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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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3-31-1999

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University of Minnesota, Morris  
Morris, Minnesota

**MINUTES-1998-99 CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING #11**

March 31, 1999; 8:00 a.m.; Behmler Conference Room

Present: Cerar, Farrell, Frenier, Haugen, Kissock, Korth, Lee, Leroux, McIntosh, Taylor

Guest(s): Mooney

Absent: Busch, Neuharth, Thielke, Utoft, Woll

[In these minutes: renewal of adjunct committees; GER designations of variable topics courses; Psy 3222, Behavioral Biology of Women.]

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Korth asked for corrections or additions to the previous minutes. Frenier mentioned two corrections she would like made. On page two, under Women's Studies, paragraph two, the sentence is corrected to read "In 1978, when the minor was introduced, ~~there weren't enough interested faculty to offer such a diverse curriculum~~ a major seemed unwise as there weren't enough interested faculty to offer such a diverse curriculum." Also, on page three, paragraph three, "...she ~~teaches~~ will teach one Women's Studies course every 2 years outside the History discipline." Lee mentioned a correction within the same paragraph, "Anthropology, for example, has ~~2.5~~ 1.67 faculty members."

**MOTION:** (Understood) To approve the amended minutes of the 3/03/99 Curriculum Committee meeting.

**VOTE:** Unanimous in favor (9-0-0)

**RENEWAL OF ADJUNCT COMMITTEES:** Korth mentioned the CC oversees five adjunct committees. The CC previously reviewed a report from one committee, so there are four remaining to review. Korth referred the CC members to the four adjunct committee reports they received with the agenda.

**A) Teacher Education Committee**

**MOTION:** (Kissock, Frenier) To recommend continuation of the Teacher Education Committee (TEC).

Korth asked if he was correct in his understanding that the TEC had not met yet this year. Kissock said that was a false understanding; the committee had met once and has a large agenda to cover at its upcoming meeting.

Farrell suggested that the first paragraph should say something about the purpose of this committee beyond its existence to respond to Board of Teaching and NCATE reviews. Lee agreed with Farrell's comment regarding the statement, suggesting that the CC approve the renewal of this adjunct committee and then attach an amended statement to pass on to the Executive Committee. Korth wondered about passing to the assembly a different statement than what was approved. Kissock commented that there was precedent for this in the past. Mooney agreed, especially if the CC felt the statements were inadequate. Kissock said the statement would be revised to say it is necessary to renew the committee in order to continue the mission of the TEC. [The statement was later revised as suggested; however the statements were not forwarded to Campus Assembly.]

**VOTE:** Approved 8

Opposed 1

Abstentions 0

**B) Minority Experience Committee**

**MOTION:** (Frenier, Farrell) To recommend continuation of the Minority Experience Committee (MEC).

**VOTE:** Unanimous 9-0-0

**C) International Programs Committee**

Frenier mentioned a concern she has regarding the Katherine Sullivan Scholarship awards. She asked if any UMM students received one of the five

scholarships offered this year. Haugen said a UMM student was a finalist. Frenier wondered if a UMM student received the scholarship last year. Haugen wasn't certain, but she was confident that a UMM student had received the scholarship within the past two years. Frenier said at one time UMM students were quite successful in their applications for this award, but the nominees in the past two years have not done well. She wondered about the value of encouraging students to pursue such a strenuous, highly competitive process if they are unlikely to be successful. Farrell felt that two scholarships awarded to UMM students within four years was a good percentage. Korth wondered if this concern was a reflection on the existence of this committee. Frenier said no, it was instead an indirect concern. She felt that the nominee this year was particularly well qualified and Frenier was disappointed she was not selected. Lee said that may be true, but it has nothing to do with the committee's function. Frenier agreed, stating she only wanted to express her concern.

**MOTION:** (Leroux, Frenier) To recommend continuation of the International Programs Committee (IPC).

**VOTE:** Unanimous 9-0-0

#### **D) Academic Support Services Committee**

**MOTION** (Farrell, Leroux) To recommend continuation of the Academic Support Services Committee (ASSC).

Farrell expressed a concern regarding the committee report. He stated this committee's function concerns the overall collection at Brigg's Library. Farrell noted that the committee's activities mainly addressed the technology issues, space considerations, and the fine policy, with little attention directed to the overall collection of undergraduate library materials. He pointed out that this would be the ultimate responsibility of Karen Fischer, the Librarian, but the ASSC should be making recommendations to her. Farrell conceded that maybe the ASSC is making recommendations and it is reflected in some way in the technology issues. Korth also wondered if space issues belonged with ASSC or instead with the Campus Resources and Planning Committee. Farrell did not intend to challenge what belongs with which committee, he was only concerned with the committee's focus. McIntosh pointed out the comment in the report from an ASSC committee member who expressed a desire for a more clearly defined role. He wondered if Farrell's concern may be what the committee member was expressing. Korth mentioned that the CC could work with the ASSC members to develop new duties and responsibilities as a separate agenda item for another meeting.

