
 - b. The process of sharing course evaluations across divisions for those courses that have interdivisional “same as” designators should be regularized.

Collier stated that May session courses that are co-taught are treated as one class, including the money and course evaluations. Strand asked how May session course evaluations go into the tenure process. Stewart answered that it is the faculty's option to put them in. Kuechle added that they do not have to be included since May session is considered to be outside of the regular appointment course load. Korth stated that when courses are co-taught in science and mathematics, he encourages the use of two envelopes because usually comments are about a specific instructor. Contant added that when it is clear the course is co-taught, two envelopes are provided. Ericksen added that Continuing Education is the exception. Collier agreed and stated that CE just sends one envelope.

Contant stated that there was not time to begin the last item on the agenda, but instructed the Committee to look over the list that was provided with courses that have the words "Internship" or "Field Study" in them. When the agenda topic of Internships is discussed, it would be good to have a complete course listing. Committee members should send any additions/deletions to Helsper prior to the next meeting. Strand asked for credit ranges to be included in the list.

Adjourned 8:58 a.m.

Darla Peterson