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University of Minnesota, Morris
Morris, Minnesota

MINUTES--1996-97 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING #15
February 25, 1997; 3:00 p.m.; Behmler Conference Room

Present: Ballou, Bauer, Ellis, Farrell, Frenier, Imholte, Korth, J. Lee, M. Lee, Schuman, Thielke, Vickstrom, Whelan

Absent: Barbour, Davis, Hansen, Kissock

Guest(s): Jim Togeas, Chair, General Education Committee; Dorothy DeJager; Roland Guyotte

FORM C FOR SPCH 1100H:

Schuman asked CC members to consider the curriculum change proposal for Spch 1100H to alter the quarter offering from fall to winter. There was no discussion.

MOTION (Understood): To approve the proposal to change the quarter offering for Spch 1100H, Introduction to Public Speaking, from fall to winter.

VOTE: Unanimous in favor (8-0-0).

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS:

Farrell distributed copies of a Form B and Form C from the Music discipline. These proposals will be considered at the next meeting.

GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM PROPOSAL:

Schuman indicated that he had invited Togeas, Chair of the General Education Committee, to the meeting to present the proposal for a general education program under semesters. He noted that the General Education Committee (GEC) had discharged this major assignment in a commendable manner.

[J. Lee arrived at the meeting at this point.]

Togeas summarized the reshaping of Prosper for the semester system as a contraction, reconfiguring, renaming, realignment, and simplification of the current General Education Requirements (GER). The driving force for contracting Prosper was the need to reduce the total credits and number of courses for the semester system. In some instances, the goals of Prosper were cloudy and needed clarification. The GEC looked at the Expanding Perspectives section in two parts and reconfigured the requirements into a liberal arts core and contemporary themes. There was a renaming of the "Process" section into "Skills." The Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MTC) was taken into consideration and some of the GER was realigned to match the MTC. Names from the MTC were used when possible. The GEC also simplified the process by proposing that the GEC be eliminated.

Schuman commented that the GEC had a very large decision to make in terms of framing the GER. Did they want the new GER to be built on essentially the same model as the old general education program? Schuman had tried to assure that the GEC look at both options and he believes that they did consider other possibilities.

In reference to II.C, Mathematical/Logical Reasoning, Farrell said most people will have satisfied the requirement with a high school math course rather than a philosophy course. Those two ways of satisfying the requirement are very different, however. Togeas said he did not know what the exemptions to the requirements would look like. Korth agreed with Farrell that the two areas do not go together well. Thielke pointed out that the two areas are combined in the current GER. Togeas added that the "Abstract Systems" segment of Expanding Perspectives has the two areas linked.

The GEC simply moved this requirement from Expanding Perspectives to the skills section.

Whelan wondered if this requirement was consistent with the MTC. Togeas said that it was. The GEC sees math as a skill. Togeas has a copy of the criteria for this category of the MTC. Ballou said that a student transferring in with the logical reasoning portion fulfilled would not meet the licensure requirements in education. The state currently only allows mathematics to fulfill this requirement, but the state is rethinking the requirement.

Common Experience Requirement

Schuman suggested that the CC consider one GER requirement at a time. The first requirement is the common experience. That discussion will be held separately, following the discussion of the GEC proposal. Imholte wondered if the GEC supported the proposal from the Common Experience Task Force (CETF) for a 2-credit course. Togeas said the GEC did not discuss the CETF proposal for a common experience, but simply folded it into the general education proposal.

Schuman wondered, since the GEC has proposed that the GEC be eliminated, if the CC would have the final say about a course fitting the GER. Togeas said the Division would have the first discussion of any course proposal, then the CC. Schuman asked if the GEC had a discussion about whether to state the requirements in terms of courses or credits. Togeas said that they did have that discussion. One GEC member reminded the group that Prosper was first stated in terms of credits and had to be changed later because of difficulties. The GEC believes that Expanding Perspectives courses should be at least 2 credits.

College Writing Requirement

Schuman asked for questions about the College Writing requirement. Togeas noted that it is a one-semester requirement.

Whelan wondered if the college writing course would be offered in both fall and spring semesters. His concern was that students who most need the writing course may not get it until spring semester. Farrell expected that College Writing would be offered both terms. Schuman said it would not be realistic to try to provide all of the necessary College Writing sections in one term. Farrell pointed out that now there are exemptions to College Writing, but only for the first course of the two-course requirement. An exemption under the semester system would be a national test, not an in-house test.

Schuman suggested that anyone scoring below a certain point on the ACT could automatically be on the list for College Writing in the fall. Farrell said that one view is that there shouldn't be an exemption when only one course is required.

Whelan wondered if there would be a follow-up course to College Writing if students need more instruction. Farrell did not know. If the college has a need for such a course, the need should be communicated to the Division. J. Lee noted that the CETF is encouraging that the common experience course will supplement College Writing.

