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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

2010-11 MEETING #8 Minutes

November 4, 2010, 12:00 p.m., 2200 Science

Present: Cheryl Contant (chair), Janet Ericksen, Mark Fohl, Tara Greiman, Sara Haugen, Michael Korth, Pareena Lawrence, Leslie Meek, Ian Patterson, David Roberts, Gwen Rudney, Jeri Squier, Elizabeth Thoma, Tisha Turk

Absent: Clare Dingley, Molly Donovan

Visiting: Nancy Helsper, Heather James, Jeff Ratliff-Crain

In these minutes: Establishment of Intellectual Community (IC) Subcommittee, German Studies Major Proposal

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES October 21, 2010

MOTION (Thoma/Patterson) to approve the October 21, 2010 minutes. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. ESTABLISHMENT OF INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY (IC) SUBCOMMITTEE

Contant stated that last year's call for IC proposals was on an accelerated cycle timeline. This year there need not be an accelerated cycle, but people do need to start identifying if there are new courses they would like to offer as IC courses in 2011-12. Ratliff-Crain recently sent out a call for proposals. Last year a subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee was formed to review proposals that came forward for IC designation. That worked out well and she would like to follow the same procedure this year. The subcommittee will review proposals that have been approved at the discipline and division level, and forwarded to the Dean's Office. Contant noted that not every course that meets IC criteria and is recommended by the subcommittee will be offered. The decision on whether a course will be offered next year will be made administratively.

Lawrence asked if there is a form online that discipline coordinators can use to ensure that a course meets the requirements of IC. Ratliff-Crain answered that the email he sent out addressed that, and it is on the Academic Affairs web page. Squier stated that a faculty member recently asked her what forms needed to be completed. She told them that it has got to go into ECAS eventually, but she wasn't aware of a special form. Contant answered that there is a special form that asks how the course meets the specific list of IC objectives. Ratliff-Crain stated that his email to faculty gave a deadline of November 19 to submit the IC submission form. ECAS forms will only need to be completed for those courses that will be taught.

Rudney asked how current IC courses fit into the process. Education offered 3 or 4 sections this year and would like to offer the same courses again next year. Contant answered that Ratliff-Crain will contact current instructors of IC to ask if they are interested in teaching again. If so, he will ask them to communicate that to their discipline and division chair. Ratliff-Crain added that the email that went out instructed people to let Adele in the Dean's Office know if they are planning to offer an IC course again. He will send out a reminder note. Ratliff-Crain asked if all the IC courses offered this year were presented for provisional approval last year. Contant answered that most of those provisionally approved IC courses will go to Campus Assembly for full approval this year. Her intent this year is to seek regular approval for new IC courses that will be taught next year. The decision will be made by the end of this semester, so early next semester ECAS forms can go to this committee for full approval for offering for next fall.

Lawrence asked if the process could be streamlined a bit because faculty are developing their schedules right now. If she knew how many sections were needed, she could tell her division faculty what is expected. Contant answered that it would be helpful, and she did not want to squash faculty interest in developing courses, but it is too early to know the number of sections that will be needed. Last year we had more new high school students than expected and had to open another section. Haugen stated that last year we were able to keep the class size small because we had enough courses to offer. Contant noted that the class size limitations last year were 18 for a 2-credit course and 25 for a 4-credit course. The new session ended up with 13 students, and a few students migrated from other sections. Two sections will be offered this spring, designed for students who are enrolled in spring semester for their first semester at UMM or for those who were unsuccessful in completing their IC course fall semester.

Squier asked if the web link includes an explanation of why these particular Gen Ed requirement courses have to go through an additional step to be approved. If an instructor proposes a course that satisfies the Hist requirement they don't have to answer questions about fulfilling other criteria. This special treatment of the IC Gen Ed requirement appears to diminish the other Gen Ed requirements. Contant answered that she hopes that the General Education Review Subcommittee will be able to tackle that issue while looking at the Gen Ed program. Part of the reason for the extra form and special process was to see if this is a cumbersome process or one that we might want to use for other Gen Ed requirements. It is a pilot process at this point. Lawrence stated that on the Twin Cities campus they have a General Education Committee that reviews all proposed courses with a Gen Ed designator.

Rudney asked Ratliff-Crain if he had received any feedback on the current courses. He answered that students are not comparing IC courses in the way they did the FYS courses. They are treating the courses as individual courses. If absence of complaints is any indication, we have been successful. An evaluation of IC courses, separate from the Student Rating on Teaching forms that students fill out for every course, will be done this semester and we will know more about the opinions of students after those are done. He added that a meeting of faculty currently teaching IC courses was held to gather feedback on how faculty felt the courses were going. They were uniform in saying that they are much happier with this

model. The only negative comment he heard had to do with a concern of overreaching the 25 student limit in 4-credit sections. Contant added that she attended the meeting as well and asked each current instructor whether they would advise other faculty members to propose an IC course. All said they would.

Rudney stated that it was her recollection that the number of students in each section was raised last year because we didn't know if we would have enough sections to offer. If we have extra courses this year, why don't we offer additional courses and allow smaller enrollments in courses? Contant replied that it may be possible to offer additional courses if additional resources are not required.

