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## Curriculum minutes 02/06/2012

Curriculum Committee

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**UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE  
2011-12 MEETING #11 Minutes  
February 6, 2012, 12:00 p.m., BCR**

Present: Bart Finzel (chair), Joe Alia, Bryce Blankenfeld, Carol Cook, Clare Dingley, Caitlin Drayna, Janet Ericksen, Hazen Fairbanks, Sara Haugen, Heather James, Leslie Meek, Peh Ng, Paula O'Loughlin, Ian Patterson, Gwen Rudney, Jeri Squier, Tisha Turk

Absent: None

Visiting: Nancy Helsper

*In these minutes: IC Substitutions; Course Approvals; General Education Writing Requirement Discussion*

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion:** (Rudney/Ng) to approve the January 30, 2012 minutes. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**2. INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY (IC) COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS**

Finzel explained that some students, for whatever reason, do not complete an IC course during their first year. The committee's minutes don't show that this concern was addressed during the preliminary IC discussions. With the old First-Year Seminar (FYS), students had the potential to substitute the FYS course with a course that addressed diversity, since that was the overarching theme of FYS. The Scholastic Committee has asked the Curriculum Committee for guidance on whether substitutions should be allowed for IC. Ultimately, the Scholastic Committee may provide some way individual students can fulfill the requirement, but he asked the committee whether, as a policy matter, students should be required to take an IC course regardless of when they complete the requirement, or whether substitutions should be allowed.

Rudney stated that the cleanest thing to do would be to make them take it. Squier voiced a concern that it might create a backlog similar to what has happened with college writing. Also, taking it after the first year would defeat the intent of the course. O'Loughlin asked if there isn't already an opportunity for students to take it during their second semester. Finzel noted that the second semester offerings are for students who either fail it the first semester or for students who transfer in during spring semester. His understanding is that not all students are meeting the requirement even with the opportunity to take it the second semester.

O'Loughlin stated that she would not want to give students an out by encouraging them to take an alternative upper level class. Fairbanks stated that it is important for students to take IC their first year. O'Loughlin stated that we could make it a priority that students who failed or missed it in the fall would have to take it in the spring. Finzel noted that we have a limited number of IC courses offered in the spring. Ng asked if students who come to UMM in the spring would still be considered in their first year if they took it the following fall, when there are more courses to choose from. Dingley explained that the

IC course has an enforced prerequisite for the first term of enrollment. Ericksen stated that some people ignore their advisers and don't take the course their first semester. If a student has to take the course the first term of enrollment, it has to be made absolutely clear. Dingley stated that there are also students who enroll in the course and drop it. The course is not repeatable, and if a student who received a D grade wants to take it the following semester, that student won't be able to get into the class because it is for first year students. Faculty who teach it in the spring are not aware that they should include students who have failed it, and they have no way of identifying which students failed versus which students are interested in taking it because they like the subject matter. A solution could be that students who failed it get first priority, but spring registration begins before the end of fall semester. There should be a priority over upperclassmen who are interested because of the subject matter. Turk noted that she was not aware that upperclassmen could take it.

Finzel asked if it might be possible for students to automatically remain enrolled in IC until they finish the requirement. Squier noted that it would not prevent them from dropping it. Finzel noted that it appears that the committee believes that there is not an appropriate substitute for IC and that a mechanism should be found to ensure that students take it. Squier stated that placing an advising hold on students would not ensure that they take it. Rudney stated that something like that would formalize the seriousness of not having completed an assigned first course of the first semester. Turk added that college writing could fit that category as well. Patterson suggested that email alerts could be sent out to those who have not completed the course, reminding them of the deadline. Dingley noted that the class might already be full at that point. O'Loughlin stated that those students should have a chance to register before any upperclassmen are allowed in. We either are going to have to put more students in the second term or not allow them to switch once they are registered.

