

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES

24 April (Wednesday)
Misner Room

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

Absent: Clifford, Tomlin

Merz began the meeting at 8:04 a.m. and expressed everyone's gratitude to Bartanen and Washburn for the provision of much appreciated breakfast refreshments at this final meeting of the year.

Minutes. The committee M/S/P approval of the minutes for the meeting of 10 April 1996.

Announcements

Bartanen announced that the Ad Hoc Core Curriculum Review Committee plans to distribute soon a written report of its work this term. The report will include some "ideas or proposals" for faculty consideration, as well as procedural suggestions.

Subcommittee reports

HUMANISTIC PERSPECTIVE. Matthews reported that Religion 107 - Human Nature and Ethics, re-approved previously for Humanistic Perspective on a two-year provisional basis, now needs re-approval for a further two years. Teaching of this course has been pending a search-hire for an ethicist; that search-hire is now complete.

ACTION **Matthews M/S/P a two-year extension of Religion 107 - Human Nature and Ethics for the Humanistic Perspective core.** NOTE: The vote on this motion included one abstention.

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

Merz called attention to the new version of the draft revised SSG document offered by Merz, Bartanen, and Washburn. Magnus began discussion by expressing concern about courses required in a major but outside the department; should we add a review question that would cause a department to reflect on required extra-departmental (ancillary) courses? The general pattern of a review is for the department to think exclusively about departmental courses, but perhaps the department should explain the requirement of extra-departmental courses. Bartanen added that the review process also does not include a question about reasons for exceeding the limits of nine units in the major field ("Curriculum Statement" of 10 May 1976 as re-dated October 1992 and issued 8/1/95, III.C.1).

Merz reported that the invitation to department chairs to comment on the SSG brought response from History faculty members who focused on two concerns: (1) Why must a department re-do the text of its report completely with each review? Merz: The answer to this question is that the department need not re-do the entire text but may revise the previous document. (2) Should reviews occur less often? Merz: The current schedule of reviews on a five-year cycle allows new faculty to have a role in the review process. Neshyba and Washburn said that changes in a departmental program always occur when new faculty join a department. Fields and Kline spoke in favor, even so, of the five-year cycle of full reviews; Kline stated that new faculty bring to these reviews "new lenses for consideration." The committee informally reaffirmed the five-year frequency of departmental reviews.

Kerrick inquired about revised review question #1, which omits the separate sub-question "How does the department's curriculum address the university's stated educational goals?" Bartanen explained that the sub-question tended to result in a paragraph each for some or all of the eight

goals; the revised question #1 attempts to focus on the broader goal of the university's "liberal arts mission." Barnett expressed the view that the sub-question forced attention to the eight goals; how might we encourage such attention while also avoiding "formulaic recitation" of service to all or some of the eight goals?

Discussion elicited incidental committee votes to amend the as yet unstated motion to approve the revised SSG.

Bartanen m/s/p to change revised question #1 to read as follows: "Giving due consideration to the intellectual and educational directions of your discipline, to the university's stated educational goals, and to changes within the university, how would you currently define your department's educational mission?"

After consultation with Magnus, Bartanen m/s/p to add to the revised SSG a new question #3 (changing the numbers of subsequent questions), as follows: "If your major requirements exceed more than nine units in the major field, please explain why the extra unit is required. If your major requires courses outside the department, please explain the relationship of those courses to departmental goals. (Note: The incidental vote on this amendment involved one "no" vote and one abstention.) In discussion Neshyba asked if this rewording is a policy shift or the articulation of "something already there"; in response, Bartanen and others pointed to the "Curriculum Statement" and the limitation of the major to no more than nine units in the major field and no more than sixteen units in the major field plus ancillary units.

ACTION Bartanen M/S/P approval of the revised "Department Curriculum Review: A Self-Study Guide."

The revised SSG will go out as soon as possible to departments with review reports due by 15 October 1996; Merz explained that these departments will have the option of responding to the current SSG, or to the new SSG, or perhaps to some combination of the two.

"Introduction to the Curriculum Committee"

Merz reported that she, Bartanen, and Washburn had looked at this internal committee document written by Matthews in 1994 and saw no reason to alter it.

Communication I guidelines

Kline recollected concerns of the subcommittee regarding the role of word processing and the nature of expository writing in the Communication I core and expressed the wish to move the consideration of the guidelines to "another body," perhaps the Ad Hoc Core Curriculum Review Committee. Merz pointed out that if we do nothing of this sort the matter will be part of the business of the Curriculum Committee in 1996-97. The informal conclusion of the discussion of this matter led to the consensus that Bartanen informally will notify the Ad Hoc Committee of these concerns, but with no expectation of policy action; the matter remains the business of the Curriculum Committee.

Overlooked agenda item

Merz noted that the committee has not dealt with the issue of whether each departmental-review subcommittee should include a Curriculum Committee member who is also a member of the department under review. General response to this matter is that insuring departmental representation on subcommittees would be unwieldy.

Resolutions

Bartanen moved, and requested seconds for, acceptance of three resolutions that she read aloud. These resolutions seemed to find affirmation through good cheer and applause. The secretary includes the resolutions as directed to do so by the committee: *Resolved*,

That the Curriculum Committee express its appreciation to those members completing their third year on the Committee--Frank Cousens, Jerry Kerrick, Carol Merz, Heidi Orloff, and George Tomlin--a term of service which has included the particular challenges of the first "fallow year" review of the Core curriculum and the current year's crop of 25 subcommittees.

That, whereas the written record of the Curriculum Committee is an especially important source of confirmation of the legislative intent surrounding faculty action on curricular matters, and whereas Suzanne Barnett has performed careful and diligent work as creator of the written record, in addition to chairing a complex departmental review and participating fully in a challenging new program review, the Curriculum Committee express its deepest thanks to Suzanne for her unflappable spirit and extraordinary contribution as Committee secretary.

That the Curriculum Committee express its great respect and thanks to Carol Merz, whose work as Chair of the Committee has both nurtured a positive relationship between the Committee and its constituents and facilitated frank and lively discussion, fair consideration of competing viewpoints, and efficient completion of the Committee's lengthy set of charges.

Kerrick and others voiced additional thanks to Kris Bartanen for extraordinary service to the Committee; enthusiastic agreement with this sentiment thus created a fourth resolution.

The committee adjourned at perhaps 8:57 a.m.

Respectfully (and finally) submitted,
Suzanne W. Barnett (25 Apr 96)