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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
2008-09 MEETING #13 Minutes
January 28, 2009, 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, Alex Murphy, Gwen Rudney, Dennis Stewart, Clare Strand, Nancy Helsper, Jeri Squier

Absent: Axl McChesney

Visiting: Jayne Blodgett

In these minutes: Request for Gen Ed designator on directed study; Course Approvals (CMR 3122, Anth 2101, and LAAS 3100); Area of Concentration Issue

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION (Kuechle/Ericksen) to approve the December 3, 2008 minutes.

Discussion: One minor correction was noted.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

MOTION (Gooch/Ericksen) to approve the December 10, 2008 minutes.

Discussion: Two minor corrections were noted.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. REQUEST FOR GEN ED DESIGNATOR ON DIRECTED STUDY

Contant explained that the request was for a Gen Ed designator for a directed study taken fall semester 2008. The request came to the Dean's Office after the Curriculum Committee held its final meeting of fall semester 2008, so it was too late to place it on the agenda. The student requested a Hum Gen Ed designator for a course titled "social issues in sports." Additional rationale was provided by instructor.

MOTION (Ericksen/Lawrence) to approve the Hum Gen Ed designator for the Directed Study course Engl 2993.

Discussion: Ericksen stated that when the request came to her attention, she went to the instructor to ask for an explanation. She was told that somehow the student and advisor got to the end of the semester plan to graduate and did not notice that the student was lacking the Hum Gen Ed requirement. The instructor was teaching a sports literature course and worked out a plan with the student to have a directed study address the issues of the topic. Lawrence asked why that specific title was chosen for the course. Ericksen answered that the student wanted it to count in a Sports Management major.

Korth recalled that when the Curriculum Committee agreed to consider Gen Ed requests on directed studies, it was made very clear that it must be approved before the course begins. This request wasn't submitted until the course was basically over. He added that he would be voting against the motion. Contant asked Korth to explain for the committee the rationale that was given for the committee to act on Gen Ed designators on directed studies. Korth explained that apparently requests were coming in for Gen Ed designators after directed studies were completed. There is a box on the directed study indicating whether the student is requesting a Gen Ed designator. The box must be checked prior to registration for the course. It should be part of the design of the directed study and not requested because the student ran short of required Gen Eds. Ericksen stated that this request came at the same time as the registration. Squier agreed that it had, and that the Assistant Dean had approved the late registration of December 18. Ericksen stated that she believed the work was completed over winter break. Kuechle asked for clarification of whether the request was submitted with the directed study. Contant answered that the request and the directed study were submitted at the same time, but neither were submitted before the end of the semester in which the student registered for the course. Korth stated that

the form gives notice that students should take into account that it will take time for the request to be considered. Contant added that the student was extremely frustrated that the request could not be addressed at the time it was submitted by either the committee or the Dean. Part of the timing issue and rationale given by the student is that the form sat with the instructor for a week before being sent forward. Ericksen replied that the instructor was actually trying to decide whether to do it.

VOTE: Motion passed (9-2-0)

3. COURSE APPROVALS

New Course: CMR 3122-Rhetoric of Picture Books, Prose and Pictures (Hum; 4 cr)

MOTION (Ericksen/Kuechle) to approve the new course CMR 3122.

Discussion: Ericksen stated that the new course is an advanced course in Rhetoric to be offered beginning in fall 2009. Kuechle stated that it surprised her to see a request for a new course when a comprehensive catalog review was completed fall semester. Everyone should have looked at their programs at that time. We have a responsibility to try to use the process in the way it was meant to be used. Strand answered that division chairs provisionally approve courses all the time. Kuechle answered that it would not upset her if they were not required to give provisional approval to courses that are submitted after the catalog process is complete. When a course is on the books and being offered, division chairs are forced to approve it or risk disadvantaging students. Contant agreed and added that she and the division chairs should have a conversation about provisional approval and bring a proposal forward to the Curriculum Committee.

VOTE: Motion passed (10-0-1)

Course Change: Anth 2101-Physical Anthropology (Sci-L; 4 cr)

MOTION (Lawrence/Rudney) to approve the change to course Anth 2101.

