

Curriculum Committee Meeting
Sept. 21, 2018
McCormick Room, Library

In attendance: Bill Barry, Peggy Burge, Kathleen Campbell, Julie Christoff, Regina Duthey, Nate Jacobi, Julia Looper, Jennifer Pitonyak, Geoff Proehl, Holly Roberts, Doug Sackman, Maria Sampen, Leslie Saucedo (chair), Jeff Tepper, Courtney Thatcher

Meeting called to order at 12:02 PM by chair, Leslie Saucedo

Agenda Item: Approval of Minutes

Accepted without amendment.

Agenda Item: Announcements

1. Julie Christoph showed committee members how to navigate to SoundNet and go to work teams. This is where working groups will find documents. Julie asked if committee members preferred attachments or going to SoundNet to find materials. Committee members expressed a preference for attachments. Julie noted that committee members would find other useful documents on SoundNet and demonstrated how to navigate to them.

2. Julie noted as well that some of the committee guidelines were out of date. The committee, for example, no longer mandates five-year reviews. Julie offered to make updates to bring the guidelines up to date. The consensus was that this was a good idea.

3. Finally, Julie noted the need for an upcoming discussion on what constitutes an activity credit. There is currently no definition from which to work. This is a topic for future discussion.

Agenda Item: Working Group Assignments

Committee chair, Leslie Saucedo, asked committee members if they were happy with their working group assignments. Hearing no objections, she confirmed the assignments that had been made. Leslie noted that course proposals will soon be sent out to working groups for approval. Course reviews will be assigned in rotation to group members. That person will become head reviewer of that proposal, who will, as necessary, raise questions or concerns with the group as a whole, usually by email. Leslie underscored the need to act quickly on spring semester classes so they can be added to spring schedule. Committee members will receive an email with an attachment from the Julie to notify them that a course proposal is ready for review.

Agenda Item: Approval of Associate Dean Duties

Each year curriculum committee members must approve those curriculum-related duties regularly assumed by the associate dean on the committee's behalf. The committee as a whole takes on what might be called "big things" or more major items, while delegating to the dean a range of other duties that are more pro forma. Julie reviewed these details for the group. These are the norms for the group to accept each year. Julie will report on a monthly basis her actions.

Leslie asked for an expression of concerns with the duties as currently described. None were expressed. Bill Barry moved to approve the list of duties that the associate dean may perform on the committee's behalf. Motion seconded and passed.

Agenda Item: Modification to the "Welcome to the Curriculum Committee" document
The committee chair noted minor modifications she had made to the document, "Welcome to Curriculum Committee." The changes were approved by consensus. The committee continued to consider the document and made additional suggestions to make it as accurate a reflection of the committee's work as possible.

Agenda Item: Senate Charge #1

The committee turned to Senate Charge #1: To develop formal guidelines for distinguishing between activity credits and academic credits.

This charge will be taken up by Working Group #3.

The problem: the university needs formal guidelines to distinguish between academic and activity credits. There is currently no definition of what an academic credit is. "Rise Program," for example, is a new kind of offering, and the university wants every student to have his curricular experience. Students, however, who could not get an internship had to withdraw from the class, and because of the withdrawal, they were disqualified from a consideration for the Dean's List. There is a wide-range of requirements for activity units. Academic activity units are all half units or less.

Jennifer PitonyakMaria Sampen (School of Music) noted that student music majors as required for School of Music accreditation must take several activity units. Jennifer'sMaria's colleagues who direct ensembles with activity credits would love to have them count as academic credits, but music would run into an issue with overload.

Committee Chair Leslie Saucedo that students can take up to 4.25 academic credits a semester without triggering an overload; 4.75 with activity credits. Traditionally academic units are graded; activity are pass/fail.

The question was raised as to whether or not Martin Jackson had researched how other colleges handled this issue, and the need to survey department chairs to get a better sense of the role activity units play in their major was noted.

Peggy Burge commented that students sometimes complain that the library requires more work for .25 courses offered by library, than for other activity credits. Some guidance as to what constitutes an activity credit would be helpful.

Julie Christoph noted that Martin had examples of syllabi that had been proposed for activity units, which might be useful for the working group.

A discussion followed as to how to create a working definition or guidelines for what constitutes an activity credit. The committee could create a working definition or chairs could first be

consulted, then the full faculty. A preference for beginning with consultation seemed the consensus.

Would a definition be retroactive? Perhaps. Julie noted that there is precedent for asking departments to revise classes to meet a new core requirement.

Jennifer asked how likely it might be that what constitutes an activity credit could vary from one department to another. Julie noted that how a university defines credits could have consequences when it comes to accreditation, suggesting the need for some regularity across the university.

Doug Sackman suggested that what had emerged in today's conversation was the realization that for some departments and academic entities the issue of activity units is more pressing and impactful than for others, which may create tension with respect to creating a general policy. The working group will need to be aware of this.

Leslie Saucedo asked Working Group #3 to meet and discuss how best to move forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:44 PM.

Time was left after adjournment for working groups to gather and discuss how to move forward, when next to meet, and so forth.

Submitted by Geoff Proehl for the Committee