

Minutes for the November 3, 2004 Curriculum Committee Meeting:

Members present: Sam Armocido and Beckie Bailey (student representatives), Suzanne Barnett, Brad Tomhave, Jim Jasinski, Mark Jenkins, Bill Barry, Carrie Washburn, Rich Anderson-Connolly, Christie Smith, Ken Rousslang, Joyce Tamashiro, Grace Livingston, Karim Ochosi, Carlo Bonura.

1. Call to order, 9am

2. SIM subcommittee report

Tamashiro moved to approve the SIM submitted by Leiana Jagolino in Behavioral Neuroscience. According to the subcommittee the proposal is in line with other programs and has strong support from faculty.

A question regarding the total number of units involved was raised earlier and Tamashiro affirmed that the student will complete a total of 16 units, the required number.

The conversation focused on general concerns involving the proposal. Jagolino will not be taking the Biology course in animal behavior (Psychology 360--the "rat lab") due to the fact that the student is allergic to rats, but other courses have prerequisites that the student did not have. The student will incorporate animal work into senior thesis.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Connections Subcommittee report

The Connections subcommittee moved the approval of the following Connections courses:

- 1. Environmental Studies 325 - Science and Policy: Geological and Environmental Catastrophes, proposed by Mike Valentine (Geology)**
- 2. Humanities 309A - Nationalism: British and German Nationalism in the Age of Industrialization and Empire, 1700-1919, proposed by David Smith (History) and David Tinsley (Foreign Languages and Literature)**
- 3. African American Studies 401 - Narratives of Race, proposed by Grace Livingston (African American Studies / Education) and Dexter Gordon (Communication Studies / African American Studies)**
- 4. Connections 375 - The Harlem Renaissance, proposed by Hans Ostrom (English)**

The subcommittee is especially interested in guidelines that call for engagement with the “interdisciplinary process.” With this explicit focus, it is hoped that proposals will be clearer in claims to meet these requirements

Anderson-Connolly asked if students would be able to take more than one 309 (in its various forms and Tamashiro similarly questioned students ability to take more than one of the same course (i.e. **Hum 325**)).

Barry argued that SIC 325 could not be repeated (if it were intentionally to be repeatable the proposer would have request this in any proposal).

Jasinski asked if a student wanted to focus on nationalism, what is the mechanism for a student being able to take additional versions of 325 on different topics. Barry replied that when a second course comes in it could be reviewed to see if it were “repeatable.”

Barnett reminded the Committee that students cannot get credit for same course and for the moment there is only one 325 course in the Connections core.

The motions passed unanimously.

4. Writing and Rhetoric Subcommittee report

The Writing and Rhetoric subcommittee moved the approval of the following WR courses:

OT 115 Schizophrenia Debates (Mcgruder)

AFAM 110 Imaging Blackness: Black Film and Black Identity (Gordon)

Both classes were approved unanimously.

5. Summary of Associate Dean approvals Fall 2005

Barry presented the first annual report by the Associate Dean regarding approvals of classes. He emphasized his primary assumption that syllabus does not represent the course in its entirety. It is important to make sure that a course meets guidelines and that it fits broadly within such guidelines. In certain circumstances Barry will also speak with the instructor in order to answer any questions about the course.

Today’s discussion focused on two courses: Sunil Kukreja’s CSOC 215 and Carlo Bonura’s PG 104.

Sunil Kukreja’s CSOC 215:

Barry stated that in his view the class engaged the requirements of a humanistic approaches core course (focusing on values, identity and existence questions). The course addresses the way that different ethnic communities define themselves and raises the question of values through this focus. With regard to the problem of “existence,” Barry was persuaded by the discussion of existence through experience. In general, if there is some account of a group’s experience then this would satisfy the core requirement. He stated that through this course it was possible to understand existence as lived experience of the past.

Barry reiterated that part of the approval process is the proposer’s awareness of curriculum guidelines. He also stated that issue of “experience” versus “existence” and the notion of a lived experience emerged from discussion emerging from the Department of History in order to allow for experience to be included in this discussion of existence.

Carlo Bonura’s PG 104

Barry began prefacing that Bonura did not submit his proposal on his own accord, but was in fact approached by Barry to reclassify the course as fulfilling the social scientific approaches core. In his discussion of the class Barry emphasized the use of historical examples to demonstrate the workings of texts within political theory as fulfilling the curriculum requirements of such core courses.

The conversation quickly turned to the “background legislation” of courses fulfilling the social scientific core requirements, namely that they develop one particular social scientific theory and that there is an application of such theory within the course. The question for this course was does it attempt to apply theory in any way.

In defending the course, Bonura argued that it focused on core concepts in political science including sovereignty, political community and citizenship. Approaches toward these topics, Bonura explained, would be inherently different than readings of these texts in a humanities discipline like philosophy or English (as they would be in line with the social scientific emphasis (or questions) found within political science). Moreover, one of the aims of the class was to have students be able to take other classes within political science (in the unquestionably social scientific sub-fields of comparative politics and international relations) and have a more complex understanding of the fundamental dynamics of the concepts discussed in these courses.

Jasinski suggested that it seemed to be a “great course,” but the Committee “must do some winking” in approving it since the course is not a social science course.

Barnett reiterated that issue here is that review process [the Associate Dean report process] is working in that these questions need to be raised regularly.

Barry again emphasized that he was looking for the syllabus to fall “in the ballpark” of the core requirements.

In relation to a broader discussion of the definition of social science Tomhave asked if is citizenship was, in fact, a form of social scientific behavior. Jasinski reminded the Committee

that social science is premised on prediction (that seemed to be lacking from the course). Finally, Jenkins pronounced the course “political theory” with no clear indication that it satisfied the core requirements.

Bonura explained that the dynamics explored in the course over the semester, namely the foundation of polities, the definition of citizens and the exclusion of certain subjects, did involve an analysis of political behavior and that it raised questions crucial to the study of democracy for instance (in that it asked students to consider how membership in democracies, and other polities more generally, was defined).

In response to Jenkins comment, Bonura replied that the question of political theory’s status as social science may in fact be what is at issue and that this position (considering it outside of social science) may be reflected in the Department of Politics and Government’s decision to terminate its “emphasis” in political theory [formerly one of four possible emphases students could elect].

Barry argued that a predictive quality to texts was included in the course syllabus. Anderson-Connolly suggested that the primary purpose of social science theory was to test or classify evidence and that a course must develop theory that served as a standard for the application of evidence.

Jenkins reminded the Committee that the beginning texts of the course were written prior to the formal development of the very idea of social science.

As time ran out, discussion came to a close and Washburn secured provisional approval from the Committee of the course for the current semester only.

6. Adjournment