

Curriculum Committee Minutes

Wednesday, 10/9/96

Present: Kris Bartanen, Heather Bruce, Tom Fikes, Brad Hiranaga, Kent Hooper, Christine Kline, David Lupher, Curtis Mehlhaff, Mary Morgan, Steve Neshyba, Geoff Proehl, George Tomlin, Michael Valentine, Carrie Washburn

Absent: Ron Fields

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m. by chair, George Tomlin, who thanked Curt Mehlhaff for chairing the Sept. 25 meeting.

Motion for approval of minutes from April 24, Sept. 11, and Sept. 25 was made, seconded, and passed.

Announcements: The chair presented posters and brochures on upcoming curriculum-related conferences, as well as a newspaper article entitled "The Dumbing Down of Higher Education." Brad Hiranaga, student representative from ASUPS, was introduced and welcomed to the meeting. Carrie Washburn distributed two items for the committee's use and consideration: the 1992 version of "A Self-study Guide" for "Department Curriculum Review" (this year some departmental reviews might be following the 1992 version) and "Guidelines for Setting the Academic Calendar." There was a brief discussion about how many teaching days were in the academic calendar each semester. Mehlhaff also noted that a significant issue in setting up the calendar was the day of the week on which break days fell, noting, for example, that repeated Monday breaks had negative impacts on classes with Monday meetings. These and other issues will be taken up when the committee reviews these guidelines.

New Business: The sub-committee on the Comparative Values Core reported on its meeting of Thursday, Sept. 26, 1996 regarding a proposal for a new Comparative Values course for the spring of 1997: History 343 Cultural Nationalism and Boundaries--The Example of Twentieth Century China submitted by Mary G. Mazur from the Dept. of History. Proehl distributed copies of the minutes of this meeting. Sub-committee chair Mehlhaff noted that the committee had compared the syllabus with the guidelines for a Comparative Values course and after some discussion had concluded that the course as proposed met the guidelines adequately and had then voted unanimously to recommend the course for the CV core.

ACTION M/S/P to approve HIST 343 as a Comparative Values course for Spring 1997.

Kline, chair of the sub-committee for the Communication I-Written core, reported on their consideration of Suzanne Barnett's proposal for a Communication I-Written course: Scholars and Warriors in China and Japan--A Freshman Seminar in Writing. Kline distributed to the committee a key portions of Barnett's proposal and a copy of the guidelines for Communication I-Written courses. She reported that the sub-committee had voted to approve this course, noting that it met each of the requirements for the Communication I-Written core. Kline moved and it was seconded that the course be accepted.

This motion engendered a fairly lengthy discussion. Of particular concern were questions raised by Hooper and Mehlhaff regarding the implications of accepting this course for history department staffing, potential encroachment upon an area of the core traditionally taught by the English department, and whether or not these considerations were germane to the deliberations of the Curriculum Committee at this time, as long as the class met the Communication I-Written guidelines.

Lupher suggested that such questions were in the CC's domain during the department's five year review and at that point the committee could address issues such as those being raised. Washburn noted that the History Department's review was indeed this year and that in most

instances this course would have been submitted as a part of that review. This observation led to a discussion of whether or not final approval of Scholars and Warriors should be postponed until the time of the departmental review later this year. Bartanen also noted that two history courses were approved last year for the Communication I-Written core.

Neshyba suggested that it was the role of the committee to accept or reject a proposal with respect to a particular set of guidelines and that issues of staffing fell to the department. Hooper advocated a larger view of the process that would take into consideration staffing and issues that grow out of that. Tomlin noted that in the past there was an assumption that English 101 courses would constitute the CI core courses but that recently faculty from other departments had been encouraged to put forward course proposals for CI. It was also noted that CI courses were being increasingly offered across disciplinary boundaries.

Mehlhoff noted that the acceptance of the course would imply a long-term staffing commitment to offer the class at least once every three years.

Fikes moved to amend Kline's motion by postponing the decision until the departmental review.

Neshyba asked for clarification about the commitment to offer the course every three years. Washburn indicated that although the university endeavored to offer courses with regularity that those commitments were not always met by departments. It was also noted in terms of staffing that Barnett had recently left a position as a chair so that she has a unit available.

After further discussion, Fikes withdrew his motion and Kline amended her original motion.

ACTION **M/S/P to approve History 100C Scholars and Warriors in China and Japan as meeting the Communication I-Written guidelines, but to defer final approval until the History Department review came before the Curriculum Committee.**

Kline then reported on the sub-committee's review of the guidelines for Communication I-Written classes that came out of their review of course syllabi with respect to core guidelines last spring. She identified three basic questions raised by the sub-committee: 1. Should there be further consideration of the role of word processing in writing, particularly with respect to the revision process? 2. Should there be a wider range of writing subjects? 3. Should students, in addition to expository writing based on the reading of text, do more writing in response to direct experience (interview, experiment, observation, and so forth)? Kline distributed a memo detailing these questions.

Mehlhoff asked whether these questions were to be taken as proposals or concerns. Kline answered that at this point they were "concerns." Neshyba, a member of the sub-committee, observed that students in Chem. 110 did not seem prepared to write observations and that, in effect, the Communication I-Written course might do more to facilitate this kind of writing. This raised issues for Mehlhoff and Bruce of general writing needs as opposed to discipline-specific needs. Bartanen noted that CI should prepare students to write for a range of audiences, from a variety of stimuli.

The discussion then turned to what to do with these questions: whether they should go back to the sub-committee and become part of revised guidelines or become part of the larger faculty discussion currently going on about the core.

ACTION **M/S/P to direct these questions to the faculty for their consideration via memo.**

Tomlin presented a request to defer the Foreign Languages review for a year.

ACTION **M/S/P to accept the request from the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature to defer the departmental curriculum review until next year.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Geoff Proehl, CTA