

Curriculum Committee Meeting Minutes 04/23/10

In attendance: Derek Buescher; Brad Dillman; Greg Elliott; Leon Grunberg; Kent Hooper; Alisa Kessel; Brad Reich; Rob Schaller; Brad Tomhave; Kurt Walls; Barbara Warren

MSP to approve minutes of April 16, 2010.

Derek noted this was the last meeting of the semester and thanked everyone for their work. The group commended Derek for being chair.

Working Group Reports:

Working group 1:

- **MSP** Wording change to FLL review report (Appendix I).

Working group 2:

- First year seminar core area review: Leon reviewed the report (Appendix II). The committee then discussed where this review would go. The report will go to the faculty senate. Alyce will take the committee's suggestions to the faculty teaching seminars and will work with Brad Tomhave and Jack Roundy to explore mechanisms for student seminar choice for spring. Derek noted that mid-way through fall term, students may change their directions. Brad Tomhave added that there is always some modification of seminar choice during registration in August. Suggested charge for next year's committee: work with the library staff and faculty to develop research gateway practices for the fall semester seminars.

MSP to accept the review.

Working group 3:

- Aftermath of activity credit discussion: Derek has composed language for faculty meeting scheduled for May 3 (Appendix III). Greg raised the issue of impact—this may reduce the number of academic courses taken; Derek will add this to the document for the faculty meeting. Brad Tomhave will work on numbers that might address this question prior to the faculty meeting. Derek pointed out the comparison institution data.

Working Group 4:

- **MSP**, with Reich abstention, to accept Business Review that includes approval of BUS 475 (Appendix IV).

Working Group 5:

- **MSP** to accept Asian Studies program review (Appendix V). The working group had posed some questions regarding the review and the program faculty responded (part of Appendix V). There was some discussion about whether to ask for an update in two years; the committee decided that waiting for the next five year review is sufficient.

Independent Studies:

Derek distributed a revised policy (Appendix VI). The last time the policy was reviewed was 1979 (when some members of the committee were not yet born or were under 10 years old). The technical policy is on the back of the current proposal form. In the revised policy, the process and requirements would be the same with the addition of submission to, and approval by, the Curriculum Committee for each independent study proposed. If the revised policy is approved, changes to the Bulletin and Academic Handbook texts would be made as well.

Derek noted that the first point on policy suggests that historically only full unit independent studies were in place (due to hour designation). Should a charge to next year's Curriculum Committee be to formalize the less than one unit independent studies? Brad Tomhave noted that there are legitimate uses of fractional unit independent studies. Alisa asked what makes the course a half unit rather than a unit. Brad replied that sometimes students only pay for 0.5 unit but do a full unit of work; some only want a partial unit, with accompanying hours; some students start half way through the semester and do full workload for half a semester. Derek noted that it is likely that in the last 30 years there are more half-unit courses and this practice has been normalized through procedure but not codified in the language of the policy. Brad Tomhave remarked that the hours are not enforced by the registrar; this is part of the work with the advisor. It should be that faculty that determines the hours/time frame for independent studies.

Kurt Walls asked whether many students take the full four units of independent studies. Brad replied that several do and the rationale for doing so is variable among students. Derek asked if the Curriculum Committee should do a full review of independent studies—learning outcomes, are they achieving what we want them to? If so, he would like to separate this from the proposal to the faculty regarding Curriculum Committee review of independent study proposals. Brad Dillman wondered how mid-semester proposals would be handled. Response: those proposals would go to Academic Standards Committee, as they do now. Note: this practice prevents students from “ambushing” faculty with mid-semester independent studies. Such proposals can be a problem or an opportunity, depending on how you look at it and whether it is a quality experience for the student. Rob noted that an increase in the activity units counting toward graduation would diminish the demand for these types of independent studies. Brad Tomhave agreed and added that the activity unit change would also help the Learning Center courses (courses designed for beginning students but taken by junior and senior students—about 10% per course—who need partial units to graduate.

Given the late time, and attrition of committee members, this motion was tabled until early next fall so the committee can determine the time/hours piece. This should be completed early in the fall semester so we can implement Curriculum Committee review of independent study proposals.

