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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

2009-10 MEETING#6 Minutes

November 19, 2009, 8:00 a.m., Behmler 130

Present: Cheryl Contant (chair), Janet Ericksen, Mark Fohl, Sara Haugen, Michael Korth, Pareena Lawrence, Mike McBride, Dave Roberts, Gwen Rudney, Jeri Squier, Dennis Stewart, Elizabeth Thoma, Tisha Turk

Absent: Talia Earle, Nicholas Johnson, Clare Strand

Visiting: Jayne Blodgett, Nancy Helsper, Jeffrey Ratliff-Crain

In these minutes: Course Approvals, FYE Curricular Component Subcommittee Progress Report, Learning Outcomes Subcommittee Progress Report

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 29, 2009

MOTION (McBride/Ericksen) to approve the October 29, 2009 minutes. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. COURSE APPROVALS

Interdisciplinary Studies

New Course: **IS 2023**-London Arts Tour (1 cr)

Course Change: **IS 2035**-Aging in Greece (IP; 2 cr)

Course Change: **IS 3217H**-Honors: The Trial of Galileo (HIST; 2 cr)

MOTION (McBride/Thoma) to approve the IS courses IS 2023, IS 2035, and IS 3217H

Discussion: Ericksen requested clarification of the division approval process of the IS courses. Contant explained that the same group of faculty who were formed to review IS courses for the catalog last year reviewed these courses and provided comments. Ericksen asked if they should have been approved by the home division of faculty members as well. A course may be approved curricularly, but the instructor may not be able to offer the course. With the current procedure, course approval and determining instructor availability are separate processes. Rudney recalled that the home discipline approval model was discussed concerning summer school.

VOTE: (10-0-0)

Division of Education

New Course: **WSS 3101**-Sports Industry Analysis (SS; 4 cr)

MOTION (Rudney/Fohl): to approve WSS 3101

Discussion: Lawrence stated that this course did go through management/economics to make sure there is no duplication.

VOTE: (10-0-0)

Division of the Humanities

Course Change: **ITAL 1105**-Italian Cinema (IP; 4 cr)

MOTION (Ericksen/Thoma): to approve ITAL 1105

Discussion: Ericksen explained that this course is changing from HUM to ITAL and increasing the credits from 3 to 4, to keep in line with other similar courses in Humanities. The syllabus has increased to include more films and assignments.

VOTE: (10-0-0)

Division of Science and Mathematics

New Course: **CHEM 2394**-Organic Chemistry II with a Biological Emphasis (SCI; 4 cr)

New Course: **GEOL 3502**-Groundwater (ENVT; 4 cr)

MOTION (Korth/Ericksen): to approve CHEM 2394 and GEOL 3502

VOTE: (10-0-0)

Division of the Social Sciences

Course Change: **HIST 3557**-East Asia Since 1800 (IP; 4 cr)

Course Change: **POL 3261**-State and Local Politics (SS; 4 cr)

Course Change: **POL 3475**-International Human Rights (IP; 4 cr)

MOTION (Lawrence/McBride): to approve HIST 3557, POL 3261, and POL 3475

Discussion: Lawrence explained that POL 3261 is a reinstatement of a deactivated course. HIST 3557 is a new course. Both changes mentioned are due to new faculty available to teach the courses.

VOTE: (10-0-0)

3. FYE CURRICULAR COMPONENT SUBCOMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT

Ratliff-Crain explained that the proposal is in many ways fashioned after the other GenEd components. It is not prescriptive on how to teach the courses, but describes what the expectations are. It allows faculty to design and decide how that might be best implemented. The broad goal is producing a setting where students will become part of the liberal arts intellectual community and make a smooth transition from high school to college. An important aspect of the proposal is the need for small classes where that kind of engagement can happen. Bullets listed in the proposal are related to learning outcomes. The proposal intentionally does not prescribe each detail. The idea is learning from each other and with each other and not being passive recipients of knowledge. Close interaction with faculty is vital.

Because it is a GenEd requirement we need to make sure we have a course that will populate it. Courses that meet other GenEd requirements are at least two-credit courses. We need to keep in mind the 15-credit minimum that the state has mandated, and the increased credit change reflects that. The Subcommittee discussed whether the course could also fulfill another GenEd content area. These courses could possibly satisfy a major requirement in some disciplines. The current course is a two-credit course that meets during fall semester. If the majority of courses are proposed at four credits, where are resources coming from and what else isn't being taught? If it stays at the two-credit norm, we still have a 15-credit issue. Currently, a student who has 16 credits at another college can have the FYS course waived. That doesn't fit the way we treat any other GenEd course. This is a GenEd course that is designed around goals and objectives rather than what year a student is. We have students arrive spring semester and students who fail the course the first semester. We may require some spring offerings for those students. The subcommittee wanted to focus on the curricular component. Other extended orientation aspects that were added onto FYS to-date still remain an issue and there is a need for other entities to accomplish that outside of the course.