Finzel stated that it is clear that the committee wants students to take an IC class during their first year. It will be up to the Scholastic Committee to enforce that. He suggested that a registration hold might be appropriate. Squier replied that most will have already registered by the time grades are in. Ng asked if it would be easy to go through the grades for IC courses and pull out the ones that received Ws or Fs. Squier stated that there would be some who dropped the course before the W would have shown up. Then a determination would have to be made of whether the W was given to someone who needed it or whether it was dropped because the student wasn't supposed to be enrolled in it. She tracked those the first year IC courses were offered, and it was a time-consuming, three-day process. Rudney stated that we need to look at changing the culture so there is an expectation of completion of that course.

Squier suggested having a practicum in one of the IC courses for those who failed to take it or failed it in the fall. They would not have to register for the course, but would have to sit in on it and take it for S/N only. O'Loughlin stated that it would be disruptive for the new students to be in a class with students who have failed it.

Ng stated that, as a member of the Scholastic Committee, this discussion gives them something to go on. Finzel replied that the Curriculum Committee has been pretty clear

that there should be no substitute for the IC requirement. Ericksen agreed and stated that the Scholastic Committee should turn down any petition for a substitution and should find a way for the student to take the class. Ng asked if the student could take the class their sophomore year with instructor permission. Dingley asked how it would affect the dynamics of the class if instructors are told to let students in. Turk noted that in college writing it is a pain to have students who failed it in the past and are now sulky about it. Ericksen stated that the alternative is to give them an exemption, but that breeds more students to request an exemption. Finzel stated that it must be made quite clear that there is no exemption. That will result in few requests for exemption. O'Loughlin added that someone should reiterate to students and advisers that this is a priority the first year and even more important than getting into a sequence of courses towards a major.

### **3. COURSE APPROVALS**

#### New Courses

AMIN/HIST 1701: Global Indigenous History (HIST; 4 cr)

ANTH 1812: Human Societies: Past and Present, Fact and Fiction (IC; 4 cr)

ANTH 2202: Men and Masculinities (SS; 4 cr)

AMIN/HIST 1701: Global Indigenous History (HIST; 4 cr)

ANTH 1812: Human Societies: Past and Present, Fact and Fiction (IC; 4 cr)

ANTH 2202: Men and Masculinities (SS; 4 cr)

ANTH 2605: Anthropology of Globalization (SS; 4 cr)

ANTH 3352: Representation and Power in Contemporary China (SS; 4 cr)

HIST 1815: Women in the American West (IC; 4 cr)

HIST 1816: Explaining the Inexplicable: 20th Century Genocides (IC; 2 cr)

SOC 1813: Political Economy of "Natural" Disaster (IC; 2 cr)

#### New Courses (provisionally approved)

HIST 1813: World Indigenous History (IC; 4 cr)

HIST 2451: The American West (HIST; 4 cr)

Meek explained that, as a whole, these are courses proposed by people who are new to UMM. These courses provide a way for them to teach a course in their field of expertise. Six of the courses (with 18xxx designators) are new IC courses.

AMIN/HIST 1701 is a 1xxx-level history course similar to HIST 1813, an IC course. 1701 is being proposed due to an enormous amount of interest expressed by history students who have fulfilled their IC requirement. The content will differ from the IC course in that the IC course will be designed to meet the IC criteria. This was done last year with PHIL 1801 and AMIN 1101. Finzel asked if both will be offered in the same semester. Meek replied that they will be offered every other year. Dingley clarified that a student cannot take 1701 and have it fulfill the IC requirement. AMIN 1701 and HIST

1701 are not IC courses. A student who takes AMIN 1701 and HIST 1813 will not get credit for both because they are too similar. Finzel stated that class size and pedagogical techniques will differ.

Rudney asked if the new courses will replace any courses currently offered that are not typically full. Meek answered that some of the courses are proposed as a result of the hire of a new anthropology faculty member. Courses that were taught by the instructor whom she replaced are no longer offered.