Contant requested volunteers for the IC Subcommittee. The charge is to review the proposals; contact faculty for additional information, if necessary; and bring a recommendation to the Curriculum Committee. Volunteers were: Patterson, Ratliff-Crain, Thoma, and Ericksen.

Contant stated that we have a naturally occurring experiment with two IC courses this year. Phil 1801 is an IC course and Phil 1101 is not an IC course. Both courses are identical, although 1801 was reserved just for first-year students and 1101 includes a lot of juniors and seniors. It will be interesting to see the comparison in terms of outcomes and process from both the student and the faculty perspectives.

3. GERMAN STUDIES MAJOR PROPOSAL

Contant stated that the proposal is being presented today for discussion. At this stage, only input is sought, not approval.

Ericksen began by explaining that when she became Division Chair of the Humanities, one of the first things she heard was "something must be done about German." In 2003-04 there were 3 tenured or tenure-track faculty in German. At the end of that year one faculty member retired and one resigned. One temporary faculty member was hired. A year later the temporary faculty member left, without a replacement. German was left with one faculty member. Throughout those years there was never a discussion of the implications of the hiring practices. She was left with few choices: The first was to drop German. This would be a bad choice, since in her opinion, offering more rather than fewer languages, is one of the obligations of a liberal arts campus. We should be trying to preserve language offerings beyond first-year language instruction only. One year is not proficiency.

Another option was to look at reducing the German major to a minor. But in conversations with the current faculty member and research into other institutions that offered German studies majors, she was convinced that it would be a good idea to consider an interdisciplinary German Studies major. Under the current German major the electives are already interdisciplinary, including history and physics courses that were approved with some discussion two years ago. Ericksen explained that the proposal is not to add a major in German Studies, to leave German as it is, or to replace German with a program that builds on electives that exist. If the German Studies proposal is approved, two current programs will be removed: German and European Studies. The European Studies major currently has one student. It is not a program that attracts a lot of people and it can still be done as an area of concentration.

Thoma asked if there is more than one German Studies adviser. Ericksen answered that there is one. Patterson asked if German Studies is a synthesis between the German and European Studies majors. Ericksen answered that it is not. This is an interdisciplinary European-focused major.

Greiman asked if there was only one adviser to follow up on the students' plans to see that they graduate. Lawrence stated that it is a valid concern. When Environmental Studies was proposed as a major she was asked if it would still be manageable if the number of students grew to 50. Ericksen stated that she hopes German Studies will grow. Squier stated that the Registrar's Office doesn't see the plans that students work out with their advisers as long as they meet the criteria to graduate. Rudney stated that a student could just follow the plan that would be on APAS.

Ratliff-Crain asked if there was a capstone in the major. Ericksen answered that German Studies would be only the second major on campus, in addition to Social Science, without a capstone. It was discussed, but with one faculty member it cannot be done at this time. Ratliff-Crain suggested a portfolio as a possibility. Greiman stated that, even with a portfolio, it would be a lot of work for one instructor. Ratliff-Crain replied that a portfolio review would not have to be done by just one person. It could be reviewed by a German faculty member plus at least one other from another related discipline. Ericksen added that it was envisioned that students majoring in German Studies would major in multiple majors. German is still required for entrance to graduate school in Art History, so students have frequently majored or minored in German and art history.

Contant stated that, from the perspective of interdisciplinary studies programs reporting to her, there is a benefit in having a defined group that governs this major, similar to GWSS, Environmental Studies, and Environmental Science. Those majors stated in their proposals that there is a group of faculty that own the major, not just one person. That shows the institution buying into it and reduces the burden on one person. It also gives students the option of working with other faculty on various aspects of the major. Ericksen stated that there is a core faculty who have already been consulted and could be asked to be in that group.

Korth stated a concern that the Physics courses are shown in increased prominence, when in fact the logistics of that working for a student are really slim. It appears to be deceptive when the course is on a list, students plan to take it, it is offered every other year, but he could be the one teaching it that year and not the German-speaking faculty member. Ericksen replied that the course says "requires written approval." Korth added that it would still be hard for a student to plan for. Ericksen stated that she wanted to show what the possibilities included. She would be willing to take it out of the proposed major. Contant asked if it would have the same course number if taught in German or English. One way to deal with the

potential problem would be to give it two different course numbers. Ratliff-Crain added that it would have to have different prerequisites as well. The course that requires the ability to speak German could be listed as offered when feasible. Korth noted that workload issues are also involved. Ericksen stated that the instructor would not be lecturing in German and has some articles in German and English. Written work would be submitted in German. Roberts stated that he was glad the instructor is supportive of the course, but to include a Physics course in a German Studies major strikes him as odd. Every single other course listed seems appropriate. Here the content doesn't seem appropriate. If a Physics course, why not a general physics course? Korth added that the instructor actually would prefer the general Physics course. Roberts stated that he thought it should be treated as a welcomed irregularity instead of being included in the list. Squire noted that the sample plan lists a lot of other class options and that's where the Physics course could be listed.

Contant asked Ericksen to take the comments and suggestions back to the new steering committee and bring forward a revised proposal for approval.

Adjourned 1:00 p.m.

Submitted by Darla Peterson