

Approved November 11, 2009

College of Arts & Science
COMMITTEE ON THE CURRICULUM

Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2009

Present: Linda Angst, Franya Berkman, Paulette Bierzychudek, Jim Bunnelle, Diane Crabtree, Julio de Paula, Stuart Kaplan, Stephen Tufte, Rishona Zimring, Jayson Estassi, Alex Rihm, Tamara Ko, recorder

Absent: Jeff Feld-Gore, Tatiana Osipovich

Chair Bierzychudek convened the meeting at 3:20pm.

The minutes from October 14, 2009 were approved.

I. Course Proposal Subcommittee

International Studies – Vietnam Overseas Program

When the Vietnam Overseas Program was originally approved in 2005-2006, it was agreed that the program would consist of four academic courses. A new course is being proposed for the program in Spring 2010 to replace the former Comparative Religions course. The subcommittee raised a concern of the scarcity and content of the required reading material for the class. When questioned, Professor Bruce Suttmeier acknowledged the subcommittee's concerns but is expecting the course to be further expanded prior to being offered. Professor Zimring recognizes the challenges of attempting to control logistical coordination of overseas programs and understands reasons for the potential weaknesses of some academic courses.

Registrar Crabtree pointed out that the Committee is the only body who reviews the quality and rigor of the College's academic courses. On the other hand, there is a need for a fourth course in the Vietnam Overseas Program and the process needs to happen in a timely manner; the Committee needs to be able to adequately balance those needs.

Ms. Rihm noted that the eight-week course consists of two weeks' worth of field trips for the students, which seemed concerning. Professor Berkman commented that gaining information purely from lecture rather than from lecture plus reading is a different style of teaching and that students can still receive a great education in this way. Field trips are actually a chance for students to spend extensive time with the course instructor who is essentially teaching that entire time. If a specific teaching style is acceptable for a certain culture, how can the Committee deny the students that learning opportunity? It is possible that the Committee's hesitation is based on the fact that the syllabus was created by the Vietnamese faculty member and they may have different cultural expectations for a syllabus.

Professor Tufte wondered if it would be possible for the Committee to approve the course for Spring 2010 and then ask Professor Suttmeier for additional documentation to support the course to be taught in future instances. For clarity's sake, Registrar Crabtree asked that the course be

modified to IS 298 to represent its approval as a one-time course offering. Chair Bierzychudek suggested that if Prof. Suttmeier submits additional documentation to the Curriculum Committee, the committee could revisit the course without a new proposal having to be submitted.

Proposal 09.10

This proposal approves IS 243 as IS 298 Environmental Sustainability in Vietnam.

Motion: The Committee approves the course as a 298 for the upcoming spring semester and would like to approve it on a continuing basis based on a more complete reading list and syllabus.

Professor Zimring will relate the message back to Professor Suttmeier.

The motion was passed unanimously.

History Department

Proposal 09.21

This proposal adds HIST 298, History of Medicine in Latin America, to the curriculum.

A concern was raised about the particularly long content statement included in the proposal form but this will go through an editing process.

This proposal was passed unanimously.

Proposal 09.27

This proposal changes the title of HIST 324, Religion and Society in Early Modern Catholicism, 1500-1600, to Saints and Bureaucrats.

This is a small change and requires no voting.

Religious Studies Department

Proposal 09.22

This proposal changes the title of RELS 373, The Reformation in Social Perspective, to The Reformations of the Sixteenth Century. It also modifies the current catalog statement.

Proposal 09.25

This proposal changes the title of RELS 251, History and Thought of Western Religion: Medieval, to Medieval Christianity.

These are small changes and require no voting.

Psychology Department

Proposal 09.26

This proposal adds PSY 398, Environmental Psychology, as a one-time offering for Spring 2010.

A concern was raised about the course having four prerequisites which essentially limits the course to psychology majors only. However, it is a very topic specific course at a 300-level and there is always the option of requesting permission from the teaching instructor to enroll.

This proposal was passed unanimously.

Foreign Languages Department

Proposal 09.29 / 09.30

These proposals add CHIN 230/231 and CHIN 290/291 to the East Asian Studies Program and is a retroactive approval to Fall 2009 as they were vetted by last year's Committee.

