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Curriculum minutes 04/27/2011

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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

2010-11 MEETING #19 Minutes

April 27, 2011, 8:00 a.m., 113 Imholte

Present: Cheryl Contant (chair), Molly Donovan, Janet Ericksen, Mark Fohl, Tara Greiman, Sara Haugen, Michael Korth, Leslie Meek, Ian Patterson, Gwen Rudney, Elizabeth Thoma, Tisha Turk

Absent: Clare Dingley, Pareena Lawrence, David Roberts, Jeri Squier

Visiting: Nancy Helsper, Heather James

In these minutes: Requests for Gen Ed designators on Directed Studies

1. Introduction of New 2011-2012 Student Members

Thoma announced that new members had not yet been determined, but Ian Patterson will be staying on as MCSA secretary of academic affairs.

2. Approval of Minutes April 20, 2011

MOTION (Thoma/Patterson) to approve the April 20, 2011 minutes. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Requests for General Education Designators on Directed Studies

Contant stated that both requests for general education designators have to do with May semester study abroad courses.

The first request is a 2-credit directed study designed to supplement what is already a history course (Hist 3162/Phil 3162 - *The Scottish Enlightenment: Markets, Minds and Morals*) that has the IP general education designator. Students are requesting the HIST Gen Ed designator for Hist 3993 - *The Scottish Enlightenment Perspective of History* (a 2-credit directed study).

MOTION (Thoma/Patterson) to approve the requests for HIST GER for Hist 3993.

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Discussion: Ericksen stated that she did not approve of the directed study add-on component. She understood that it was being done for financial aid reasons, but there is not enough time in a May session course to cover what needs to be taught without adding a directed study to it. That is a lot to do in a short, intensive span of time. Contant suggested that students could register for summer session I for the directed study portion and complete it after they return from the study abroad trip.

VOTE: Motion passed (8-2-0)

The second set of GER designator requests are from three students who will participate in the May study abroad one-credit course *Choral Performance and Cultural Studies in Iceland, the Baltic States and Finland*. The directed study Mus 3993 - *Choral Music in the Baltic States; its roots in folk music, national heritage, culture, religion, and*

contemporary performance is a 2-credit companion course. They are requesting an IP GER for the directed study.

MOTION (Thoma/Patterson) move to approve three requests for IP GER for Mus 3993.

Discussion: Ericksen stated that she had worked with the instructor to ensure that the directed study has a different set of assignments than the primary course, as well as a bibliography. She voiced her reluctance again to approve fulfilling a GER in a short directed study.

Korth stated several concerns. One is that the May term directed study has a paper due June 20. Secondly, there appears to be some double-counting of activities between the study abroad course and the directed study. Thirdly, a reason given for the request was that the student is too busy to take an IP course. That reason is not satisfying. Ericksen answered that there are overlaps in work, but not in the assignments. Turk was concerned that the directed study requires too much to be undertaken, and she is not convinced the students will learn all that is expected of them.

Contant stated that when she compared the tasks to the timelines, almost all is about music and not really about history before and after Nazi and Soviet occupation or the geography of Baltic States and neighboring countries. The list of those issues should match up with the assignments. All tasks and timelines have the word *choral* or *music* or *composer* or *arranger* in it. Ericksen answered that there will be trips to significant museums that touch on those issues with lectures by curators, but that is part of the main course and would happen regardless of the directed study.

Ericksen stated that she couldn't find the course description of May session courses in the course listing. Contant replied that this particular May course is a complement to the choir music tour that takes place during spring break alternate years. That experience is for a half-credit for one week. This is a three-week, essentially choir tour course which has had some academic content supplementing the actual performances. The addition of two academic credits to an essentially performance-based course could be interesting, challenging, and valuable for people who really want to get into the heads of Latvian composers. We have tried to ensure that students on these study abroad programs are actually *studying* abroad and not just *traveling* abroad, by requiring academic credits and academic content.

Rudney stated that an international experience such as this one still could legitimately address international perspective. We should add for clarification that the assignments required for the directed study should include 90 hours of work over and above the study abroad course.

Thoma stated that it concerns her that the students' rationales state that they don't have time to take an IP course. They should have planned ahead to fulfill their Gen Eds. Turk noted that she does not object to the directed study, but the use of it to satisfy an IP designator makes her nervous as well. Is that really the intent of this directed study? Rudney suggested that the requests be sent back for a revised rationale. Korth added that it would then just become a creative writing exercise.

Meek asked whether it is difficult to complete a music major in four years. Ericksen answered that it is difficult if the

student is starting from scratch because of the testing into various levels. Meek then added that saying you don't have time may be a legitimate excuse. Ericksen answered that she is not convinced that it is really that hard to get the courses that are required. Turk stated that it is entirely possible the students didn't plan effectively, but that's not the question. Meek noted that it seems like a really good chance to get an IP if you have a chance to go abroad. Ericksen agreed, saying that is the fundamental reason she allowed it to go forward. It is a good opportunity that's not often taken advantage of. Thoma asked if all the study abroad courses should come with an IP designator. Ericksen said that it would be possible, but you can only pick one designator when the course is created.

MOTION (Thoma/Patterson) moved to table the motion until additional clarification can be obtained. The vote will then occur via email, since this is the final meeting of the year.

Motion passed VOTE (8-2-0)

[The results of the email vote for the three directed study request revised rationales resulted in two approvals and one denial:

1. Approved (6/5/1) Rationale: *I need the IP Gen Ed Designator because my class load and senior seminar makes it difficult to find time to fill the IP requirement.*
2. Approved (8/4/0) Rationale: *As a double major with English and Music this IP would really assist my scheduling for graduating in four years.*
3. Denied (5/7/0) Rationale: *I have a major that would make it hard to get an IP course in without conflict.]*

4. Other Items

Contant stated that she would not be present at the May 2 Campus Assembly. Two items will be on the agenda from the Curriculum Committee: honors courses will be presented for approval and the Assembly would like to hear an update on the General Education review process.

An item that still remains on the table is whether we want to engage in a qualitative conversation about our current Gen Ed program. Contant did not think there would be time or a level of commitment from now until the end of the semester to complete a survey. The quality of the input would also be questionable. Patterson stated that he talked with the students in his dorm about it and it only took 10 minutes to steer that conversation in a productive path. An email survey may not get the same results. The members agreed that it probably would not be helpful to do it so late in the semester. Ericksen stated that something could go out that simply says we will work on it in the fall. That way people can begin to think about it now. At least people would know where we are with it. Korth stated that he sent out questions to his division faculty, inviting them to a meeting and to submit written comments. One person showed up for the meeting and one person submitted a full page of written comments, out of over 30 faculty members. People are just too busy. He did leave it open-ended in case people wanted to respond at a later time. Contant stated that she would send it out as chair of the Curriculum Committee. Meek noted that people had been asking her about it, so there is some concern about it.

Contant thanked all who participated in the work of Committee and its subcommittees this academic year.

Adjourned 9:00 a.m.
Submitted by Darla Peterson