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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
2008-09 MEETING #11 Minutes
December 3, 2008, 8:00 a.m., Behmler 130

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

Absent: Alex Murphy

Visiting: Dorothy De Jager, Jayne Blodgett

In these minutes: PDF-only course catalog; volunteers for discussion of criteria for opening/closing a major/minor; discussion of FL designator on 1001 language courses

Contant welcomed Mike McBride, new student member to the Committee, replacing Victoria Lei. Members were encouraged to update their online calendars or send their spring semester schedules to Darla as soon as possible.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 19, 2008

MOTION (Kuechle/Ericksen) to approve the November 19, 2008 minutes.

Discussion: Lawrence noted a number of corrections. The last sentence of the third paragraph on page two should be changed to “Lawrence answered that there is no broad rule, but some disciplines have a limit.” Also, in the last full paragraph of page two, the word “internship” in the first sentence should be changed to “intern,” and the second sentence of the same paragraph should end with the additional words “or other cities.” She also noted that the first word in the sixth line of the third full paragraph on page three should be changed from “must” to “may.” De Jager asked that her statement on page two regarding residency requirements be revised and submitted a revision.

Motion passed, by unanimous voice vote, with corrections as noted.

PDF-ONLY COURSE CATALOG (item not on agenda)

Contant stated that the Twin Cities campus requested all campuses to abandon the printed catalog as a cost-saving and energy-saving measure. The change would be effective beginning with the 2009-11 catalog. A printable (8.5x11) catalog will be available in PDF format on the Web. The PDF is easily searchable and would be readily available and archived. The current online catalog (produced from PCAS) would continue to function in the same way. The front pages of the PDF version would include the pages in the front of the current printed catalog.

When UMM moved from a printed class schedule to the current online-only schedule, there was some consternation on campus.

Gooch asked if the PDF version would remain static while the online version would be ongoing and changing. Contant answered that a decision would have to be made about the frequency of updating the PDF. Her anticipation is not to prepare or make changes to the PDF version in the interim of the two-year catalog cycle, because it takes a lot of time to prepare and to format the catalog.

Lawrence asked if a two-year cycle is fairly common among colleges. De Jager answered that she sees a lot of annual catalogs, mostly from community colleges. Rudney stated that the catalog is a contract with the students, and teacher education is particularly vulnerable to changes. They have to track what year students entered and what they have to do to meet their contract.

Boever stated that she finds the printed copy of the catalog helpful when advising students to choose a language. Contant answered that the PDF-only version would be bookmarked and fully searchable, and would actually be an improvement over the printed copy. Strand asked if the folks in the Twin Cities would be willing to print a limited

number of printed copies for distribution. Contant answered that it was not their intention to do so. UMM would have to do it at our own expense, using the PDF.

Boever noted that some people would need it in alternative formats. Helsper replied that requests for alternative formats would be sent to our disability services office. Gooch stated that he sees catalogs sitting along side of many of the Committee members and suggested that members would continue to need a printed format. Contant stated that it could be accomplished each year to provide a copy of the PDF catalog to the new Committee members as a gift at the beginning of the academic year.

Contant concluded that we don't have much to say about the change because she was informed that we are the last campus to decide. All others have agreed to abandon the printed copy. She thanked the Committee for its input and asked for a motion and vote. Helsper asked that the terminology "PDF-only version" be used in the motion. The printed catalog is being replaced by the PDF-only version. The online catalog is the version that is produced directly from PCAS without the front section that appears in the printed catalog.

MOTION (Lawrence/McChesney) to approve the conversion to the PDF-only version of the course catalog beginning with the 2009-11 catalog.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

2. VOLUNTEERS FOR DISCUSSION OF CRITERIA FOR OPENING/CLOSING A MAJOR/MINOR

Discussion: Contant stated that although Collier and Ericksen had both volunteered to be on the subcommittee to frame the discussion, some divisional diversity should be represented on the subcommittee. Strand asked if the Committee would consider opening it up to the campus for discussion in the form of a task force, since the division chairs have discussed it and there is a particular major in mind. Kuechle stated that the division chairs have not discussed this topic. Contant added that this discussion is about formalizing procedures and not about any particular major.

Collier asked if the Committee could just make it an agenda item to discuss as a group. Contant answered that, at this point, she is just looking for someone to frame the conversation that the Committee will have. Ericksen stated that it would be helpful to have someone on the subcommittee who has been at UMM long enough to see majors come and go. She asked what the last major was to be closed. Boever answered that health education was the last to go. Helsper stated that she had prepared a list of all majors that have come and gone over the last 25 years. Boever asked if the subcommittee could also review minutes from some of the meetings to see how those decisions were made. De Jager added that proposals for adding a major could also be reviewed.

Helsper stated that there is a form in PCAS for creating a new major. It can be found on the Curriculum Committee home page. The left panel will take you to PCAS. Gwen stated that it's good to look at the process of creating a new major, but it's not exactly the opposite procedure to drop a major. There are factors that have to be reviewed that aren't in PCAS. Contant stated that the Regents may have criteria available on the Web. It would go to the Regents for approval.

The Subcommittee volunteers to frame the discussion of criteria for opening/closing a major/minor are: Ericksen, Collier, and Strand.

