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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

2008-09 MEETING #17 Minutes

March 4, 2009, 8:00 a.m., Behmler 130

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

Absent: Sara Haugen, Mike McBride, Axl McChesney, Alex Murphy, Clare Strand

Visiting: None

In these minutes: Course Approvals in Sociology and English, Discussion of Division Chair Approval of Reactivating Courses

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION (Ericksen/Kuechle) to approve the February 25, 2009 minutes.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. COURSE APPROVALS

MOTION (Lawrence/Ericksen) to approve the proposed Sociology course changes.

New Course: Soc 3103-Research Methodology in Sociology (SS; 4 cr)

New Course: Soc 3112-Sociology of the Environment and Social Development (Env; 4 cr)

New Course: Soc 3123-Sociology of Aging (HDiv; 4 cr)

New Course: Soc 3403-Sociological Theory (SS; 4 cr)

Inactivate Course: Soc 3101-Qualitative Research Methodology (4 cr)

Inactivate Course: Soc 3102-Quantitative Research Methodology (4 cr)

Inactivate Course: Soc 3401-Classical Sociological Theory (SS; 4 cr)

Inactivate Course: Soc 3402-Contemporary Sociological Theory (SS; 4 cr)

Course Name Change: Soc 3121-Sociology of Gender (HDiv; 4 cr)

Discussion: Lawrence explained the rationale for collapsing Soc 3101 and 3102 into one new course Soc 3103, grouping qualitative and quantitative research methods into one course. This allowed the faculty member an option to offer a new elective, Soc 3123. Soc 3401 and 3402 are also collapsing into a new course 3403, grouping classical and contemporary sociological theory into one course. The changes are enrollment-based and better prepare and fit the needs of the students. Soc 3112 is a new course that blends sociology of the environment and sustainable development, sociology of social development, and sociology of inequalities. It complements other social science courses by providing a sociological perspective on environment and development issues, and the course is designed to meet partial requirements for the environmental studies and the gender, women, and sexuality studies majors. Korth stated that the changes have implications for the description of course requirements for the major and asked how that will be fixed. Lawrence answered that the Registrar is meeting with the sociology and anthropology faculty to discuss making the PCAS changes for this. Lawrence said she will bring a PCAS proposal to the Curriculum Committee soon.

VOTE: Motion passed (9-0-0)

MOTION (Ericksen/Rudney) to approve the proposed English course changes.

Reactivate Course: Engl 2421-Understanding Moby-Dick (Hum; 4 cr)

Reactivate Course: Engl 3153-Gothic Literature (Hum; 4 cr)

Discussion: Ericksen explained that the two courses were inactivated during the catalog process in fall semester, but subsequent faculty leaves came through and the discipline decided that it was feasible to offer the courses after all. They are exactly the same courses, with no changes. Engl 2421 is being taught by a retired faculty member whose retirement

agreement included that he will teach one class per year. Engl 3153 was a topic the English discipline didn't think would fit with other offerings, but a faculty leave allowed for it to return to the course offerings. Helsper asked if the reactivation would be in effect spring 2009 or fall 2009. Ericksen answered that they would be in effect fall 2009.

VOTE: Motion passed (9-0-0)

3. PROPOSAL: DIVISION CHAIR APPROVAL OF REACTIVATING COURSES

Ericksen asked if someone could explain why reactivated courses have to go back to the Curriculum Committee for approval after the exact same course was approved earlier. Korth answered that reactivating a course is a curricular change. Helsper added that going through the Curriculum Committee and Campus Assembly approval process is a way to notify the campus that a course is back. It is helpful for other majors that might want to include it.

The Curriculum Committee discussed this issue at its September 9, 2004, meeting, where the following guidelines regarding inactive/active courses were noted:

- Courses not offered during the catalog can be included in the catalog and can remain active however, if a course is not going to be taught in the next 2-3 catalogs then it should be made inactive.
- Courses may be listed as "offered when feasible."
- Reactivated courses should go through the Curriculum Committee.
- If a course is being dropped from the catalog it does not have to be made inactive if the discipline plans to offer it again. If a course is being dropped from the catalog because it is not going to be taught again then it should be made inactive.

Ericksen replied that the message she was given was that too many electives are listed in the catalog. Helsper noted that years ago it was a big problem on other campuses, and UMM received a list of "phantom courses" that had not been taught for a number of years. We were asked to clean them up. Our campus was doing a good job of getting them off the books and replacing them with new courses. Ericksen answered that with electives it doesn't work that way. Helsper replied that you can say "offered when feasible." Squier added that the message we were getting from students was that some of the courses listed weren't offered at any time during their four years at UMM. It was seen as false advertising. Contant stated that there is truth in the advertising if the course is taught at some point in time over the four years a student is here. Collier stated that it is truth in advertising to list a course as "offered when feasible" or every other year. It is not promising it would be taught.

Contant stated that the question remains and this is only the beginning of a longer conversation about the course approval process. She had a conversation with the division chairs about it and will bring a proposal to the Curriculum Committee after spring about a variety of potential ways to streamline the curriculum approval process.

Squier asked if the new courses that were approved at this meeting to be taught in fall 2009 can have division chair provisional approval so that students can register for them. The division chairs agreed to provisionally approve them.

Contant gave an update on the catalog process. Page proofs have been reviewed, and it was found that some disciplines decided to change their curriculum through the page proof process. Those changes will not be put into the catalog. She has asked the division chairs to check with their disciplines about one of the changes. There is language in the catalog that refers to courses that may not be taken S/N unless offered S/N only. It is apparent that there are differences of opinion as to what that means in a major or minor. Some disciplines meant for the language to refer to only core courses for that major and not to electives. Other disciplines interpreted the phrase "required courses" to mean core and electives. Given that difference of interpretation, the language was not clear in the catalog. The division chairs are polling their disciplines now to clarify their intent. The outcome should make the wording in the catalog clearer to students. Squier said that she checked with the Twin Cities campus policy on S/N grading and it states that no S/N grading is to be used in any of their majors. Sometimes we follow what the TC does, sometimes we don't. Contant added that the Morris campus will determine its own policy.

Adjourned 8:34 a.m.

Submitted by Darla Peterson

