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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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12-13-2018

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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

2018-19 MEETING #10 Minutes

December 13, 11:40 a.m., Moccasin Flower Room

Members Present: Janet Ericksen (chair), Stacey Aronson, Arne Kildegaard, Peh Ng, Michelle Page, Stephen Gross, Denise Odello, Simon Franco, Kellie Meehlhause, Stephanie Ferrian, Christina Munoz, Annika Nelson, Josh Westfield, and Judy Korn

Members Absent: Stephen Crabtree, Benjamin Narvaez, and Julia Scovil

Visitors: Melissa Bert, Rebecca Dean, Nancy Helsper, and Jeri Squier

In these minutes: Discussion of new Campus Student Learning Outcomes; Discussion of a student survey regarding General Education

Approval of Minutes

Meeting #3, September 20, 2018 – Minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Meeting #4, September 27, 2018 – Minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote, as amended.

Discussion of New Campus Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs) with Rebecca Dean

Dean explained that the CSLOs originated in and were approved by the Curriculum Committee in December 2009. They were approved by Campus Assembly in March 2010. The existing CSLOs served a purpose but the Assessment of Student Learning Committee (ASLC) is asking the Curriculum Committee to consider changing the CSLOs to better fit the current situation.

Dean said that she had asked students how many knew that we had SLOs, and only one student, who had served on the ASLC, was aware of them. CSLOs are an expression of our educational goals as an institution, and an articulation of the skills, knowledge, and attributes we expect from our graduates. CSLOs are not the same as our Gen Ed, co-curricular, or academic Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs). But, they are a guide to remind us of our curricular priorities when we consider program changes. CSLOs should be consensus-based, with students and faculty having a role in determining them. They need to be assessable in some fairly straightforward manner.

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC), an accrediting organization, provides the following expectations and Best Practices for CSLOs:

- Clearly stated and prominently displayed
- Aligned with our mission and curriculum
- Learning-centered
- Consensus-based
- Applicable to all students
- Assessable

Our current CSLOs (listed below) are based on the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) report by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). The LEAP report was a result of a seven year project that included input from presidents of liberal arts colleges, non-profit foundations, and others interested in higher education.

The University of Minnesota, Morris's goal is for students to have gained, by the time of graduation:

1. *Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World through:*

- Core studies in the liberal arts: arts, histories, humanities, languages, mathematics, sciences, and social sciences
- In-depth study in a particular field: its schools of thought, advanced theories, language, and methods of inquiry
- Engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

2. *Intellectual and Practical Skills, practiced extensively across students' college experiences, including:*

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Creative thinking and artistic expression
- Written, multi-media, and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information and technology literacy
- Collaboration

3. *An Understanding of the Roles of Individuals in Society, through active involvement with diverse communities and challenges, including:*

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Aesthetic/artistic engagement
- Environmental stewardship
- Ethical reasoning and actions

4. *Capacity for Integrative Learning, including:*

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies, and through co- and extra-curricular activities
- Application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and progressively more complex problems
- Skills for sustained learning and personal development

Dean stated that these are “goals” and not “requirements” of students. We have asked people to post CSLOs on their syllabi and course proposals. They can be found on our website, but not prominently. Some of our current CSLOs are directly related to Gen Ed categories, but there is no clear relationship to the Gen Ed program. There is not a clear relationship to our mission. We've done some curriculum mapping and the relationship between what's offered and the CSLOs is not clear. Our CSLOs are more program-centered than learning-centered. Some are assessable, and some are not.

The ASLC looked at other models that would fit the HLC's expectations and Morris. Following are three models to consider:

1. **Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)** calls their model “Profiles of Learning for Undergraduate Success” rather than CSLOs. There is not a lot of jargon used. It is learner-focused, assessable, applies to all students, and can be broadly applied across campus. They have four areas (with four bullets under each):

COMMUNICATOR

- Evaluates Information
- Listens Actively
- Builds Relationships
- Conveys Ideas Effectively

PROBLEM SOLVER

- Evaluates Information
- Thinks Critically
- Collaborates
- Analyzes, Synthesizes, and Evaluates
- Perseveres

INNOVATOR

- Investigates
- Creates/Designs
- Confronts Challenges
- Makes Decisions

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR

- Builds Community
- Respectfully Engages Own and Other Cultures
- Behaves Ethically
- Anticipates Consequences

Dean noted that one advantage to this approach is that not only do students, faculty, and staff know what this means, but so do parents and legislators. They also apply to all students broadly across campus, including student activities and on-campus jobs. We currently have no way to put together an e-portfolio, but in the future a system like this makes it easier to see how students develop in a smaller number of categories.