3. DISCUSSION OF FL DESIGNATOR ON 1001 LANGUAGE COURSES

At the last meeting the Committee, Contant handed out a proposed new wording for the foreign language requirement in Gen Ed. Contant stated that the wording currently in the catalog is relatively brief in text. It refers to one year or two semesters in a single foreign language. Footnotes state exceptions, such as, exempting out through placement, passing an exam, proving a native language other than English. The conversation that has come forward is not that students complete two courses, but that they complete a level of proficiency. The proposed new language clarifies and simply states the ways of completing the proficiency requirement. The footnote includes clarification rather than the content of

the requirement. It suggests no significant change in content from what was included in previous catalogs. It simply brings the language from the footnote up into the text. It is also intended to make clear that proficiency is the requirement rather than the completion of coursework. It can be established in a variety of ways. The intent is not for all students to sit through two courses when it may not be necessary. The change makes it feasible in the future to take the FL designator off all 1xxx courses because only completion of the second course or one of the exceptions will get you the FL requirement. This is a tough one. Other schools struggle with this. Math also includes a level of proficiency, in which students go through a placement process and are provided a variety of levels of courses to take. Contant added that the proposed language change can't be put through now for approval because it has ramifications and would require submission to Campus Assembly for information or approval.

Kuechle stated that two years ago a similar proposed change came forward to the Committee. It was approved but when it came to Campus Assembly, it was rejected. Strand added that at the Campus Assembly meeting the conversation got off-track and the discussion changed to prerequisites, the July in Paris course, and whether it should meet the language requirement. Also, there was a misperception that the Scholastic Committee received petitions from students regarding language requirements. That was contradicted. The truth was that students went to De Jager first, and if De Jager felt that petitions would not pass, she did not forward them to the Scholastic Committee. But there were a number of students going to De Jager asking why the FL was not being met, even though they took the course. Kuechle continued that if what is brought forward again is essentially what was brought forward two years ago, she would hate to come forward with the same exact proposal and have it revisited in the same way. Strand added that if it were brought forth again, and the discussion was initiated by De Jager or herself, the result would be different.

Rather than using 1001 course numbers, sign language and Italian use 1300, so for consistency that might be an issue. Contant asked why they are different. Helsper answered that 1100 was a standard for starting a major. Italian and sign-language are in continuing education and are not majors.

Stewart stated that he assumed the exception of a student proving he/she has a native language other than English is approved through a foreign language instructor. He suggested that the exception state who is responsible for approving it. It should say Scholastic Committee, if they approve it rather than an instructor. De Jager stated that if the student is a Hmong student, often the parents don't speak English, but the student does. In this case, we test for proficiency as an exception for an exemption. Kuechle asked how a Hmong student demonstrates proficiency. De Jager answered that there is a faculty member in the Twin Cities who tests them. We contact someone in the Twin Cities if the proficiency test is needed for a language UMM does not offer.

Stewart asked if there is someone with four years of a foreign language, 20 years ago, would they demonstrate it by evaluation, or does it have to be current proficiency? Contant stated that a FL requirement was fulfilled during the years the student was at UMM. McChesney stated that was his understanding that credits are life-long. They could get the Gen Ed requirement here, come back in 30 years, and finish the degree. Haugen shared that she got FL credits at least 15 years before coming back to complete her degree. Strand added that catalogs expire, but credits don't. Contant stated that the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP) is bringing forward a proposal to edit credits. Kuechle stated that 7 years of coursework are accepted in Education. Contant stated that there is a need for UMM to revisit all Gen Ed requirements and get a better understanding of what we are trying to accomplish in the Gen Ed program. This is a big task for next year.

Proficiency language is intentional because it allows us to use an examination process of some sort to establish proficiency. So this is not simply a text change but a change in content. De Jager stated that it is a change to the current catalog, but the Campus Assembly approved 0-2 courses. Strand added what was originally approved by the campus assembly during semester conversion was 0-2 courses. When the Gen Ed was being proposed for semesters there was an understanding that every course should meet some Gen Ed category. Based on that assumption, the beginning courses were proposed to meet the FL requirement. In retrospect, we see the beginning language courses are the only courses in our curriculum that carry a Gen Ed but do not fulfill the requirement. It would be student-friendly to remove the FL designator from the beginning courses.

Gooch asked if it would be better so say current proficiency, rather than just proficiency. Contant answered that it could say current or current as of a specific date, such as graduation.

Contant concluded that, as a result of the discussion, she will revise the proposal and re-word #4 to include reference to the Scholastic Committee. De Jager added that at a workshop in the fall in the Twin Cities, the terminology they are using now is to say non-native rather than foreign.

The FL requirement is described in the current catalog as follows:

Foreign Language (FL) Two courses in a single language.**

***Students are required to demonstrate proficiency in a second language at the level achieved at the completion of the first year of college language study. Students can demonstrate proficiency by: a) passing 1002 Beginning Language II or an equivalent college course; b) passing the appropriate placement test; c) passing an examination for credit, such as AP or CLEP; or d) proving that they have a native language other than English.*

The proposed revised proposal is stated as follows:

Foreign Language requirement: Proficiency in a single language other than English at the level equivalent to the first full year of college language study. Placement tests are given by language disciplines to determine the level of proficiency of a student with prior coursework.* This requirement can be met in any one of the following ways:

- 1) Completing Beginning Language II or its equivalent (students must either complete Beginning Language I or its equivalent or place out of the first course),
- 2) Exempting out of the requirement by passing a placement exam,
- 3) Passing a special examination, such as AP or CLEP, or
- 4) For non-native speakers of English, successfully petitioning the Scholastic Committee for an exception.

* *Students who plan to complete courses in the same language that they studied in high school must take the placement examination and abide by the placement recommendation. If, after an initial exposure to the recommended course, the placement seems inappropriate, they may follow the recommendation of their language instructor as to the proper entry course.*

At the next meeting, the Committee will continue with agenda items 4 and 5. The discussion of closing of majors will be put off until spring semester.

Adjourned 9:00 a.m.

Submitted by Darla Peterson