

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

Curriculum Committee Minutes

Curriculum Committee

10-15-2020

Curriculum minutes 10/15/2020

Curriculum Committee

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/curriculum>

Recommended Citation

Curriculum Committee, "Curriculum minutes 10/15/2020" (2020). *Curriculum Committee Minutes*. 380. <https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/curriculum/380>

This Minutes is brought to you for free and open access by the Curriculum Committee at University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. It has been accepted for inclusion in Curriculum Committee Minutes by an authorized administrator of University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. For more information, please contact skulann@morris.umn.edu.

UMN Morris Curriculum Committee

October 15, 2020, 1:00 p.m. Meeting #7

Zoom

Members Present: Janet Ericksen (Chair), John Barber, Barbara Burke, Rebecca Dean, Jennifer Deane, Simón Franco, Nic McPhee, Ben Narvaez, Peh Ng, Michelle Page, Emily Wittkop

Members Absent: Stacey Aronson, Marcus Muller, Stephen Gross, Shanda Pittman

Others present: Jeri Squier, Robyn VanEps

In these minutes: Writing requirement discussion

#1 Welcome and announcements

Introduced new student member Emily Wittkop. The Campus Conversation on Monday had more than 60 participants, and no objections were raised to moving forward with the writing requirement revision, although it will continue to be refined with feedback from the conversation and other places, including Scholastic and an yet to be determined student forum. Ericksen met with the Scholastic Committee earlier today to discuss the proposal as well, and they support the general proposal although still have some questions to be resolved. Scholastic did, though, favor the two-level requirement.

#2 Writing Requirement discussion

Ericksen separated the previous working document into two proposals: a one writing intensive course proposal and a two writing intensive course proposal. Undetermined is how to present either one or both proposals to campus assembly. With Scholastic Committee's input, the transfer credit language in both proposals is different from what has been there previously. It clarifies the move of transfer credit exemption approval from English to the standard practice. McPhee strongly supports this change, in part because of difficulties with changing responsibilities among English faculty. The two course model puts one course at an intro level and the other at a higher level. McPhee asked about the two course model allowing capstones to carry a W (most capstones seem to require substantial writing, although Chemistry, for instance, does not). His concern is about the capstone disadvantaging the use or development of higher level courses other than the capstone, when students may need and want more preparation before the capstone. Dean also expressed concern about the missing the middle level course in development. But some of the bigger majors wouldn't have enough courses to accommodate a 3xxx writing intensive course (which has to limit enrollment). Could the criteria for upper level be adjusted so it can accommodate more students?

Squier asked about how the courses will be vetted for adding the "W" designation in the catalog and on what timeline--can this really happen in time for next year? Ericksen discussed timelines with Scholastic, and it seems possible--especially if Squier agrees--if the revision passes at the last Campus Assembly this fall or the first one next spring. A call for proposals could go out

immediately after the vote, with a fairly short turn-around for the initial slate of offerings. Proposals would be reviewed by the Writing Board, who would bring their recommendations to this committee. Curriculum Committee would then vote on the slate and send it forward to Assembly. It's a tight timeline, Ericksen admitted, but it would put at least a first round of W offerings into the schedule ahead of registration for fall classes--and, really, while March would be ideal, new student registration will happen later than that, and new students are the ones who will be bound by the new requirement. Too, we do not have to have all of the W courses available in the first year, since students have multiple years in which they make take them. At minimum, perhaps the lower courses could be added by March and upper level courses added in a phased manner. If the proposal is approved, at least some courses could be included in the schedule when students start registering, even if not all courses are identified yet. The proposal does not require that the upper level course be in the student's major.

Ng stated that more courses may come in if the proposal is approved. Ericksen agrees that there may be more interest than the results of the preliminary call showed, and she is hearing almost entirely positive things about the proposal. Deane commented that it was great to see so much interest at the campus conversation. Franco asked if this proposal is weakened by the variable credit count necessary to fill--it could be filled with between 3 and 8 credits. Franco noted that this means disparities in work load. Burke responded that ArtP has the same disparity. She also believes the W designation will help students register for classes. Narvaez commented that the minimum criteria for meeting the writing intensive course requirement will be consistent and so courses with more credit are doing more of other things. Ericksen reminded people that the proposal is built on the idea that these courses are ones the student would be taking already. The W acknowledges that writing is part of it, whether the instructor chooses to adjust a course in order to add the W or not. The criteria proposed might actually keep these courses more consistent than other GenEd courses.

Ericksen would like to move this forward to Campus Assembly for discussion at their next meeting. Is there preference in this committee for a one-course or two-course proposal? More questions would need to be asked and answered if we move forward with a two-course proposal. It could be a phased approach to allow more time to solidify the second level course. Burke asked about the need for divisions to commit to offer courses next year. Ericksen replied that since only new students starting next fall would be held to the new requirement, we do not need immediately to have much beyond what English has committed to offering, although we'd certainly like more than that. She noted that staff development would be an important piece to help faculty, and the system has a number of options for helping us with this. English has committed to having lower level course offerings. Dean suggested that both models be presented to Campus Assembly. Her experience indicates that options are better at that level. Ericksen left criteria slightly different between the lower and upper level courses, but this, too, is a point for further discussion. McPhee expressed his concern about including the capstone as meeting the requirement, if it diminishes a discipline's inclination to develop other options. Barber shared that the capstone experience should be a culmination of learning, not necessarily where a significant amount of new learning is still occurring. Deane commended students doing

an incredible amount of learning still at that level. McPhee pointed out that not all capstones require writing.

The next Campus Assembly is October 27. Ericksen asked if those present feel that the framework is ready for discussion at this level. McPhee heard from someone that the review process is important to the proposal, so he suggested that be included. The current (TC) questions can be presented as the minimum and subject to revision. The first Writing Board could possibly even include someone from the Writing Center based at UMN TC (it *is* a system resource, at least to some extent). Narvaez commented that we shouldn't expect to have 100% support for whatever proposal goes forward. The Writing Board membership as presented should include 3 of the 4 divisions, faculty with writing teaching experience, and a student. Franco anticipates that some questions will be about how the committee is structured. It will be an arm of the curriculum committee. They would bring a slate of courses brought to the curriculum committee and then to campus assembly. Those present all support a two-level course requirement. Wittkop stated that she is undecided between the two options, but could support either one.

There will need to be some exemptions provided as the requirement is implemented. Squier commented that her opinion is to wait to include the second requirement in the next catalog, to ensure that we can develop enough courses. She also noted that APAS will need to be adjusted.