Schuman noted that Engl 1111 is a pre-College Writing course for students who are below a level to succeed in College Writing. Are we content with having College Writing as part of the GER as a one-course requirement? Whelan said that he was. His concern is for students who come in less well prepared. Schuman asked how we now place students into Engl 1111. Thielke said she places students in Engl 1111 if their ACT score is 15 or below. Sometimes the course is filled, but other times it is not. Schuman said we could check the English semester proposal to see what other courses are being proposed.

Ballou said she thought the general education proposal was well conceived, especially the Global Village. She has reservations about some of the goals because they are very broad. She was not sure of the assumptions for the foreign language skills, for instance. Those goals are quite high considering that the requirement is only for two courses. However, she is not sure if the GEC knows what courses students will want under semesters. Schuman agreed; can we expect the English discipline to come up with a course to supplement the general education program when the GER has not been approved?

Foreign Language Requirement

Farrell said the foreign language goals are similar to those in the current GER. J. Lee wondered why the foreign language requirement was for 0-2 courses and the college writing requirement was for 0-1 course. Does this represent a resource issue or a philosophical issue? Togeas said the GEC expects students to come in with foreign language experience; the GEC is sticking with the status quo on this requirement. J. Lee said his experience with freshmen is that they have better foreign language skills than English. Togeas said resource issues were not involved in the decision.

Ballou commented that the high schools in Minnesota are working hard to upgrade requirements, but UMM attracts students from other states as well.

Frenier wondered what had happened to "Writing Across the Curriculum." Schuman replied it is at the end of the proposal.

Whelan wondered if all four of the skills requirements will have options for exempting out. Togeas said all would, with the exception of the performance requirement. Whelan wondered why a student would not be allowed to exempt out of performance. What if they were in a high school play? Schuman said it would be difficult to verify the quality of their performance after the fact.

Mathematical/Logical Reasoning

Togeas said this requirement was moved from Expanding Perspectives in the current GER to the skills section in the proposed GER. Thielke wondered if the move signified a philosophical shift as well. In other words, would Pre-Calculus and College Algebra now count under this requirement? Togeas said they would if the Math discipline and the Division of Science and Mathematics feel that those fulfill the goals. Whelan wondered if taking the mathematics placement test could fulfill the requirement. Togeas said that College Algebra is supposed to bring students up to college level. He would argue against using a test which places the student out of College Algebra to meet this requirement. He is not sure about testing out of the Pre-Calculus course.

Whelan said the definition of the level of skill required is an important question. High school students may have excelled in a high school play, for instance. Schuman said that skill is hard to measure, unless the student performs for theatre faculty or has a video of the high school play. Togeas said the general education proposal states principles. The exemption procedures still need to be established. Whelan wondered where the procedures would be established. Schuman said by the discipline, then the Division, and then the Curriculum Committee.

Korth repeated that he finds the name of the "Mathematical/Logical Reasoning" requirement to be too fuzzy. He suggested either "Quantitative Reasoning" or "Analytical Reasoning." Guyotte said the MTC uses "Mathematical/Logical Reasoning" as the title for its requirement. The GEC felt that the goals of the requirements were close enough that UMM's GER should use the same name. Korth did not see any reason why UMM's requirement should have the same name as the MTC. Students transferring in with the MTC will have already fulfilled the GER; those transferring out will have the components of the MTC accepted. Farrell said there is concern throughout the University about homogenized curricula. What will make the University of Minnesota degree unique?

Schuman suggested that CC members could propose amendments when we get ready to vote on the proposal. He wants the names of the requirements to be clear so that prospective students and their parents, who may not have a college education, will be able to understand them.

J. Lee agreed that the name of the requirement could be changed. However, from the students' point of view, if this name is easier to understand, he doesn't see why it would need to be changed. Korth said the current name is too broad. He could think of physics courses that would fit. Frenier wondered what Korth saw as the core of this requirement. Korth said "understanding math." Guyotte said the GEC wants to include philosophy logic courses. Korth did not agree with that inclusion.

TIMELINES AND REFERRALS:

Schuman said he had not expected to get through the GER proposal in one meeting. He wondered how long CC members thought it would take to act on the GER proposal, the common experience proposal, and the semester curricula proposals from each discipline. We have deadlines from the Twin Cities which we must meet. He asked members to think about a timeline and the Committee will discuss it at the next meeting.

Whelan agreed that a timeline was needed. He wanted the Curriculum Committee to work through problem areas with the proposals so that time could be saved in Campus Assembly. Schuman said the CC was probably duplicating some of the work of the GEC and the Assembly will probably duplicate some of the discussion of the CC.

Togean said he would be uncomfortable as Chair of the GEC in agreeing to any amendments to the proposal. He suggested that, since the GEC has forwarded its recommendation to the CC, that the CC make recommendations back to the GEC. Farrell agreed; we owe it to the GEC to take any recommendations back to them.

Schuman asked Mooney to put together a schedule of CC meetings for the timeline discussion at the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Curriculum Committee will be on Tuesday, March 4, at 3:00 p.m. in Behmler Conference Room.

Meeting adjourned 4:05 p.m.
Submitted by Nancy Mooney

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