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### Curriculum minutes 04/01/2009

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## UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

### 2008-09 MEETING #19 Minutes

April 1, 2009, 8:00 a.m., Imholte 109

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

Absent: Mike McBride, Axl McChesney, Alex Murphy

Visiting: Jayne Blodgett

*In these minutes: Program changes in the Division of the Social Sciences; Request for General Education designator on Directed Study; Continued discussion of Student Learning Outcomes.*

### 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOTION** (Gooch/Lawrence): to approve the March 25, 2009 minutes.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote with a minor correction noted.

### 2. PROGRAM CHANGES

#### *Division of the Social Sciences*

**MOTION** (Lawrence/Hanson): to approve the program changes in the Division of the Social Sciences relating to the addition of a new course and revision of the theory and methods courses.

**Discussion:** Contant explained that the changes are the result of the impact of previous course changes on the major and minor programs in the social sciences and sub-plans. The same changes apply to all the programs listed.

Contant added that in the Social Science major, she made a judgment to bring all the sub-plans back to the Curriculum Committee to be voted on as a whole at this meeting (even though a few had gone through at an earlier meeting) so that all the changes can be brought to the Campus Assembly as a single-vote package.

Anthropology Major (B.A.) and Minor

Liberal Arts for the Human Services (LAHS) Major (B.A.)

Social Science Major (B.A.)

Anthropology Sub-plan

Sociology Sub-plan

Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies (GWSS) Sub-plan

Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies (GWSS) Major (B.A) and Minor

Specific changes include adding new Sociology electives and deleting inactive courses (Adding Soc 3103, 3112, 3123, and 3403; and deleting Soc 3101, 3102, 3401, and 3402. [See minutes of March 4 for further details and discussion of these course changes.]

**VOTE:** Motion passed (8-0-0)

[Stewart arrived.]

### 3. REQUEST FOR GEN ED DESIGNATOR ON DIRECTED STUDY

**MOTION** (Ericksen/Hanson): to approve the FA Gen Ed designator for one student's Directed Study course Engl 3993.

**Discussion:** Ericksen explained that the directed study was modeled almost word-for-word after a course that currently carries the FA designator in the theatre discipline, but with a focus on American Indian dramatic literature. There is a substantial body of work in that area. Lawrence asked why the student is doing a directed study rather than taking the

course that is offered. Ericksen replied that the student would rather focus her entire fulfillment of the FA requirement on American Indian dramatic literature. She added that she did not think there is a policy to say that except in extreme circumstances one should not ask for a Gen Ed designator for a directed study. Kuechle responded that the Curriculum Committee sees few requests each year, so they are the exception.

Collier asked if the theatre discipline would have a problem with the course being taught as a directed study. Korth added that the course that it is modeled after is a theatre discipline course, while this is an English directed study—that seems a little peculiar. Ericksen replied that drama is squarely in both disciplines. The professor who teaches the dramatic literature course in theatre also teaches in English. Strand stated that it is not the job of the Curriculum Committee to question the validity of the course itself. Korth replied that the Curriculum Committee has the right to question a course that comes before the Committee, especially in the middle of the semester. Strand stated that students can register for a directed study up to the last day of class. They are designed that way on purpose. Collier responded that he could not imagine what good reason there would be to register the last day of class.

**VOTE:** Motion passed (6-1-2)

#### **4. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (Continued Discussion)**

Contant distributed a handout with five different pieces of information discussed at the last meeting:

- 1) UMTC Learning Outcomes
- 2) UMM Learning Outcomes proposed by 2008 subcommittee
- 3) UMM Mission Statement (from the Strategic Plan)
- 4) UMM Proposed Mission Statement (2/19/09 one-sentence statement that English students prepared, with modifications included from Campus Assembly)
- 5) Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) program of the Association of American Colleges and Universities

Contant asked Committee members to review the hand-out as an aid to help craft UMM's Learning Outcomes to bring forward to Campus Assembly. At the last meeting it was concluded that learning outcomes should be mapped to the mission statement. Gooch noted that the mission statements on the handout were different from the official mission statement in the catalog. Contant replied that the catalog version is much longer. Rudney replied that, although the current long version is not fancy and doesn't have the mission feel and look, it has been a mission statement that people at UMM understand. Contant agreed that it is a very descriptive and a good one to follow if shortened. Lawrence stated that when the Strategic Plan was prepared, this mission statement was a good description of who we are and what we are aiming for. It is woven into the Strategic Plan.

Contant asked about the extent to which the learning outcomes should map directly or indirectly to the mission statement. Lawrence stated that the mission statement covers a much broader area than just students. Maybe the focus should be on the student part. The rest of it isn't important in terms of student learning outcomes. Ericksen stated that the one sentence proposal only omits environmental stewardship. The rest are all there. Collier noted that only the last sentence of the official mission statement seems to be relevant to student learning outcomes.

