

Approved November 20, 2012

**College of Arts and Sciences
COMMITTEE ON THE CURRICULUM**

**Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2012**

Present: Andy Bernstein, Jerusha Detweiler-Bedell, Jeff Feld-Gore, Judy Finch, Tuajuanda Jordan, Dan Kelley, Peter Kennedy, Joel Martinez, Bethe Scalettar, Freddy Vilches, Sara Rangel, Julia Yeckes, Tamara Ko, recorder.

Absent: Jim Grant

Guest: Paul Powers, Director of Exploration & Discovery

The meeting was convened at 3:33pm.

Minutes from October 30, 2012 were approved.

I. Course Proposal Subcommittee

AES 107 Low Int R/W Core

AES 127 Int R/W Core

The above AES courses both have variable credits of four to eight. Each course will replace two other two- to four-credit courses and will help with scheduling, as the department will only need to account for the time of one course as opposed to two.

HIST 216 Ancient Greece

This course is currently offered as a temporary course and is widely liked, and the department is now proposing to make it a permanent offering. The change will not have an impact on resources.

IS 240 North African Social Movements

This course was previously taught in an overseas program and is replacing an old course that is no longer being offered because the instructor has left.

All courses were unanimously approved.

II. Classics Studies Major Discussion

The question of whether HIST 216 would be applicable for the classics studies major was raised, and Dean Jordan quickly clarified that after her conversation with Professors Rob Kugler and Nick Smith, she is confident that there would be no additional resource strain. If the major does

end up expanding, the department will request for additional resources just like any other department does now. Students would be allowed to take any needed courses from Reed College, and Professors Kugler and Smith will continue to offer the courses here at the College.

One of the previous concerns was that there would be no permanent faculty member attached to this major but since both professors are endowed, it would be a simple enough matter to adjust their titles to include classics studies without removing them from their original home departments. The responsibilities of the administrative assistant would need to be reviewed, but the curriculum would not be offered any differently than the current status quo. Professors Kugler and Smith have also stated that they do not request a course release or stipend for chairing the major.

Co-Chair Detweiler-Bedell had some lingering concerns about the classics studies major proposal but they have now been addressed by Dean Jordan's update. The major would need to be presented to the faculty in order to get final approval though, and would technically not be in effect until the next academic year. However, the major could be retroactively approved to spring semester.

If the Committee endorses the classics studies major, this would be one more step towards presenting it to the faculty. There will be a lot of resource questions, and Co-Chairs Detweiler-Bedell and Martinez will need to present a very thorough presentation so as to be as clear as possible. The responsibility of answering any questions will fall on Professors Kugler and Smith.

Motion: The Committee votes to recommend the approval of the classics studies major.

The motion passed with seven ayes.

III. Subcommittee Updates

SPAS

Dean Jordan questioned whether data was kept on file about student self-designed majors; if a trend exists for a certain major, the subcommittee would not necessarily have to repeat the same work all the time. Registrar Finch said that while the data is not easily accessible at the moment, it would be feasible to gather. Professor Kennedy added that an approved classics studies major would definitely relieve the bottleneck on reviewing self-designed majors.

The timeline for students to declare a major is by the beginning of junior year (61 credits). Dean Jordan queried the possibility of making that timeline sooner (sophomore year) as it is related to retention issues, and also informed the Committee that a Major Declaration Day has been planned for next semester. The faculty would need to approve implementing a new deadline in order to get it officially on the books.

Discussion was postponed until next week.

ISCC

Professor Bernstein informed the Committee that Professor Curtis Johnson has been approved to lead a Greece Program.

IV. General Education Discussion

Co-Chair Detweiler-Bedell reminded the Committee to think about how to define and structure general education and its new requirements. Although it is generous of a department to claim that all of its courses are applicable for certain requirements, there is more deliberation and intentionality in picking specific courses. The reason that discussion is still a bit vague is because concrete definitions of general education have still not been explicitly determined.

Director Paul Powers informed the Committee that one of the current issues with core is dependent on pending changes in general education and the second is how to distribute the external review with the greater faculty. He has been reviewing the pros and cons of the core's status quo and the most complicated element is how the program relates to general education. In spite of the original charter, core in its present form is only focused on humanities and humanistic social sciences. The College will either have to come to terms with that fact or take steps to change it. It is difficult to understand how exactly the changes in general education will impact core considering the fact that discussion was separated.

The fact that the sciences are not focused on in core is a negative factor in trying to get MNS faculty involved because they feel out of their element. It is also problematic for smaller departments such as physics because there is a noticeable crunch on teaching courses when the faculty has other obligations. Director Powers said that one possible suggestion made was to have MNS faculty contribute to general education in other ways as opposed to through CORE.

Since core currently consists of two semesters, Ms. Yeckes suggested devoting one semester to humanities and the second to the sciences. Director Powers responded that the current structure does attempt to provide some of that now. If the second semester takes on a more holistic approach, then the new general education requirements in MNS would need to be adjusted.

Currently there are a few options for the relationship between core and general education revisions. Core will stay the same with the new requirements; core will stay the same and the new revisions will be adjusted; keep the revised general education requirements and change core as needed; or change both core and the new revisions. While there are data and descriptions to support the fact that core does work, Director Powers also acknowledged genuine concerns about its weaknesses. If a major change were to occur, people have imagined changing core into a one-

semester requirement with generally the same structure as the present fall semester and then moving the first year students into the general curriculum. However, the biggest concern is of the unknown implications from moving the students away from the core curriculum. Where would they go and what classes would absorb the additional seats? Additionally, approximately seventy percent of core is staffed by adjuncts and fluctuates by thirty percent for tenure-line members who participate. While this is not a problem pedagogically, there is speculation that this could hurt the long-term student connection to the College.

Co-Chair Martinez asked what exactly E&D is trying to accomplish; there appear to be several key items being listed (e.g., writing, critical reading and thinking, discussion, research, presentation). Director Powers responded that E&D does claim to accomplish a lot but that it may not be on a desired level. It is also troubling that one program has so many pressures on it. Librarian Kelley added that E&D does function like a department, which makes it easy to have the students more easily flow through the curriculum. Additionally, the original thought was to have it be much easier to have permanent faculty members take turns participating.

Director Powers added that the external review would also need to be addressed. Some people have found it to be problematic but some data should be made available to the faculty at large. Co-Chair Detweiler-Bedell suggested drafting an executive summary of the review. Director Powers and the E&D Steering Committee will work on a draft and present it to the dean's office prior to being submitted to the Committee.

Discussion was postponed until next week. Director Powers was invited to attend next week's meeting as well.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48pm.