

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES
20 September 2006 (Wednesday)
Misner Room

Present: Suzanne Barnett, Elizabeth Benard, Brad Dillman, Mary Rose Lamb, Grace Livingston, Bob Matthews, John McCuiston, Brad Richards, Elise Richman, Michelle Salter '07, Florence Sandler, David Scott, Christine Smith, Stuart Smithers, Kurt Walls, Lisa Wood (Chair), Alyce DeMarais, Brad Tomhave, Carrie Washburn, Lori Ricigliano

Not present: Lynda Livingston (subcommittee service only this fall); Paul Loeb

Call to order. Chair Wood called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

Minutes. The committee M/S/P approval of the minutes for the meeting of 13 September 2006 as corrected to clarify that Smithers was not present. (The minutes erroneously listed Smithers as both present and not present, hence the need for correction.)

Announcements

- (1) Benard praised Grace Livingston for her performance as one of three performers in "The New Orleans Monologues, Part II," on Saturday, 16 September 2006, during the Race & Pedagogy Conference. The committee joined in applause.
- (2) Washburn explained that whenever possible she will distribute curricular proposals to Working Groups (WG) / subcommittees at meetings of the full committee, not via Campus Mail.
- (3) Wood announced that **the committee will not meet next week, on 27 September**, because the Misner Room is not available to us at 8:00 on that day. DeMarais explained that the alternative scheduling of the room next Wednesday is a result of the reshuffling of rooms this semester to accommodate lost classrooms in Thompson Hall.

Working Groups (WG) / subcommittees. Wood called on chairs of WG / subcommittees for reports of activity under way.

- WG ONE (Chemistry / Humanistic Approaches): No report.
- WG TWO (Latin American Studies / Fine Arts Approaches): No report.
- WG THREE (English / Geology / W&R and SCIS Seminars): For Loeb, Matthews said that the group will meet right after this committee meeting.
- WG FOUR (History / Physics / Connections): Scott said that the group will meet this Friday and has several core-course proposals under consideration.
- WG FIVE (Internship / SIM / Ad Hoc other core): No report

DeMarais encouraged WG / subcommittees doing department or program reviews to contact chairs to remind of the deadline for submission of review reports (15 October) and to start the conversation that is part of the review process.

Committee procedures. Wood advised committee members to review the Faculty Bylaws, Article V, "Standing Committees." One action of a committee is to determine when the committee is to meet. At this meeting we should begin talking about how often the Curriculum Committee will meet and what is reasonable to accomplish this year.

Committee actions delegated to the Associate Academic Dean. Returning to unfinished business launched at the meeting of 6 September 2006, the committee resumed discussion of actions delegated to Associate Academic Dean DeMarais as delineated in the Curriculum Committee document entitled "The Function of the Associate Deans' Office in Curricular Matters."

Washburn offered some perspective on this matter by distributing copies of a single-spaced, small-font, tightly formatted list, in 4.5 pages, of "Administrative Curriculum Action" (approvals of new courses, changes in existing courses, and dropped courses) in 2005-06 involving 121 courses and provisional approval of one summer study abroad program. She said that this list indicates "how much work" the Associate Dean does on behalf of the committee.

SUBMISSION PROCESS. With implicit reference to *delegated action (1) - "approval of individual new or revised courses"* [by common understanding and practice this action involves only non-core courses] and to submission of course proposals in general, Wood raised a concern about process. She stated that she has known of course proposals sent directly to the Office of the Associate Deans with only the signature of the department or program chair showing approval at the departmental level, that is, without any process of full departmental review. Smithers expressed the view that this is a departmental issue dependent on departmental procedures. Matthews agreed, adding that most departments do have discussion of proposals. Barnett advised against any effort to establish a policy that would require departmental review as monitored by the committee, which would add unnecessarily to the committee's duties.

Delegated action (10) - "approval of courses for the Approaches core categories in the new core." **Matthews M/S/P to take off the table DeMarais's motion at the meeting of 6 September.** From the minutes of the meeting Barnett read the motion--"**DeMarais M/S/ that the committee approve the list of delegated actions but strike action (10)**"--and recalled relevant points of discussion as recorded.

Dillman stated his willingness to delegate Approaches course proposals by asking if any reason exists *not* to do so. Barnett responded by recalling the origin of this delegated action in the busy time of the transition to the new core and the involvement of the then Associate Dean in the Curriculum review process for many years. She also pointed out the committee's decision nonetheless to request of that Dean a report at least once a year to explain, with examples, how he made decisions on Approaches core proposals. She also expressed concern that by delegating action on core courses the faculty would lose ability to make informed judgments of such courses.

Delegated action (9) - "approval of all courses proposed for the old core." **AMENDMENT: Matthews M/S/P also to drop number 9.** Washburn said that while some students are still fulfilling parts of the old core, no new proposals are coming in for the old core.

