University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

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Curriculum minutes 03/24/2022

Curriculum Committee

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UMN Morris Curriculum Committee
March 24, 2022, 11:40 a.m. Meeting #13
Zoom

Members Present: Peh Ng (Chair), Stacey Aronson, John Barber, Barbara Burke, Rebecca Dean, Jennifer Deane, Stephanie Ferrian, Kiel Harell, Rachel Johnson, Nic McPhee, Vanessa Mora, Marcus Muller

Members Absent: Jade Allard, Ben Narvaez (on leave), Simón Franco, Michelle Page

Others present: Michael Lackey, K.K. Lamberty, Elena Machkosova, Jeri Squier, Robyn VanEps

In these minutes: ABAS Academic Program Review, CSci Academic Program Review

#1 Welcome and announcements
Ng reminded the committee that there is an additional meeting next week. Ng will be presenting the current status of Gen Ed at the April Campus Assembly meeting.

#2 Minutes from March 2, 2022 and March 10, 2022
Zoom poll to approve minutes from Meeting #11 - March 2, 2022. Motion made by Barber, seconded by McPhee. Minutes approved (7-0-0).
Zoom poll to approve minutes from Meeting #12 - March 10, 2022. Motion made by Johnson, seconded by McPhee. Minutes approved (8-0-0).

#3 Academic Program Review
African and Black American Studies
Ng welcomed ABAS discipline coordinator Michael Lackey and reminded Committee members of their role. Enrollment is up in ABAS. The discipline has created a "best student award" for the first time. A student has been selected. The ABAS faculty shared that they feel overworked. They are considering an introductory course to the discipline and working on its feasibility, but feel it would add continuity. Lackey has asked for a website for courses (page in Schedule Builder), but at this time has been told it's not possible. An ABAS page would make it easier for students to see what is available. Muller responded that it might be possible, but it creates difficulties with upkeep because courses have to be double listed. Disciplines with no course designator that is tied to the name of the discipline have the same issue. Johnson commented that Environmental Studies sends out a list to advisors to help. Dean commented that making an improvement to the schedule builder would benefit many. Lackey is hoping to provide a platform for prospective students to find courses. Squier commented that the new replacement programs for registration may be better equipped to make this work. Burke asked what advisers should know about ABAS to help advise students. Lackey responded that he always keeps the audience in mind and encourages students to know how it will benefit them. McPhee asked about the new award they are offering. This will be the first year it is being done so unable to respond about the impact of it. Ng thanked ABAS.

Computer Science
Ng welcomed Computer Science faculty and reminded Committee members of their role. Machkasova shared that they learned a lot from connecting with alumni. An area that alumni pointed out as weak is

in systems. They are looking to offer a course to address their feedback. They are also looking to add ethics as a required course. In the next catalog, one of the introductory courses will be offered as two half-semester courses. They are missing a faculty member that could specialize in systems courses (computer hardware, operating systems, databases, etc.). McPhee commented that programming and systems are more integrated in the field of computer science recently. Alumni have commented that that lack of systems courses has impacted them in their careers. Ng asked about needs being met with the current staffing level. Machkasova responded that they are managing and doing the best they can. Lamberty says an idea is to require a systems course like databases to ensure students get a base knowledge, but that would likely result in fewer electives. Ideally, they would hire someone who specializes in databases and other system areas. Johnson asked about courses for undergraduate faculty to pursue interest areas. McPhee and Lamberty did attend a training, but didn't find a way to apply it to courses. Alums could be a resource as well, but they are making much more than a teaching salary would be. A more sustainable solution is necessary. CSci has already submitted an ECAS for changing CSci 1201 to two half semester courses and they are working through the same thought process for the data structures course. Both are giving consideration to students who come in with coursework in these areas and to those students who don't have interest beyond the first half.

#4 Gen Ed discussion
Ng commented that a Gen Ed proposal needs to be moved forward, keeping our UMN Morris Strategic Plans and the MPact 2025 in mind. Ng asked how the committee feels about changing the name of "General Education Requirements" to the "Morris Core." This was a suggestion in the campus feedback and from at least one Vice-Chancellor. Dean is happy to rename it, but asks what the benefit would be. McPhee also responded that he's not opposed and asked about the input from admissions. Also, asked if it would create any issues with the transfer curriculum. It would not affect the MN transfer curriculum. Ng has not brought this to admissions yet.