Proposal 09.31 / 09.32

These proposals add JAPN 230/231 and JAPN 290/291 to the East Asian Studies Program and is a retroactive approval to Fall 2009 as they were vetted by last year's Committee.

These proposals were passed unanimously.

II. Response to Current General Education Motion

Following conversations between Professor Ben David and Professor Becko Copenhaver, the current motion on the floor for the next Faculty Meeting will not be withdrawn. A reworded version is now presented on the Moodle forum (also see below). Chair Bierzychudek encouraged the Committee to start discussion with colleagues if they are interested in defeating the motion at the next Faculty Meeting.

Motion: We move that any proposal for the revision of General Education requirements be voted on in its entirety. The faculty shall not disaggregate a proposal and vote separately on constituent pieces.

(Forum: <https://moodle.lclark.edu/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=15295>)¹

It was pointed out that a compelling reason for defeating this motion is the fact that it would severely limit the faculty in future actions. The *Exploration & Discovery* program was a revision of existent general education requirements and it had not been necessary to examine the program in its entirety. The current language of said motion does not respond to that concern.

III. Capacity for SQR Requirements

Chair Bierzychudek has compiled the capacity data for the possible reconfiguration of the SQR requirement and the resulting numbers do not significantly differ from the current requirements. The new reconfiguration would actually produce a greater number of available spots for students to fulfill the requirement. If the Committee were to move ahead and present this as a motion before the faculty, the language of the motion would need to be addressed (Chair Bierzychudek would recommend the removal of "competencies") and it would need to be recognized that there are multiple types of sciences with different ways to test hypotheses (e.g., historical, experimental, and observational).

¹ For additional rationale on the motion, please visit the link to the Faculty Forum.

Given that capacity for the reconfigured SQR requirement appears to be available, Chair Bierzychudek queried the Committee on its desire for moving forward with such a motion.

Professor Zimring remarked that some members of the faculty view the current general education as an incomplete distribution model and that modifying SQR requirements may support arguments for making such a model more complete. Registrar Crabtree added that it is very important to emphasize to the faculty that the approval and passing of a new SQR requirement does not eliminate it from further productive discussion.

Professor Zimring asked if the motion should include language emphasizing that moving to a new system with no requirements whatsoever would be possible even with modification of SQR as an interim measure. However, it was pointed out that the accreditation team was explicitly clear in requiring the College to have a general education program in place. This may also be an initial task for the newly convened GETF to accomplish.

Chair Bierzychudek moved to present a motion before the faculty regarding the reconfigured SQR requirement with specific wording to come via email. She will bring this motion forward in the event that the current motion on the floor is defeated.

The motion was passed.

IV. Announcements

Dean de Paula announced to the Committee that there is currently a letter circulating amongst the faculty asking for the removal of non-voting faculty members from the GETF. The Committee was reminded that from a procedural standpoint, the Committee had previously approved the process for the convening and physical composition of the GETF.

In the event of the letter reaching Dean de Paula, he will present it back to the Committee for discussion.

V. Unfinished Business

Additional Credits Counting Towards GPA

To continue discussion from the last meeting, Registrar Crabtree was interested in determining a consistent and clear policy in terms of dealing with additional credits outside of the required 128 for graduation specifically in regards to AES credits. Should grades from any additional AES credits be factored into the student's final GPA?

The discussion revolved around other kinds of courses that are not included in a student's total credits. There are two. Foreign Language majors electing to take 100-level or 200-level courses in a 3rd language are not allowed to count those credits toward graduation. Also, students are allowed to repeat courses in order to improve their grade, but the credits for repeated courses are counted only once, not twice.

It was pointed out that counting the grades from the additional credits could be a misrepresentation of the student's actual academic ability and would inflate their GPA. Registrar Crabtree mentioned that other institutions have a more generous academic policy in which

grades for repeated courses actually replace the old grades but that the College's current policy is to average the two.

On the basis of keeping the grades of repeated courses, it could be argued that the course is still a legitimate academic course of the College and both grades are clearly listed on the student's final transcript.

Whether to count the grades of AES courses is a somewhat different matter from repeated courses. Still, it would be desirable to have a consistent policy regarding courses whose credits are not applied toward graduation.

The Committee is interested in hearing from the AES Program regarding possible implications. Professor Tufte will get in touch with Director Joann Geddes and report back to the Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:38pm.