1. **Alverno College** calls their model “8 Core Abilities.” Alverno is well known for innovated assessment and education programs. They don’t give out grades, students do self-assessments.

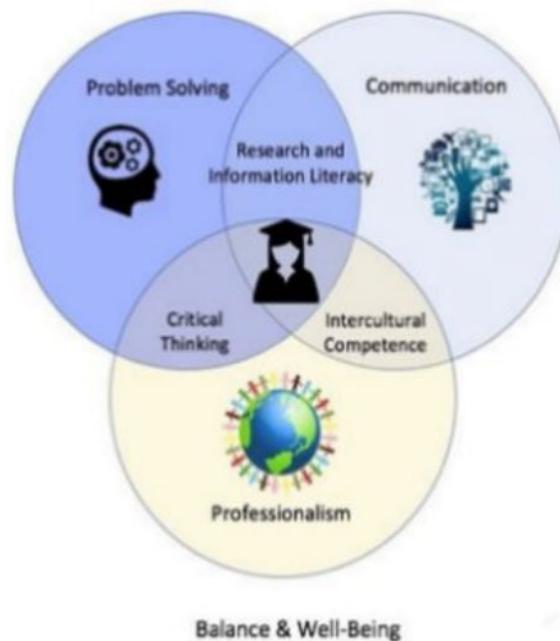
There are eight Core Abilities:

Communication
Analysis
Problem Solving
Valuing
Social Interaction
Developing a Global Perspective
Effective Citizenship
Aesthetic Engagement

There are no additional bullet points. This is learner-focused, contains no jargon, applies to all students, is assessable, and is the basis of all curriculum. The broadness of this model makes it much easier to assess. Ericksen noted that at the time we developed our current CSLOs, she remembered English made their Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) more specific because it would be easier to assess them. Is that not the case at the CSLO level? Franco answered that there has been a shift in the assessment world

from specific to broad to allow institutions to be more nimble. Dean agreed that nimbleness is important. When we have to look at three different types of communication, it makes assessment harder. Assessment is a coalition of the willing. Areas get tired of being asked “how do you assess this?” Ng noted that aesthetic engagement is a difficult outcome to assess. How do you assess that? Are we going down the path again in six years when we’ll be asked to be less nimble? Her greatest fear is that the trend will change again, and we will need to change because this is what parents and students are looking at now. It would be nice to be ahead rather than at the end of the cycle. Page stated that her experience with standards and outcomes from the State of Minnesota and Teacher Prep is what happens when we have very specific outcomes is that there tends to be five gazillion of them. When we are more general it allows more room for interpretation. In a sense, when talking about CSLOs, it would be in our best interest to have fewer general and broad outcomes in the program and be more specific in the PSLOs. The journey doesn’t have to end with this layer. Part of where this is coming from is that in assessment they have a good system for doing academic program assessment. They are now working on student affairs. They have developed a system for Gen Ed and a system to get through all categories in three or four semesters. But the HLC says we should be assessing them all. How do we do it in a timely manner? The general ones such as knowledge of the world – where do we go with that? Something more flexible would help us tell HLC when they come next October that we have a set of CSLOs that we can assess.

3. **Fort Lewis College** calls their model “21st Century Skills.” Fort Lewis displays theirs in the following diagram:



Dean stated that these are relatively straight-forward and are focused on what the student will have or be. Nelson stated that there is a culture of students who would be turned off by the word “professionalism.” She explained that students would rather be seen as engaged than as professional.