Other Business

- The Fine Arts Approaches rubric modification continues. Derek noted that we had a good discussion with members of those departments that teach in the core area.
- Derek was approached about adding a member of the library staff to the Curriculum Committee membership (change the Faculty Bylaws). Lori Ricigliano has routinely attended the Curriculum Committee meetings but is not a voting member. This will be suggested as a charge for next year.
- **MSP** core review procedures [8 members present].

MSP to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by Alyce DeMarais.

Suggested charges for the 2010-2011 Curriculum Committee

1. Work with the library staff and faculty who teach first-year seminars in the fall to integrate research gateway practices into the seminar curricula.
2. Work with Registrar and Academic Advising to determine if there is a mechanism for students to pre-select their spring seminar based on topic.
3. Codify independent study policy language and bring revised policy to the faculty early in the fall.
4. Address changing the Faculty Bylaws to add a library staff member to the Curriculum Committee membership.
5. Complete Fine Arts Approaches core rubric language modifications.

Appendix I

Report of the Curriculum Committee on the
Foreign Languages and Literature Curriculum Review
April 2010 (Revised 4/23/10)

Curriculum Committee Working Group 1 moves to accept the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature's 2010 Curricular Review.

The department members prepared a thorough and thoughtful review that addresses the introduction and reorganization of three different major tracks within the department: French Studies, German Studies, and Hispanic Studies. The department provides good rationale for the divergence of the majors in these three areas while retaining the Foreign Languages and Literature department status where the faculty work together to support non-Asian foreign language-related instruction and scholarship at the University of Puget Sound.

The Working Group, in consultation with the department, notes the following regarding the curriculum review:

- The department agrees to have two majors in French Studies (rather than five separate majors):
 - French Language and Culture with four tracks:
 - French Literary Studies

- French Cultural Studies
 - French and the Arts
 - French and Comparative Literature
 - French Language and International Affairs (FLIA)
- All majors, tracks, and courses, within all three areas of French Studies, German Studies, and Hispanic Studies, must be offered within the existing faculty complement of the department. Acceptance of modifications of the curriculum neither presumes nor endorses the need for additional staffing to fulfill the proposed curriculum.
- The use of extended papers/projects for seniors in their upper-division classes is a creative, thoughtful mechanism that will provide an important culminating experience for students and valuable assessment of student learning outcomes for the department. We urge the department to develop rubrics that address the student learning outcomes for assessment of the senior papers/projects.
- The department proposes piloting a program of using the Diploma de español como lengua extranjera (DELE) proficiency exam as an assessment of learning outcomes for students majoring in Hispanic Studies. If the DELE is indeed being used as an assessment of student learning within the Hispanic Studies program at Puget Sound, then teaching preparatory classes for the exam is neither necessary nor desired. We urge the department to evaluate their motivation for the use of the DELE and plan accordingly.
- The working group acknowledges the faculty's thoughtful analysis of the current and future state of the Spanish language, and those who speak it, in the US. The working group also notes the work of the department faculty in a number of initiatives to promote language and culture studies. While the working group applauds these efforts, it notes that they are not expectations of the university curriculum.
- The committee recommends the department consult with other departments and programs regarding the suitability and offering of courses required for majors under the auspices of the FLL department.

Appendix II

Report on Freshman Seminars April 21, 2010

Brad Dillman, Leon Grunberg, Alyce DeMarais

Tasked by the Curriculum Committee to review the freshman seminars, the working group reviewed syllabi of Scholarly and Creative Inquiry (SCIS) and Writing and Rhetoric (WR) courses, analyzed the survey responses of past and current faculty teaching these courses, and facilitated a discussion among faculty of the first year seminars on March 30, 2010. Participation in the survey (n = 34/84; 40%) and the discussion (n =17) was relatively high. Our review of the syllabi found that all course syllabi complied with the guidelines of each seminar rubric, though not all explicitly referenced the guidelines or learning objectives. Below we report on some of the strengths and challenges identified by faculty teaching the two freshman seminars and present some suggestions for the CC to consider.

Scholarly and Creative Inquiry

A sizeable majority of faculty respondents were satisfied with the way these seminars were working, noting in particular that the seminars tended to develop student interest in a scholarly topic and often created a lively community of learners. A smaller number of faculty noted that inadequate knowledge of the topic and the variability in the level of preparation among some students tended to

adversely affect the intellectual quality of the seminar experience. Some faculty pointed out that seminars taught in the Spring semester might be less successful because students were not able to enroll in their first choice of course.

