

Minutes of Curriculum Committee Meeting  
February 5, 2010

In attendance: Derek Buescher (chair), Alyce DeMarais, Brad Dillman, Greg Elliott, Kena Fox-Dobbs, Leon Grunberg, Kent Hooper, Alisa Kessel, Caitlin Martin, Brad Reich, Rob Schaller, Brad Tomhave, Kurt Walls, Barbara Warren, Steven Zopfi. Visitor: Fred Hamel

**M/S/P** Minutes from December 7, 2009.

Working Groups- Reports

Working Group 1 reported that the Foreign Language curriculum review was in process.

Working Group 2 proposed that Physics 108, Empowering Technologies: Energy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, be approved as a new Scholarly and Creative Inquiry course. **M/S/P**.

Working Group 3 reported that they were working on the Activity Credit issue. They also asked that the review of Physical Education be postponed until next year, after the NCAA meetings. The Committee agreed to the request.

Working Group 4 reported they were still working on the Business curriculum review.

Working Group 5 reviews of Fine Arts and Asian Studies are in process.

Proposal to Modify the Fine Arts Approaches rubric. DeMarais proposed that a decision on changing the rubric, as outlined in the December 7, 2009 minutes, be postponed until after we hear from all relevant departments. **M/S/P**.

Calendar Discussion. Faced with the task of approving the full calendar for the academic year Fall 2013 and Spring 2014, the Committee engaged in a long discussion centered on two issues: (a) whether to equalize the length of the two semesters given that the fall is five (5) days shorter and (b) what to do, if anything, about the length of the Thanksgiving break and the cost to many students of flying home twice in the space of a few weeks.

Warren suggested it would make sense to have duplication across the semesters thereby avoiding the need for instructors to adjust their syllabi when teaching the same course in both semesters. Dillman concurred and preferred shortening the spring semester.

Buescher noted that one argument in favor of a longer spring semester is that students have more time to complete better quality projects. Zopfi agreed and asked if there might be a cost to the university if the semester was shortened.

Kessel wondered if it might make sense to look at what peer institutions do. Tomhave noted that some research had looked into this some years ago with little practical result.

DeMarais recalled that there was no consensus to change the calendar and that the previous registrar favored keeping the existing calendar.

Walls raised the reasonable question of why we were spending time on this issue if no one felt passionately about it. Schaller supported this observation by noting that he hadn't heard any complaints about the longer semester from students and wasn't even aware this was the case until this discussion.

Hooper agreed, saying that only a radical change to the calendar made any sense. The Committee came to life, and a series of exciting if somewhat improbable suggestions were bandied about (e.g. ignore Thanksgiving; move it to January).

Buescher brought everyone back down to earth by proposing we charge a subcommittee to explore what peer institutions are doing and to examine the implications of changing the current calendar. DeMarais, Dillman and Kessel volunteered to take on this task.

The Committee then considered a recommendation from the School of Education that the Pastoral Counseling track be discontinued because of low student interest and the declining viability of the program. **M/S/P** the discontinuation of the Pastoral Counseling track.

Finally, the Committee considered a proposal to approve a new Study Abroad program (School for Field Studies: Turks and Caicos Islands - summer) that was of four week rather than the usual six week duration. After learning that the course involves more than the required contact hours, the Committee **M/S/P** the proposal.

Meeting adjourned at 9:52 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Leon Grunberg