Finzel stated that this is the first substantial group of IC courses that the committee has seen under the new process of not having an IC subcommittee vetting them. He asked if the ECAS paperwork is sufficient to determine if they meet the goals of the IC requirement. Ericksen answered that she did not see anything in ECAS that states the goals of the IC requirement. In college writing there is a shared common wording that is including in all the syllabi for college writing courses. IC should have something like that to remind students and faculty. The ECAS form does not speak specifically to the goal of IC. Finzel noted that the faculty member proposing an IC course needs to explain how the course meets the Gen Ed designation.

Dingley stated that there have been times when she has asked faculty if they would consider a different designator that matches the course more closely. On occasion the Curriculum Committee has asked faculty if they would consider a different designator. Ericksen stated that we do need clarification of all the Gen Ed requirements, but IC is distinct in that it extends across so many disciplines. We often rely on discipline expertise as whether a course meets a Gen Ed goal. We could go back to asking that IC course proposals include a separate explanation. Dingley stated that it would be almost impossible to update our internal system. Finzel asked if we could require an explanation where we have them list the Gen Ed requirement. Squier answered that it is a drop down box. Helsper suggested that it be included in the box where it says "rationale for change." Squier replied that there is a word limit in that box. Ericksen suggested that the rationale could be required at the discipline and division level for review, but would not be part of the official electronic paperwork that goes forward to the committee. Finzel stated that it would help the division chair speak to it at the meeting of the committee, and asked the Divisions to expect a rationale with IC course proposals.

**Motion:** (O'Loughlin/Patterson) to approve the proposed courses. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

#### **4. GENERAL EDUCATION DISCUSSION: WRITING REQUIREMENT**

Finzel began by stating that the consensus of the committee, based on the discussion at the last meeting, is that students should be taking college writing in some form at UMM. There were issues about transfers and what might substitute for college writing, but the broad consensus was that there should be no waiver for non-course related things, like an ACT score. There was some talk about a second requirement in a field of study or an advanced writing course in the English discipline, but that is an independent and separate

topic of discussion that will occur later. The next step might be to approve the suggested proposal brought forward at last week's meeting, followed by a discussion on how to treat transfer courses.

Dingley stated that the Scholastic Committee oversees how AP credits count. Finzel added that there was also some discussion of changing the name of college writing to help remove the stigma of being perceived as a remedial course. Transfer courses that could come in as equivalent to the fundamentals course would not meet the writing for the liberal arts (or whatever new title we give college writing) requirement. O'Loughlin asked if college writing would be at a little bit higher level. If a student took College in the Schools in high school, that could come in as fundamentals. If a student took college writing at a community college, that could come in as fundamentals. If a student took college writing as a PSEO student, that would count as college writing. Would the student be required to take an advanced class as well? Bart stated that college writing faculty would look at the credits and work with our transfer specialist to decide if the course meets the requirement. Ericksen stated that it is often not easy to tell if it meets the requirements from looking at the syllabus alone. Turk noted that it is fairly easy to do a sweep of what doesn't match what we do. If we identify what all college writing sections do in terms of instructions, number of pages, individual meetings with the instructor, etc., it would be easy to identify from a syllabus whether it would meet our requirement. Squier asked if there is a way that students could test out of our college writing if they have college writing transfer credits. Turk answered that currently when students want to transfer in with college writing credits, she asks the students to give her a portfolio of writing from the class and a syllabus. She does that for students who seek exemptions in their junior or senior year as well.

Finzel asked that Turk revise the proposal, in light of this discussion, and present it to the committee at its next meeting. Revisions should include a proposed name change, the requirement of taking it in the first year, and removal of references to additional writing courses. It should be kept as simple as possible, backing off a little on the language of transfer, stressing exemption rather than transfer.

Helsper asked if the committee should include a response to the resource issue when it goes to Campus Assembly. Finzel answered resources would be handled by the VCAA's office. Finzel stated that, if the proposal is approved by Campus Assembly, Admissions will need to change their admissions materials so that they no longer tell students that they will be exempted from college writing based on their ACT scores.

Adjourned 1:00 p.m.  
Submitted by Darla Peterson