Writing and Rhetoric

Most faculty respondents were satisfied with how well they were meeting the “writing effectively” and “constructing persuasive arguments” objectives of the rubric. In particular, faculty were pleased that students seemed to learn that writing well was a result of a process involving feedback and multiple revisions. However, many faculty noted that balancing and doing justice to all three learning objectives as well as adequately covering the substantive topic of the seminar was difficult in the time they had. Several reported that meeting the “speaking effectively” objective was particularly challenging because they did not feel they had adequate training to do a credible job.

Suggestions

We asked faculty whether, and how, they would change the learning objectives or guidelines for the two seminars and received several suggestions for minor changes (documents that report all survey responses and give a summary of comments made at the meeting with faculty are available from the Associate Dean). On the whole there was no consensus that significant changes in the rubrics were either necessary or practical. A few argued for reducing the WR objectives by moving the speaking component to the SCIS seminar but others believed it was important to keep the focus of the WR seminars on teaching skills (writing and speaking). There were also divergent opinions on the sequencing of the seminars, ranging from abolishing the distinction between the seminars to having all WR courses be taken in the fall and all SCIS in the spring.

We therefore recommend no changes in the rubric at this time. Instead, we make these suggestions for the CC to consider:

- (1) Discuss with administrators whether some method might be found to increase the likelihood that students could enroll in their preferred seminar courses in spring semester (e.g. could they rank order their first three choices before spring pre-registration?)
- (2) Encourage faculty teaching SCIS or WR in the fall to take students through the “research gateway” so that faculty teaching in the spring can assume all or most students have gone through this training.
- (3) Encourage faculty to convey clearly to students the learning objectives of the seminar. This will signal the purpose of the seminar to students and identify the distinction between the two types of seminars.

Appendix III

Proposal from Curriculum Committee to change allowable Activity Courses credit from 1.5 to 2.

Current Language:

Graduation Requirements

Earn a minimum of 32 units. The 32 units may include up to 4 academic courses graded pass/fail, up to 1.5 units in activity courses, and up to four units of independent study. (See regulations regarding transfer credit and activity credit)

Proposed Language:

Graduation Requirements

Earn a minimum of 32 units. The 32 units may include up to 4 academic courses graded pass/fail, up to 2 units in activity courses, and up to four units of independent study. (See regulations regarding transfer credit and activity credit)

This change would be reflected in all relevant documents regarding Activity Course Credits and Graduation Requirements.

History and Rationale

- The first rationale for this proposal comes from the historical changes in credits at Puget Sound. When the faculty made the decision to reduce the graduation requirement from 36 units (inclusive of “J” term) to 32 units Activity credits were also reduced. The 36-unit program of study allowed for 2 activity credits. An equivalent reduction (36 to 32) resulted in a reduction from 2 units to 1.78 units rounded down to 1.5.
- Several programs of study rely on activity credits as curricular development in the liberal arts tradition. Notably, the music program where students rely on activity credits, even when not receiving credit, as necessary elements of both their program of study and their preparation for graduate school.
- Theatre, Music, IPE, ENG, COMM, BIOL, LC & PSYCH, PE, and CES offer activity units to roughly 1100 enrollment slots a term.
- Increasing the allowed number of activity credits may result in the broadening of many students liberal arts experience as students seek out full and partial activity credit from academic programs. Students seeking “lab” like experiences in non-major departments may fulfill those experiences with activity credits.
- The potential broadening of educational experience is consistent with the University’s definition liberal arts and President Thomas’ Defining Moments Vision invocation of “innovation” and “creativity” as central to the liberal arts experience offered to Puget Sound students.
- This increase of activity credits is consistent with Northwest peer and aspiring peer institutions. The graduate requirement for Reed College, for example, is 30-units (each course is 1-unit) plus six quarters of physical education. Whitman requires 124 credits for graduation (equivalent to 31 Puget Sound units). Of those 124 credits, 16 may be activity credits (equivalent to 4 total units at Puget Sound), but no more than 8 of those credits may from “sports studies, recreational, or athletic” courses and no more than 12 may be from academic course (Theatre, Music, Dance, and Rhetoric and Film). Lewis & Clark College has a 128-unit degree requirement (equivalent to 32 Puget Sound units) with required 2 credits from physical exercise, an allowable 4 credits (1 Puget Sound unit) from PE and athletics, and allowable additional academic activity units of at least 4 semester credits. Willamette allows 2 units of activity credit within a 31 unit degree.