The current FYS course has an infrastructure including funding for theatre productions, bringing in a convocation speaker, participation in cultural activities, etc. We still need to decide whether we still want that kind of infrastructure to continue even though we aren't talking about a common theme. Also, in moving in this direction, we would advise removing the phrase "First-Year" from the GenEd category. It defines the student and not what we're asking them to do. With more and more students coming in with large numbers of credits, what is a first-year student and what does that mean? Ericksen suggested that it be called "intellectual community (IC)."

She asked why the subcommittee voted down giving it other GenEd designators. Turk answered that none of the other GenEd categories carry more than one GenEd designator. Ericksen asked if it could be an IC course with different GenEd designators. Lawrence answered that fitting into a major is a tough sell for an entry-level course. Giving it another GenEd designator would make it valuable and not just an add-on course. Korth stated that if it can't be attractive to students without adding a sweetener to it, we shouldn't offer it. If you allow to double-dip, you're going to get seniors taking it for the other category. McBride stated that, as a student, he would not want upperclassmen in his first class as a freshman. It should be reserved just for first-year students. Turk stated that she liked the idea of removing "first-year" from the name, but it would have to be made clear that it needs to be taken the student's first year. Stewart stated that in the proposed structured there will be juniors and transfer students in these classes. One

possibility that might aid retention is to have a couple sections of the IC course specifically for transfer students. Ratliff-Crain replied that the proposed spring semester sections would be structured that way.

Contant asked if it would be difficult to sell the new course to faculty. Having around 28 sections in the fall and two in the spring would require more sections of courses than FYS currently offers. Ratliff-Crain added that an increase in credits per course would also be a resource issue. Ericksen stated that is why it would help if it could meet other GenEd requirements because faculty will have to be pulled off of other classes that offer a GenEd in order to staff this course. Stewart asked how many sections are currently being offered and cautioned against slowly drifting upwards in class size. Contant stated that there are 20 sections this semester. Squier added that enrollment has historically required around 25 sections. Roberts stated that the new courses could be sold to faculty, but there would have to be a selling process. One positive aspect is that a number of the current FYS courses could easily fit the new IC. With the removal of the human diversity umbrella, a number of faculty would be happy to teach IC. There are different categories that faculty could teach that are discipline-specific. The flexibility would make it easier to sell it to faculty.

Stewart stated that if we link IC with majors, by adding GenEd designators, the most popular majors will have one section, while a number of students will be upset that they can't get the one in their major. Contant stated that we are currently teaching 40 to 46 credit hours of FYS. With the proposed course, if some decided to do 3 or 4 credit versions, there would be more than 60 credit hours in this component. Ericksen stated that she can think of faculty in her division who would be willing to teach the course, but if a faculty member gives up a 2000-level course that teaches 30 students to offer a 1000-level IC course to 15 students, there's a major reduction in faculty-to-student credit hour ratios. Turk asked if there would be a problem with sophomores, juniors, and seniors lobbying to get into the courses that have GenEds for their majors. Contant answered that they will lobby, but we have to be firm. What is interesting and intriguing from a GenEd perspective is that the IC course is not content-dependent.

Roberts noted that part of the deal is that the proposed course is resource-intensive. If we're serious about competing with other institutions, we need to invest some resources. We need to account for the positive contributions to the first-year experience. Contant agreed and noted that if the proposed change is approved, it is a commitment that will require a loss of commitment to other things. This is a zero sum situation. One way to sweeten the deal is to offer the additional GenEd designators mentioned earlier. McBride stated that the positive effect on retention of a class size of 15 would outweigh any negatives.

Squier asked if it would be more attractive to faculty if they had the option of offering the course in the spring semester. Turk answered that it would be attractive to her since her fall schedule is set. Ratliff-Crain noted that the proposal includes up to 4 spring sections. Contant stated that if the majority of the students arrive in fall they should all be taking the course in the fall. This is the important part of developing a community. You do that when they walk in the door. The course is designed for that particular purpose.

Thoma asked if switching resources to provide a better first-year course would result in upper level class sizes increasing. She stated that what she loves them because of the small sizes and discussions. Ericksen answered that it would vary by discipline. Contant added that without this course, it is possible that a student would not be in a class with less than 70 students their entire first year.

4. LEARNING OUTCOMES SUBCOMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT

Contant stated that by the end of this week all of the conversations (12-14 hours of input) will have taken place over the last 3-5 weeks. Comments will be brought back to this committee the first week of December for review.

Contant announced that the Curriculum Committee will meet in the Spring Semester on Wednesdays at 8:00 AM during Spring Semester.

Adjourned 9:08 a.m.

Submitted by Darla Peterson