Discussion: Lawrence explained that this change sets up specific lab times for students to register for. In the past, the labs were scheduled based on the student's schedules. Now it will be done just like the sciences, with four lab times the students can register for. There is no substantive change to the course. This change solves a course scheduling issue.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

Course Change: LAAS 3100-Contemporary Latin America (1 cr)

MOTION (Lawrence/Rudney) to approve the change to course LAAS 3100, effective fall 2009.

Discussion: Lawrence explained that students were allowed to repeat the course 4 times. Only 4 credits count toward the major. The change would allow LAAS-declared majors to take the course up to 8 times. Eight credits would count toward graduation.

Strand added that the nature of the major is that once a student declares the major he/she is required to take the course every semester. The current repeat limit of 4 credits led to additional required credits not counting toward graduation. Boever asked if the change would be retroactive. Strand answered that it would be desirable to specifically state that it is retroactive. Korth asked how students have been able to take it more than 4 times with the current limit of 4. If students can take it more than 4 times now, what is changing? Murphy answered that the change allows up to 8 credits to be counted toward the 120 credits toward graduation. Nothing in the system prevents students from repeating a course, but the number of times it counts toward graduation would change from 4 to 8.

Gooch asked if the member who made the motion would be willing to make it retroactive. Lawrence agreed to revise her motion to include making it retroactive. Korth stated that it did not need to be retroactive at all but applies to the action of adjusting transcripts going forward to allow up to 8 credits. Strand stated that it was her understanding that the limit of 4 credits was a mistake made during semester conversion in 1999. Korth answered that it is not clear that it was a mistake. Helsper questioned why such a mistake wasn't caught the first year after semester conversion. Strand answered that most students weren't starting the major in their freshman or sophomore year, as they are now. She

added that if the committee does not make it retroactive, it will go to the Scholastic Committee on a student-by-student basis. McBride stated that making it retroactive would reduce the bureaucracy involved. Contant noted that if it is made retroactive the Registrar must go back and grant the credit whether a student requests it or not. That is not a good use of the Registrar's time. Strand agreed. Lawrence revised her revision of the motion to include retroactive to fall 2007. Stewart stated that he would be annoyed if he were a student who failed to graduate by 2 credits in 2001 because his credits LAAS 3100 credits did not count toward graduation. Is there a simple way to check to see if any students were in that situation? Gooch answered that a student in that situation would have appealed to the Scholastic Committee. Boever added that many LAAS students have another major and would not have been prevented from graduating without their LAAS major. Lawrence agreed that they usually double-up with Spanish or anthropology. Lawrence amended her motion again to an effective date of fall 2009.

VOTE: Motion passed (11-0-0)

3. AREA OF CONCENTRATION

Contant stated that she wanted to bring an issue regarding areas of concentration to the Curriculum Committee for discussion. A course substitution on an approved area of concentration came to her for approval during winter break. The request replaces a 3xxx-level course with a 2xxx-level course. This substitution would result in 16 of the 54 major credits at a 3xxx level or higher. Contant asked the committee for advice on whether that is an acceptable number of credits at an upper division level. We do not put a limit on upper level courses across majors, but many of the majors and areas of concentration on campus require no fewer than 20 units of upper level courses. Contant asked the committee to give their input on whether 16 out of 54 units is a sufficient level of depth and rigor to count toward an area of concentration.

Lawrence stated that a conversation about the adequate number of upper level credits would have to take into account the number of total credits required for the major. For example, it would sound reasonable to take 16 upper level credits if only 36 credits were required for the major. Ericksen stated that the bigger issue is what is meant by majoring in something. It should mean having a depth of knowledge. But that's not articulated in the catalog numerically; and it would be difficult to do so.

Strand stated that the area of concentration in question does follow the prototype. Contant responded that the student did not follow the prototype and requested a substitution of a lower-level course. Ericksen asked if it would be reasonable to state on the prototype that no fewer than half the courses should be at the 3xxx level or above, and if the guideline is not met, the student must make a good case for the exception. Lawrence thought that half might be too much. Korth stated that he did not recall ever counting the number of upper-level courses required in science and math majors. Kuechle noted that an area of concentration can easily be interdisciplinary, and the more interdisciplinary the major is, the possibility of more lower-level courses is greater.

Contant asked if she would be correct in stating that there is a concern from the committee about the particular substitution requested because there is not a topical link between the two courses, and there is also concern about the lack of upper division course work that results with the substitution.

Adjourned 9:05 a.m.

Submitted by Darla Peterson