Dean stated that we need to be mindful of our mission and how we can change our CSLOs into a set of relatively straightforward categories of student development and knowledge in a way to say to the HLC that we have alignment between the CSLOs and the curriculum. We have a process to help us accurately assess these in a one- or two-year cycle. She would like to have a conversation about adding some questions about what a Morris graduate should look like. She will continue to have conversations among committees and divisions, and will create some models for Morris to review. Ericksen stated that the

timeline would ideally include approval by the Campus Assembly in spring semester 2019. Bert stated that there is a joint subcommittee working on this with the ASLC. Nelson stated that there is a proposal going around in Steering Committee that will cut a few committees, including the ASLC. The plan going forward is that everything concerning assessment would fall to the Curriculum Committee. Dean noted that there is an administrative branch of assessment as well.

Discussion of a Student Survey Regarding General Education

Nelson stated that the ideal plan is for students to take the survey and not be frustrated by it, so the plan is to have about ten questions. They really need to hone in on what would be helpful for this committee and for Dean and the ASLC. What knowledge should Morris grads have? The focus has been on information about WLA. Ericksen asked if questions have already been formulated regarding WLA. Nelson replied that they want to ask: 1) whether or not having a specific topic would have influenced the student's decision to take one section over another; 2) would they have liked to have tested out of this requirement; 3) a question about whether the class they took was engaging. Squier stated that if you ask the question whether a topic would have influenced their section choice, the answer will inevitably be "yes." Why not ask if the theme should be across all sections? Outside of English nobody knew there were different topics. Ericksen stated that the topic isn't the point. The topic is writing. You just have to have something to write about.

Ericksen stated that it would be good to ask how many of the student's classes have included grades on written work. That would be a question worth asking. The problem is do we need more or less different writing instruction. Helsper stated that she considered her Math homework to be written. Ericksen responded that the question could specify papers or essays. Dean noted that it might be helpful to ask faculty how many papers or essays they have assigned. Nelson responded that they could do a separate survey for faculty.

Franco asked if WLA was the only Gen Ed that MCSA would be focusing on. Nelson answered that they didn't know what other Gen Eds needed to be explored. Interdisciplinarity is a big thing on campus, and she wondered how many students actually see it in their courses. Franco stated that it may be a good idea to have a meeting with MCSA and ASLC and/or Assessment Council to see what we already have and what new information is needed. Dean added that it would be good to have Helsper there to provide existing data. Ericksen stated that before the survey goes out she would like to know the goal of the survey.

Helsper suggested a question about whether students would be in favor of requiring all four of the Global Village requirements, but allowing some to have two designators. This would not mean additional requirements, but doubling up on Gen Eds. Nelson stated that they do have a question like that in the survey. Helsper suggested asking if the student thinks there is anything missing from our GERs.

Franco asked if we will look at different models in the spring. Ericksen answered that the committee started to read two articles in the Drive on how to or how not to reform Gen Ed. We don't have anything certain yet. Helsper stated that she did a study in APAS on graduates to see which two of the four Global Village requirements students chose. Sixteen percent chose all four. The most popular ones were ECR and IP. A large majority who chose those two did it through waiver or, AP credits, or transfer credits. Korn added that some Gen Eds are built into the major. Ericksen stated that it would be good to ask if they understood the purpose of Gen Ed. Nelson added that it would be helpful to ask about interdisciplinarity as well, e.g., do you know what it is and do you see it in your courses or in your Gen Eds? Ericksen noted that we don't have a Gen Ed that is focused on interdisciplinarity. The only courses

labeled as interdisciplinary are IS courses, and there is no requirement for an IS course. The question could be rephrased to: "Do you see explicit attention to interdisciplinarity and why?"

Ng stated that we have Best Practices by AAC&U and LEAP. We have historical discussions and data. We can look at that. Ericksen stated that David Langley has volunteered to collect Gen Ed models for us. Kildegaard noted that it doesn't seem that students who are here now are the right audience. Especially seniors in the chute. Asking how important writing was to you might give a very different answer from someone five years out in the world where they are realizing the gaps or the expertise they experience. Interaction with your education doesn't end when you walk out the door.

Submitted by Darla Peterson