

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES

3 April (Wednesday)

Misner Room

Present: Adams, Barnett, Bartanen, Clifford, Cousens, R. Fields, Jackson, Kerrick, Kline, Magnus, Matthews, Merz (Chair), Morgan, Neshyba, Orloff, Tomlin, Valentine, Washburn

Absent: Paris

Merz began the meeting at 8:03-8:04 a.m.

Minutes. The committee M/S/P approval of the minutes for the meeting of 20 March 1996.

Subcommittee reports

MATHEMATICS AND COMPUTER SCIENCE: Barnett distributed the departmental proposal for renewal of the major in Computer Science/Business (CSB) and stated that this remaining item of the departmental curricular review had to await the revision of the Business curriculum. The revised major substitutes new Business courses for previous Business courses. In fact the CSB has *not* had a thorough review because the new Business courses that will be part of the major will not be in the class schedule until next year.. In line with the department's wish to proceed with the revised major while subjecting it to further review, the subcommittee recommends approval of the revised major for two years, which is consistent with the committee's provisional approval of the new curriculum in Business.

ACTION **Barnett M/S/P approval of the revised Computer Science/Business major for a provisional period of two years.**

Matthews commented that the department intends to undertake consultation with Business colleagues as early as this summer; the CSB major is genuinely a combined degree. Clifford asked if a period of two years is enough time, in view of the delay in appointing a Director of the new Business program; Merz and Barnett defended the two-year period on the basis of consistency with the two-year approval of the new Business curriculum.

SCIENCE IN CONTEXT. Orloff reported on behalf of the subcommittee

ACTION **Orloff M/S/P approval of SCXT 325 - Science and Policy for the Science in Context core for a two-year period.**

Orloff stated that this new course combines and will eliminate the following current courses: SCXT 322 - Geological and Environmental Catastrophe, SCXT 323 - Natural Science and Economics of Earth Resources, and SCXT 324 - Issues and Conflict: The Environment and Public Policy. The new course considers physical phenomena and relevant policies; the course will have multiple versions, although the thematic emphasis will be consistent.

Bartanen explained that the original approval of SCXT 322, 323, and 324 was provisional, and each course has had one re-approval; the committee's policy is that a course may have provisional approval only twice. The time has come for the combination; as well, the new course fits the SCXT core expectation of thematic courses having varied sections.

In response to Tomlin's inquiry about *what* "policy," Valentine said any sort of policy--local, international, any policy; the issue is how scientific information is used to make policy.

In discussion the committee affirmed that the new course cannot be taken twice for credit, and also that a student who has taken one of the contributing courses (SCXT 322, 323, 324) normally would not be able to take SCXT 325 for credit.

SCIENCE IN CONTEXT PREREQUISITES. Tomlin distributed a reference document and reported that the subcommittee reached conclusion on two issues, (1) two Natural World (NW) core courses as standard prerequisites to the SCXT course and (2) specified prerequisites for particular SCXT courses.

Standard prerequisites. Having looked at the original documentation governing standard prerequisites for SCXT core credit (two NW core courses) and having talked with faculty teaching in the SCXT core, the subcommittee devised the following "memorandum of understanding" to be sent to the Academic Standards Committee:

Ordinarily students enrolled in a Science in Context course for SCXT core credit should have completed two courses satisfying the Natural World core. In the rare circumstance that students have completed upper division science courses which include a laboratory experience these courses may be used to replace the required Natural World core courses as prerequisite courses. Students in this situation must petition the Academic Standards Committee and that petition must have the approval of the responsible instructor of the Science in Context course.

The memorandum would provide a basis on which the Academic Standards Committee can approve petitions from those few students who may not have completed the two NW core courses at the time of taking a SCXT course for core credit but have had a sufficient science background. The subcommittee discussed the matter of *prerequisites* vs. *co-requisites* (taking a NW course in the same term as the SCXT core course) and decided to maintain the prerequisite arrangement.

Specified prerequisites. The subcommittee considered individual SCXT courses with specified prerequisites, such as *which* NW courses or the added prerequisite of the completion of the Mathematical Reasoning core requirement. The subcommittee agreed that no recommendation is needed on this issue.

ACTION **Tomlin M/S/P to accept the memorandum to be sent to the Academic Standards Committee as written on the handout.**

Orloff asked if this action would create more work for the Academic Standards Committee. Tomlin and Clifford said "no"; the memorandum will eliminate lengthy discussion of individual cases. Magnus commented that this action is one of "interpreting the rules," not making new ones. Moreover, the original legislation with reference to prerequisites uses the term "should," not "must"; the action is in line with the legislation.

In response to Washburn's inquiry about the timing of the petition, Tomlin explained that at the beginning of the course SCXT instructors normally poll students regarding prerequisites; this process should identify the few students who would need to petition. Morgan stated that she checks SCXT enrollments prior to the term (so students can receive early notification of the need to petition).

Prompted by Clifford, committee members concluded that this action (the memorandum) meets needs expressed by Ron Van Enkevort (member, Academic Standards Committee) at the Curriculum Committee meeting of 21 February 1996; Tomlin has checked with Van Enkevort.

COMMUNICATION I. Kline distributed documents and reported that the subcommittee has reviewed every syllabus for English 101 with reference to the expectations of the Communication I (C1) core; the subcommittee found "on the whole that syllabi actually meet the core guidelines," although variations characterize different sections of the course. The subcommittee proposes

approval of all syllabi with the understanding that Kline will ask some participating faculty to make more explicit the congruence of the course and the C1 core guidelines. Kline called attention to meetings within the Department of English that have produced what Kline termed a “deepened consensus” of what is needed in the C1 core.

ACTION Kline M/S/P approval of these syllabi for English 101 sections to meet the Communication I core; with approval, Kline will follow up on some instances of needed revision.

Kline reported that the subcommittee’s deliberations brought out the issue of “the use of word processing for the revision of written work” (C1 guidelines, III.G) and the suggestion that this issue may need further elaboration. The subcommittee’s deliberations also brought out the possibility that the guidelines’ definition of expository writing as almost exclusively based on the reading of text might need expansion to include experiment or observation as the basis of exposition. The committee could direct the subcommittee to reconsider the guidelines or to interact with the ad hoc core review committee with such issues in view. Magnus raised the point that learning to write through reading texts is appropriate as a start. In response to inquiry from Cousens, Kline affirmed that the English 101 syllabus are predominantly written-text based.

The committee moved to adjourn at 8:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne W. Barnett (3 Apr 96)