Appendix IV

Report of the Curriculum Committee on the
Business and Leadership Curriculum Review
April 2010

Curriculum Committee Working Group 4 moves to accept the School of Business and Leadership’s 2010 Curricular Review.

The Working Group notes the following regarding the curriculum review:

- The department has eliminated the Category B requirement for two units of coursework outside School of Business and Leadership (SBL) noting that integration of the business major within the liberal arts has been subsumed by the graduation requirement of three upper division courses outside the major. In conjunction with the department, we have modified the major requirements to read “Advanced *business* electives” which will ensure that only business courses will be used within the major preserving the use of the “upper division outside the major” requirement as proposed.

- We encourage the SBL faculty to frame the program goals in the form of student learning outcomes. We acknowledge that the program will do so with its 2010-2011 Bulletin text edits.
- We encourage the SBL faculty to continue to develop ways to be involved in university core courses and non-departmental courses. While there is ample opportunity for students from outside the SBL program to take BUS courses, the converse is not as prevalent.
- We encourage the SBL faculty to continue to develop mechanisms for enhancing student writing and information literacy through assignment structuring and collaboration with library and Center for Writing, Learning, and Teaching staff. We note the reorganization of the senior experience from BUS 490 to a senior research seminar and the opportunity this provides for both an in-depth culminating experience for students, the further integration of information literacy and writing work into the senior curriculum, and the assessment of student learning outcomes.

Appendix V

Report of the Curriculum Committee on the Asian Studies Curriculum Review April 2010

Curriculum Committee Working Group 5 moves to accept the Asian Studies Program's 2010 Curricular Review.

The working group notes the thorough, detailed, and well written document submitted to the committee and applauds the extensive participation of all members of the Asian Studies faculty in preparing the document.

The working group asked the Asian Studies faculty for clarification on the following:

- 1) Please address Question no. 5 of the Self-Study Guide as in pertains to the ALC majors. Please describe how the program meets the requirement for Writing in the Major, with specific reference to the assignments of an appropriate course or courses. Please see Addendum A. of the Self-Study Guide.
- 2) We noted that there is no capstone course or senior seminar for ALC majors. Please explain why such a course is not part of the ALC major's curriculum.
- 3) A) Please articulate in more detail the expected learning outcomes for ALC majors (addressed in question no. 2). B) Members of the working group wondered whether it would be possible and beneficial for the program to require all students who major in Japanese to take the Japanese Government's language proficiency exam. This could provide another assessment tool for the program. We also wondered, was there a similar proficiency exam for Chinese and would it be possible to make it a requirement for Chinese majors?
- 4) You note in your response to question no. 10 that Asian Studies faculty members participate in the Asian Studies 489 senior thesis colloquium regularly. Members of the working group admire Asian Studies faculty members' consistent participation in the senior thesis presentations. We would like to suggest that you make this event part of your formal assessment process. One possible way to do this would be to devise a rubric for evaluating the thesis presentation and to have attending faculty members fill out the rubric after each presentation. These rubrics then could be collected and kept on file (along with the senior theses), and the information could be used for assessment purposes and self-study.

Responses to these items are included with the review text. Through their responses, the faculty have noted issues that will be considered in preparation for their next curriculum review:

- How to add more analytical writing to the East Asian Languages major.

- Whether or not to add ALC 205 Great Books of China and Japan to the East Asian Languages major.
- Whether or not to add an independent study to the East Asian Languages major.
- Whether or not to incorporate a senior portfolio as a capstone experience and, if so, how to model the portfolio.
- How to incorporate a language assessment tool.
- Whether, or how, to make the ASIA 489 Senior Thesis colloquium a formal part of the assessment process.
- How to accommodate the influx of majors.
- How to implement ideas to be derived from their week of meetings scheduled for summer 2010.