**VOTE:** Unanimous 9-0-0

**GER DESIGNATIONS OF VARIABLE TOPICS COURSES:** This is a list of courses to be offered under variable topics umbrellas that had no GER designations. Korth stated this list was compiled by Jeri Mullin from information submitted from the various divisions for the Class Schedule. Leroux expressed concern that a course he plans on teaching in the fall was not on the list. Mooney said the umbrella course may already have a GER designation approved and assigned. If so, there would be no need for the course to be included on this list.

McIntosh wondered if the approved GER designations would be forwarded to Campus Assembly. Korth said they would. Farrell wondered how he would challenge a designation since there was no rationale provided. Mooney said in the past the CC has asked instructors to change the recommended designation of a course. For example, the designation for the Sign Language course was changed from Social Science to foreign language. This is the type of thing the CC can catch. Farrell said it seems this is a task that could be done in the Registrar's office. Korth felt this could be said of a lot of the CC work. He pointed out that the CC could no longer ask GER proposals to meet criteria, since there are none. Farrell agreed and felt it was irrelevant.

McIntosh said without a course description there is no way he can determine if a course fits a certain GER designator. For example, is "Facing West" a course that teaches diversity? He assumes so, but has no way of knowing. Mooney pointed out that topics courses typically have no descriptions; they fit under the description of the umbrella course. Farrell said as a result there is no information to make a judgment. Mooney stated that the CC could require the disciplines to put the course description on the Form C for each topics course. Farrell said no, if the process is changed it should be simplified not complicated. His office spends an immense amount of time on curricular changes. The process does not improve the quality of the students' education. Farrell felt the process was unnecessarily complicated. Kissock pointed out that at this time we must follow the procedure that is in place. He wondered if a course is to be offered under a broad heading, and there is no GER classification for that heading, how it would be determined. Mooney said generally the catalog says, " See specific topics for general education categories." Some say nothing. We have some with variation, therefore we need to review each course. Kissock agreed and said we need to make or verify the judgment. This is the CC's opportunity to review the GER designation and study them if we choose to.

**MOTION:** (Kissock, Lee) Move to accept the GER designations of the variable topics courses.

McIntosh stated he was not ready to vote without more information to base a judgment on. Mooney said the CC has approved the form C, which doesn't require any explanation for GER categories or descriptions for topics courses. If we require a description, we need to change the form C so the CC can deal with things brought forward.

Lee said he can understand McIntosh's concern, but feels the CC can trust the instructor and the division to assign an appropriate GER designation. He does feel the CC review of the designator is a good checking mechanism. McIntosh felt that a course description is not an excessive expectation.

Mooney pointed out that it would be a new requirement.

Kissock desired to return to the point that Farrell was making. He stated that the CC has just been through a massive change in converting from quarters to semesters. It may be a time to step back and review the entire process. Mooney said it would be no problem for her to require descriptions for topics courses. The new PeopleSoft system requires a description and she must trick the system to accept a course without a description. Korth said this could be a future agenda item.

**VOTE:** Approved 8

Opposed 1

Abstentions 0

**CURRICULAR CHANGE PROPOSAL, PSY 3222:** Korth requested a change in the agenda order so the CC could review the PSY 3222 form C and hopefully pass it on to the Campus Assembly.

Korth pointed out that this form C is for an honors version of a course that already exists. Mooney questioned if the instructor intended to select the grading option as A-F only. She wondered if the instructor may have been unaware that almost all courses at UMM are A-F or S-N. Mooney said all the other courses, except one, were offered with both options. Frenier wondered if all are offered with both options, then why have the option at all. Mooney said the question had never been on the form before. She said faculty may be checking the first option available without realizing the usual practice at UMM.

Frenier said she likes to have the S-N option available, but would like most of her courses to be A-F only. Mooney stated her understanding of the original intent of the S-N grading option was to encourage students to try unfamiliar areas without risk to their GPAs. Frenier said the S-N grade is not seen as above a C to a graduate school. Therefore she advises students not to take S-N except outside of any possible majors, which can be difficult to identify in the first years of college. Mooney noted that the major requirements often specify that courses for the major must be taken A-F.

Kissock stated that at UMM the Education Program does not accept S-N grades. Lee wondered if most courses allow S-N option. Mooney said the semester curriculum only has one "A-F only" course. Lee mentioned that if the instructor is concerned that students taking a course as S-N may have a less serious approach, they may prefer that the course have the A-F grading option only. Mooney said her only concern is that the instructor may be unaware of the significance of the options.

Kissock wondered if the teaching courses are listed with S-N options. Mooney said the student is not restricted when registering for the course. She said this may be an oversight. Kissock said it is made clear in the program description. He said in the discipline of education, a student may register for an S-N course, but in ELED or SecEd they cannot. Mooney said the S-N only grading option should appear on the parenthetical for the course. If it does not, registration is not restricted to S-N only.

Lee recommended that the CC approve this Psy 3222 course with the A-F only option as proposed. He will contact the instructor to verify their desire and will inform Mooney if there is a change needed. Lee felt the instructor purposely chose the A-F option. Frenier wondered why any student would take an honors course as S-N. Mooney agreed and wondered if the CC should review all honors courses and require them to be A-F only. Kissock called the question for a vote.

**MOTION:** (Understood) To approve Psy 3222H, Behavioral Biology of Women.

**VOTE:** Unanimous 9-0-0

Meeting adjourned 8:50 a.m.

Submitted by Melody Veenendaal