Delegated action (7) - "approval of additional programs to the IES Study Abroad options."
Delegated action (8) - "approval [of] Study Abroad programs for 'approved' [sic] status."
 With implicit reference to these two delegated actions Matthews asked about who approves Study Abroad programs. DeMarais replied that the Interim Study Abroad Committee (ISAC) is still in operation and is doing the work of delegated action (7) and delegated action (8).

After Matthews M/S/P to call the question, the committee voted on the motion as amended:

ACTION **DeMarais M/S/P that the committee approve the list of delegated actions but strike action (9) and action (10).** This vote included one abstention.

Faculty Senate charges to the 2006-07 Curriculum Committee. Senate charges to the committee for this year are not yet available.

RECOMMENDED CHARGES. Barnett called attention to the five charges recommended by the 2005-06 committee as included in the year-end committee report to the Faculty Senate submitted by then Curriculum Committee chair James Jasinski (pp.3-4):

1. Scheduled five-year reviews of departments and programs

2. Scheduled five-year reviews of core categories, with ongoing review of "current mechanisms for assessing the core"
3. Examination of the practice of "'double counting' a full [senior] year of course work" in 3-2 programs
4. Examination of existing guidelines for assigning activity versus academic credit"
5. Examination of "how graduation requirement #H (upper level course requirements outside first major) is being implemented"

In response to Wood's call for preferences or observations, Washburn said that Jasinski said of recommended charge #4 that he perceived it simply to be a matter of revisiting the guidelines for assigning activity or academic credit. However, Washburn added, DeMarais checked the files and could find no relevant guidelines.

Wood observed that the upper level graduation requirement (recommended charge #5) comes up in advising all the time: What meets the requirement?

ADDED ITEMS. Wood put on the board three additional issues submitted by DeMarais that emerged in the work of specific subcommittees in 2005-06 but were not issues identified by the full committee:

- (1) Enhancement of Library Tech resources
- (2) Study Abroad in the major
- (3) SIM (Special Interdisciplinary Major): Review

[*Library Tech resources.* In a message to the secretary after the meeting DeMarais explained that added item (1) surfaced in departmental and program reviews in connection with Self-study Guide question 9, "Explain how the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process in your curriculum." One possibility is that the question could be expanded "to specifically include how technology is used" (DeMarais) in the department's teaching program.]

Study Abroad. Added item (2) prompted DeMarais's comment that the issue is how departments and program are using Study Abroad to meet major/minor requirements. This item also prompted several observations. Matthews expanded the concern to Study Abroad *and* the major: We encourage students to do Study Abroad, but in some disciplines this is difficult to do and still complete the major in four years. Lamb agreed with this statement and said that completion of the degree in four years is reasonable; Study Abroad should be possible within a four-year program of study. Smithers asked if ISAC (Interim Committee on Study Abroad) should be considering the issue of accommodating Study Abroad experience in departments and programs. DeMarais said that ISAC *is* thinking about options for students to do Study Abroad; perhaps we should wait on this issue until we have received the ISAC report.

Benard commented that the Pacific Rim / Asia Study-Travel Program is "open to all students," some of whom do the year in Asia in a fifth year because of the every-three-years cycle of the program; the fifth-year students often stop out for a year so that the number of years for the degree is only four years. Majors of participating students run the broad spectrum. Sandler asked if there *really are* students who do the program and accomplish the major in four years. Benard replied that this is the normal pattern and that departments are very supportive of students' participation.

SIM. Added item (3) prompted Smithers's inquiry about the need for review of the SIM and the reply from several that the question is whether it is still relevant and needed; moreover, recent proposals have needed a great deal of subcommittee work that suggests the need for better proposals. Wood: If a SIM proposal comes in this year, then the relevant WG / subcommittee [FIVE] can be the context for deciding whether the SIM is problematic.

Self-study Guide for departmental and program reviews. Wood implied that this also might be an added item by asking how often the committee revisits it. Washburn said that it changes informally and incrementally and was last revised in Fall 2003. Wood observed that the guide is not exactly suited to the Internship Program; perhaps a different guide should apply to such a program.

Faculty Senate Charge to Standing Committees: Self-Evaluation. Wood introduced the subject of the committee self-study process developed by the Faculty Senate last year. DeMarais said that this involves a set of specific questions, for example, how does the committee choose a chair? She added that last year's committee was "swamped" at the end of the year and could not give attention to the committee self-study process. Wood said that she could coordinate a self-review process this year with contributions from committee members. Washburn pointed out that the self-evaluation document from last year has not yet gone out to the committee. DeMarais said that after this meeting she would send the document as an attachment to a message to the full committee. [The draft document dated 5/2/05 was sent later in the day on 20 September after the committee meeting.]

Next meeting: Scheduled for 4 October.

Adjournment. At 9:00 a.m. McCuiston M/S/P to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne W. Barnett
(22 September 2006)