

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES

10 April (Wednesday)

Misner Room

Present: Adams, Barnett, Bartanen, R. Fields, Jackson, Kline, Matthews, Morgan, Neshyba, Paris, Tomlin, Washburn

Absent: Clifford, Cousens, Kerrick, Magnus, Merz (Chair), Orloff, Valentine

Former chair Tomlin began the meeting at 8:05 a.m.

Minutes. The committee M/S/P approval of the minutes for the meeting of 3 April 1996.

Subcommittee reports

CLASSICS. Bartanen reported for the subcommittee that the Classics Program report was very specific in addressing the self-study questions, and the subcommittee recommends approval.

ACTION Bartanen M/S/P approval of the Classics Program quinquennial review.

Bartanen commented that the program as reviewed involves no changes; the Classics faculty believe the program is well positioned for another faculty line, but they realize that this is not the purview of this committee. The Classics field continues to grow by linkages to other scholarly areas, for example, anthropology. The Classics curriculum emphasizes primary texts and provides curricular opportunities for students who have options to concentrate on Greek civilization, or Roman civilization, or both.

SSG ("Department Curriculum Review: A Self-Study Guide")

Tomlin called attention to the SSG handout and conveyed Merz's reminder that it is a "working document" offered by Merz, Bartanen, and Washburn to incorporate ideas forwarded by the Faculty Senate task force on the Curriculum Committee, as well as ideas generated in the committee's recent discussions.

Fields praised the draft for clarifications and refinements. Barnett focused attention on draft questions #6 ("In what ways has your department, school, or program incorporated new technologies into the curriculum?") and #7 ("In what ways has your department, school, or program incorporated innovative pedagogies into the curriculum?") and proposed that these would be better as combined and as an "opportunity" for comment, not as specific self-study questions. Barnett argued that these questions differ from revised and renumbered question #5, which in draft form now asks "In what ways does the curriculum in your department, school, or program reflect the diversity of our society?" The "diversity" question has behind it the strength of faculty legislation (curriculum document of 10 May 1976), while the proposed "technology" and "pedagogy" questions lack such specific support; if self-study questions in some sense are directive--expecting performance with reference to the specified topic, for example, diversity--then the proposed questions may be intrusive. Moreover, if the proposed questions about innovations do not elicit evidence of innovations, an excellent departmental review report that does not provide such evidence may in some sense be perceived as deficient.

In discussion Kline set the general consensus that asking about pedagogy and about innovations aimed at the improvement of teaching is entirely appropriate in an institution that values teaching; Jackson and others added that we should invite reflection on methodology. Matthews argued for the provision of *opportunity* to comment on innovations in methodology but not necessarily the *expectation* of such comment. Kline phrased the presumed departmental effort as "active consideration" of how we organize what students need to know and how we go about insuring their learning.

The committee reached informal agreement that the paragraph introducing the section of the SSG entitled "Review Questions" might add the word "pedagogy" to the list of specified areas in which changes might have occurred since the last departmental review; the second sentence thus would read "These [changes] might include changes in the discipline (whether in content, orientation, methodology, or pedagogy)...." The committee also seemed to favor the possibility of removing draft questions #6 and #7 (about innovations in technology and pedagogy) and making them part of a final paragraph of the section that would invite comment. Bartanen said that the group working on the revision of the SSG could draft some language for the committee's consideration. This issue did not reach conclusion, however; Kline focused on the possibility of a specific *question* about pedagogy, as did Matthews; on the other hand, Fields expressed concern about confusing such an inquiry with the evaluation of faculty as teachers as part of the advancement process.

Neshyba asked on what basis the SSG is subject to revision. Bartanen explained that the revision is an attempt to address the perception of the Curriculum Committee as a "police force" primarily involved in "judgmental" activity. The revision aims to make clear that the committee wants "to foster discussion"; the revised language allows more creative response. In addition, the revision aims at clarification and streamlining.

The discussion closed with an expression of interest in expanding the "invitation" that might follow the "Review Questions" to include "issues of concern" (Neshyba) and perhaps also "issues of celebration" (Kline), as well as issues for the next review (Bartanen). The invitation in effect could be for "free-flowing narrative" (Jackson).

The committee adjourned at 8:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne W. Barnett (11 Apr 96)