Lawrence stated that the subcommittee had decided to focus only on curricular and not co-curricular. Ericksen replied that it would be difficult to measure co-curricular. Contant stated that students should meet learning outcomes in different ways. Given that UMM markets itself as a small, personal school where students can shape their own education, it seems the institution's identity would be missing if co-curricular is not included. Ericksen replied that students are not required to graduate with co-curricular. If someone comes through with a bachelor's degree, will that person be told s/he did not meet our learning outcomes because the co-curriculars are missing? Contant stated that learning outcomes should not have check boxes, but give students the opportunity to demonstrate at a minimum that they met them. Students could be allowed to say this is a learning outcome that was a focus and four other co-curriculars were added to really beef that up. Haugen asked how close the engagement planner is to going up. That tool is set up so for planning in a meaningful way to meet student learning outcomes. Stewart stated that this Committee should be setting the minimum, but students can go over and above the minimums.

Strand stated that she is part of the student engagement process. It is live on the Twin Cities campus and she would expect it to be live here next year. Contant suggested that the Curriculum Committee focus on the curricular but not eliminate the co-curriculars. Stewart stated that things not technically required to graduate should not be used. Contant replied that there are a lot of things required for graduation that don't meet the learning outcomes, for example the 120-credits-to-graduate rule. Collier stated that he did not see why the issue has to be decided. What satisfies learning outcomes is an open question. The charge is to determine the learning outcomes and leave what satisfies them as an open measurement issue later.

Lawrence stated that the Twin Cities has two sets of student learning outcomes. UMM is a small campus. It is all done holistically here, so should there be one set? It impacts the wording of the student learning outcomes. In one version of the UMTC set, from the student development point of view, they wanted the words "civic engagement." Lawrence preferred "social responsibility" because it is broader.

Haugen stated that if the learning outcomes are restricted to the minimum curricular requirements, then that puts a lot of pressure on the curricular to meet all of those outcomes. Contant replied that some will argue that only the curricular should be controlled. Haugen replied that then the curriculum must allow them to meet all the student learning outcomes.

Collier noted that #7 on the Twin Cities version uses the words "life-long learning." That should be on UMM's, given recent changes in UMM's advertising, as a renewable, sustainable education. Lawrence stated that it would be difficult to measure. Contant stated that UMM has a tag line and should somehow reflect it in the student learning outcomes. Perhaps there is twenty-first century language for life-long learning. Kuechle responded that UMM is not really preparing student outcomes for this century. It's an ongoing process—figure out something curricular and begin with that.

Contant suggested the following phrase be placed before the learning outcomes as a preamble that does not have to be measured: "At the time of receiving a bachelor's degree, a student is prepared for a lifetime of continuous learning." It gets away from the catch phrase of "life-long learning." Contant asked Lawrence to help her at crafting the sentence in the next two weeks.

Contant asked if the Committee would agree to use a slightly modified version of the subcommittee's learning objectives, or would they rather try to capture the phraseology from the LEAP version or UMTC version. There was some discussion of the various elements in each set of learning outcomes and the number included in UMM's set.

Strand stated that every UMTC course has to be resubmitted to justify a liberal education requirement as of 2010. Re-approval also includes identifying a student learning outcome. Lawrence replied that she thought UMM's learning was more broad-based than what they have in IT or the Carlson School of Management. UMM's follows closer to the LEAP outcomes.

Contant stated that she is hearing that Committee members find the UMTC list attractive because it hits all the main areas, but it does not capture what UMM is. Rudney stated that the format of the UMM proposed list is a blend of the LEAP version, and the model of LEAP might be better for UMM. UMM could prepare a heading that captures the campus identity, followed by a statement with measurements.

Collier stated that the first question is what are the distinctive goals of a liberal arts education? Contant replied that LEAP was prepared exclusively by liberal arts colleges. She introduced them at the faculty retreat last fall. Collier asked if they were designed with measurement in mind. Contant answered that they could be tailored to fit UMM.

Lawrence stated that she thought the LEAP version didn't go into the major or mastering a body of knowledge and a mode of inquiry. Ericksen stated that the argument when bringing a slightly modified version of LEAP to Campus Assembly can easily be that it puts UMM in line with other liberal arts colleges. That's an important piece.

Contant asked the discipline representatives how difficult it would be to map the curriculum with the LEAP outcomes.

Kuechle answered that Education is already doing so much of it, and that it can be done.

Korth asked how the outcomes will be put to use. Will they be used as a set of requirements or as a set of outcomes to measure to what extent UMM students meet them? Contant stated that every student is not expected to meet them in order to graduate. Whether every discipline can supply something in every outcome is not clear.

Lawrence and Contant offered to draft a preamble to bring back to this committee.

Contant announced that the 2009-11 Catalog in PDF format is available on the Web. The Dean's Office will be printing 150 copies for distribution to faculty and advisers. The new catalog has been slightly restructured.

The Curriculum Committee will not meet on April 8. The EDP Subcommittee will meet at that time instead.

Adjourned 9:00 a.m.

Submitted by Darla Peterson