

**Curriculum Committee Minutes  
February 24, 1999**

**Present:** Barnett, Cannon, Goleeke, Hooper, Kirkpatrick, Kline, Livingston, Mehlhaff (Chair), Pinzino, Proehl, Stevens, Sugimoto, Warning, Tomhave, Washburn  
**Absent:** Grunberg, Heavner, Bartanen

At 5:08 p.m. Mehlhaff began the meeting.

*Minutes.* **Kline M/S/P approval of the minutes for the meeting of 17 February 1999.**

*Subcommittees*

SCIENCE IN CONTEXT (SCXT). Stevens distributed a memorandum regarding two proposals considered by the subcommittee and stated that pre-submission review of SCXT course proposals by the Science in Context Advisory Committee, chaired by Jim Evans, is a very helpful procedure. Because the second of the two proposals involves a question of guidelines compliance, the committee acted separately on the two courses.

**ACTION: Stevens M/S/P approval of SCXT 335 - Thinking About Biodiversity for the Science in Context core.** Note: This motion passed with one ABSTENTION.

In the brief discussion attending SCXT 335, proposed by Alix Cooper and Terry Mace, Washburn affirmed that the description in the *Bulletin* will include the standard SCXT prerequisite statement: "*completion of the Natural World core requirement.*"

With reference to SCXT 370 - Technology and Work in the Modern World, proposed by Mott Greene, **Stevens M/S/ approval of SCXT 370 for Science in Context core credit.** The committee talked at some length about whether the course, proposed and to be taught by only one instructor, meets the SCXT core guidelines item III, which states that "Science in Context courses should be taught by teams of faculty...." Cannon raised this issue, which was anticipated by Evans, whose memorandum accompanying the proposal argues for allowance of the single instructor on the grounds that "multiple perspectives," not necessarily "multiple faculty in the same room at the same time," is the intention of the guidelines provision and that Greene ably would deliver "cross-disciplinary perspectives." Cannon made the point that the guidelines hitherto have assured that at least "back stage" a faculty team has talked about the course as a common enterprise, even in a case where one faculty member only has taught a section of a course that was a team proposal and had been team taught previously. Barnett recalled the committee's approval last year of a SCXT course in which only one faculty member would be the instructor but would involve a series of guest instructors as the means of providing multiple perspectives. Stevens said that this proposal includes no provision for guest instructors and added that Greene is aware of the exception this course poses; in the proposal, Greene defended allowance of a single instructor by pointing to the centrality to his work of "science in context" and also to the difficulties of staffing and scheduling SCXT courses. Kline said that the guidelines incorporate the notion that "conversation produces insights," and the lack of conversation in this instance means lack of fulfillment of the guidelines.

Washburn suggested approval of this course for "one year only" because the committee can address the staffing problem the proposal raises during next year's review of the SCXT and other core areas; the guidelines *do* need revisiting. Mehlhaff and others raised another guidelines issue, namely, whether the "technology" focus of the course in fact meets the expectation, in section II.A. of the guidelines, that a SCXT course "will have at least one-third of its content drawn from the sciences...."; Hooper suggested that the committee could pass this concern along to Greene, who could press the "science" content appropriately.

**Warning M/S/P to amend the motion to approve the course for one year only.** Note: The motion to amend passed with one ABSTENTION.

**ACTION: Stevens M/S/P approval of SCXT 370 - Technology and Work in the Modern World for Science in Context core credit, with the provision that approval is for one year only.** Note: This motion passed with one ABSTENTION.

NATURAL WORLD. Warning conveyed the subcommittee's recommendation for approval of Biology 207 - Principles and Practices of Conservation Biology, proposed by Kathy Ann Miller as a one-time-only course to be part of the 1999-2000 Pacific Rim/Asia Study-Travel Program (PRAST). The venue of the course will be Nepal, with classes in and around Kathmandu and on trek. Warning reported that the proposal gives explicit attention to most of the criteria for the core, and the subcommittee reached satisfaction that one criterion not addressed in the proposal in fact will be part of the course. Washburn explained that all PRAST courses have "one-time-only" status. Mehlhaff asked about the proposal's indications of methodology, and Cannon replied that the course has the approval and confidence of the Department of Biology.

**ACTION: Warning M/S/P approval of Biology 207 - Principles and Practices of Conservation Biology for Natural World core status.**

*Other business*

"FOLLOW YEAR" REVIEW OF THE CORE CURRICULUM. Mehlhaff distributed copies of Bartanen's draft of a memorandum that the committee might send to faculty members teaching in the core to request materials for review. The committee will discuss the draft at the next meeting, when Bartanen can be present.

"GUIDELINES FOR SETTING ACADEMIC CALENDAR." The committee began reconsideration of this document and responded to Mehlhaff's inquiry about whether, and when, to hold an open forum for campus discussion. Barnett and Kline expressed preference for committee deliberation prior to any open forum, and Kline added that in committee the matter could begin as a general discussion and then move to a subcommittee. Hooper stated his preference for an open, "free-for-all" forum that would include students, who also have concerns about the calendar.

Washburn focused discussion on what she perceives as the central cause for concern about the calendar, namely, interest in the possibility of a week-long fall break. She commented that a few years ago the committee's thorough exploration of this possibility reached the conclusion that it is an impossibility unless classes occur on all holidays. Washburn added that the calendar issue arose this academic year around Thanksgiving in connection with the situation in which we have no fall-break week but students take it anyway by leaving early for the Thanksgiving break. Several committee members expressed varied ideas, and with Mehlhaff's leadership the committee agreed informally to set aside one entire committee meeting to discuss the calendar.

**At 5:56 p.m. Stevens M/S/"P" that we adjourn.**

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne W. Barnett  
26 February 1999  
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