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Curriculum minutes 04/24/2015

Curriculum Committee

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**UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
2014-15 MEETING #16 Minutes
April 24, 2015, 2:15 p.m., MFR**

Members Present: Bart Finzel (chair), Sarah Ashkar, Mary Elizabeth Bezanson, Donna Chollett, Stephen Crabtree, Janet Ericksen, Pieranna Garavaso, Sara Haugen, Judy Korn, Peh Ng, Ricky Rojas, and Gwen Rudney,

Members Absent: Mark Collier, Pilar Eble, Maryanna Kroska, Emily Sunderman, and Sonja Swanson

Visitors: Jon Anderson, Julia Dabbs, Nancy Helsper, and Jong-Min Ki

In these minutes: Art History Program Review Report (Professor Julia Dabbs); Statistics Program Review Report (Professors Jon Anderson and Jong-Min Kim); Discussion of General Education Program

Approval of Minutes – April 17, 2015

MOTION was made to approve the April 17, 2015 meeting minutes. Minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Announcements

This is the last meeting of the academic year. Finzel thanked the Committee for its work this year and especially thanks those members who will not be serving next year.

Academic Program Reviews

Finzel stated that it was his intent a few years ago to close the loop on the disciplines that had put a lot of energy into their program reviews, and share them with the division chairs and the dean. Disciplines were then asked to come to the Curriculum Committee meetings and report on the distinctiveness of the program, curriculum link/relationship to other programs (including Gen Ed), innovation in last few years, and especially program goals or expected improvements in the coming years. The last question is really the intent of the report, because programs will be invited to return to the Curriculum Committee after four years to report on program changes or progress toward goals. Art History and Statistics have been sitting on the shelf for a long time and are now coming to light like priceless pieces of art discovered in the attic.

Art History Program Review Report (Professor Julia Dabbs)

Finzel welcomed Professor Julia Dabbs to the meeting. Dabbs reported that the Art History discipline currently has three full-time faculty. She teaches renaissance and baroque, Professor Eisinger teaches modern, and Professor Schryver teaches medieval. The small discipline does quite well covering art history chronologically and thematically. Art History is a portal to various fields of study. Students also achieve some pretty distinctive skills, taking a visual object, analyzing it, and translating it into words. Relatively few students come to Morris even having heard of art history because they don't

have much exposure to it in high school. Most of the majors and minors are acquired by conversion.

Art History fulfills the Fine Arts (FA) Gen Ed requirement across-the-board. Art History has 60% of the total list of Gen Ed courses. They also fulfill major/minor requirements in Studio Art, GWSS, German Studies, African American Studies, Secondary Education, Elementary Education, and Art History offers an Honors course.

Dabbs described two curricular innovations in Art History: 1) a capstone assessment of the major and its requirements, including some methodology and theoretical aspects of its benefit to students in the job market; and 2) Professor Schryver recently introduced some 2xxx-level courses which will be in place next year for the first time. He sees this as a stepping stone from introductory level courses to the upper level courses. There was too much of a gap between them before.

Art History has three common goals: 1) follow-up on the capstone assessment course; 2) restructure the major so when choosing upper level courses for the major, the student would not be allowed to take six courses from one faculty member, but would be required to take an upper level course from each of the three faculty members. This would encourage breadth in the major; and 3) to reimagine and revitalize the principles of art course, including changing the title, to bring more students into the Art History fold and increase the number of majors and minors. They are looking at creating a 3xxx-level methods course with a strong research paper and practical aspects of doing library research in the field. It could be broken into two components at 2 credits each. Right now they are waiting to see who is hired when Professor Eisinger retires, so that person can have a say in what is offered.

Ericksen stated that if the course could be rotated with other Humanities courses, it could cross into French, Spanish, and English. If there was one common course either rotated or shared teaching visual dimensions of applying theories, it could have stronger enrollment and serve different disciplines. It's something to talk about. Dabbs agreed and noted that Art History has majors take the English methods course when it is offered. Finzel added that it would be helpful for small majors to have a dedicated theory class for small majors. Rudney stated that she also supports the idea of it being healthy for students and disciplines to have a variety of offerings.

Finzel thanked Professor Dabbs for her report to the Committee.

Statistics Program Review Report (Professors Jon Anderson and Jong-Min Kim)

Finzel welcomed Professors Anderson and Kim to the meeting. Professor Anderson stated that one of the distinct things about the Statistics program is that they have been able to serve UMM students in a more general education context as well as at a higher level by prepping students for advanced study or employment. Morris is one of the very first liberal arts colleges to offer a program in Statistics. He has been amused and entertained by machinations in other liberal arts colleges trying to move into this area. The program has been a key contributor in service projects, community learning, statistical education,

and online education. Between faculty and students they have a diverse set of interests and skills. On the outside, they appear to be a bunch of statisticians that look alike, but he has different skills than each of the other three faculty in the program. The mix turns out to be better than the sum of the parts and has enabled them to adapt better than they would have otherwise.

As for curricular connections, the Statistics program satisfies Gen Ed requirements for students, and a lot of majors have a statistics requirement. A lot of upper division courses in other programs are there to serve the students in that particular program in advanced study. The Statistics program's advanced courses are not intended only for Statistics majors. One example is Psychology students going to graduate school need the quantitative parts on their resume. Upper division students are a majority of students from other parts of campus other than Statistics majors. Faculty are involved and serve campus through grants generated by other investigators, they provide support and consulting advice, and they provide service to administrative entities on campus when needed.

Innovations include the use of modern Statistical software. In upper division courses it has always been true, but they made a conscious decision to have more modern computational skills come down to lower courses. It has been exemplified in Undergraduate Research Symposium presentations that students in other disciplines programs that have taken Statistics courses have shown they have a much better set of skills that serve them well in other programs. The program is involved in open source development of software modules and curriculum. Statistics is making innovations in teaching and how they are doing research. They have been involved in getting a multi-disciplinary data science program up and running. It's quite likely that in some ways statistics won't exist as it exists in five or ten years. Data Science will be the thing that will consume Statistics, making it a small entity that will become the other. Finzel asked if Anderson sees the program's name changing to Data Science with a minor in statistics in five years. Anderson answered that the development of the green revolution will include small, well-defined experiments. Innovations will still be exist, but the whole world of data exploration to define knowledge and truth will be so large that it will dwarf what we used to be. Today we buy something on Amazon. It took 15 years to get off that data analytical profile. Personalized medicine is data exploration. We are ready for it, but likely in five or 10 years the idea of the nice experimental 20th-century innovation will seem a nice little trinket.

General Education Program

Finzel stated that at the last meeting, the committee looked back at the record of Gen Ed discussions in 2011 and discussed the question of whether the themes that came out of that review still resonate. Today's meeting will be a free discussion of ideas. The following ideas were brought up for further discussion:

- A clear and systematic way to match SLOs to GERs is needed, understanding that some SLOs would require an accumulation of classes and/or experiences to fulfill them, rather than one course.

- Allowing some courses to satisfy more than one Gen Ed should be revisited. There is a national conversation going on regarding a ladder of Gen Ed, providing a sequence of requirements taken in each of the first three years. One or two courses in each discipline could be targeted.
- Broaden the Gen Eds to reduce the sense of only one class on campus that satisfies a Gen Ed, e.g., science classes for non-majors.
- Individualize Gen Ed requirements based on the majors, e.g., a science Gen Ed would not be listed as a Gen Ed requirement on the APAS of a science major.
- Cluster Gen Eds around specific SLOs.
- Revisit foreign language requirement and the ability for students to test out of it.
- Consider adding a fitness Gen Ed.

Submitted by Darla Peterson