

COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM

January 7, 2015

12:45 p.m., 254 Baker

Meeting Minutes

Voting Members present: Bujanovic, Cohen, Daley, Dibble, Kyanka, Shannon (for President Wheeler), Verostek, Wagner, Whitmore

Non-voting members and Guests present: Newman

Unable to attend: Delaney, Donaghy, Margolis, Rutkowski, Sanford, Spuches, Vanucchi, Wheeler

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order at 12:49 pm
2. **Approval of Minutes from December 10.** The minutes from the December 10, 2014, meeting were approved by acclamation.

3. Announcements

- a. **Proposals posted for CoC and faculty review:** No new proposals have been posted for faculty review.
- b. **Proposals submitted for CoC completeness review:** A proposal from SCME to modify the MPS program has been submitted for completeness review.
- c. **Administrative approvals by the Dean.** There have been no new administrative approvals by the Dean, but the recent submission of an administrative approval request for a course prefix change prompted some discussion by the Committee. When a department requests a prefix change there needs to be an awareness of the impact of this on programs outside the department. This is especially important if the department delivers numerous courses to other departments and majors. The example under consideration was the Environmental Studies request to change the EWP prefix to EWR, to conform more closely to their concentration on Environmental Writing and Rhetoric. It was noted that the EWP prefix came into being several years ago when it replaced the CLL prefix. Shannon noted that it is probably only recently that the final reference to CLL has been replaced in the catalog and program plan sheets. The impact of such a change is widespread throughout the College, particularly when the Writing Program is involved. Shannon suggested that we live with EWP a little longer until we are sure that all references to CLL have been deleted. Questions for the Committee to consider are: Should we ever try to change prefixes and when is it appropriate to do so? When a department name changes is probably a fitting time to change prefixes. Wagner noted that even within departments there may be need for a prefix change. His example was the Sustainable Energy Management program within FNRM -- there are no courses with an SEM prefix. Daley was concerned about using new course prefixes as more specialized course descriptors, while Wagner mentioned general education courses. Daley asked if course descriptors should be allowed to change merely at the whim of the department. Shannon noted that this may be reasonable if there is a new program with potentially new additional courses. At this point Daley noted that the bigger issue was whether the Committee has authority over course prefix issues. It should be more appropriately dealt with at department or program level. An example of a good use of a new prefix is the SCME microscopy certificate, where the courses

have an MCR prefix, as students looking for courses in this program would not think to look at construction management courses. With regard to the issue at hand, Daley didn't see a compelling need to change from EWP to EWR, and noted that there are universities that only use numeric systems, and so circumvent any prefix issues. Daley, Shannon and Dibble argued that this change of prefix would cause a lot of problems with regard to catalog, departmental handbooks and plan sheets, and Shannon asked that the idea be tabled and that Environmental Studies should revisit the issue at a later date. Daley noted that we should probably not be carrying out any administrative changes like this until the College's new branding has been clarified. Whitmore admitted that Environmental Studies did not realize the extent of the problems caused by a prefix change, and Shannon explained that no one realized how difficult it was until the previous change from CLL to EWP.

4. Updates from the Dean (Shannon)

There were no new updates from the Dean.

5. Old Business:

- a. **xxxx96 generic course descriptions.** Daley reported that there has been no progress in the development of these generic course descriptions.
- b. **Development of a Study Abroad course.** Shannon reported no further progress in the development of this course.
- c. **Minor Enrollment Form.** Shannon reported no progress, but indicated that his pending acquisition of new software would speed the process.
- d. **Final Revisions to the Curriculum Proposal Form and process.** Dibble introduced the flowchart, noting that diamond shapes indicate the decision boxes. Page 2, explaining what indicates a major change, was basically copied from the SUNY web site. A minor change is by default anything that is not a major change. After some discussion on the possibility of administrative curriculum changes, it was decided that curricula can only have major or minor changes, and therefore all new curricula or curricular revisions must follow this flowchart. Wording should be added to page 2 to say that if a change is not a major change then it is a minor change and the proposer should use the "local" minor change form. If the proposer is confused about whether the change is major or minor s/he should contact the Committee. Shannon noted that while the Registrar's office keeps a record of course descriptions, the catalog and the department are the repositories of the curriculum/program descriptions. While a revised program description should be submitted for Committee review with a local "minor" program change, the program description for a new, new from existing, or major curriculum changes should only be developed after the proposal has been approved by SUNY and SED. It is the department's responsibility to develop this catalog curriculum description and forward it to the Provost for processing and entry into the catalog. It was recommended that there should be an additional box at the end of the flow chart to indicate this.

Dibble also introduced the "local" minor change form, which is now streamlined, but which now has signature lines incorporated. The lines for the signatures for the Associate Provost for Instruction and the Registrar should be removed. A section for the proposer to indicate the transition plan to the revised curriculum (including the dates of implementation and the cohorts

of students that it impacts) should be added. These forms are posted on the web site and will go into effect immediately. Newman is to send Dibble suggested wording on the transition plan section.

e. **Examination of status of and proposal process (if any) for new areas of study.**

Daley and Shannon have not yet met with the Provost regarding this.

f. **Review of the Bylaws and clarification of Committee responsibility.**

In Donaghy's absence, Daley reported that the Executive Committee of Faculty Governance has developed a first draft of the Bylaws. The responsibility of the Committee on Curriculum will generally remain as at present.

g. **Review and compilation of academic policies.**

Daley reported that this is being worked on.

6. **New Business:**

a. **Proposals for action:**

There were no proposals to be discussed. Daley noted that there will be a number forthcoming, as deadlines are coming up.

b. **New policy concerning transfer credits and minors.**

This policy proposal had been brought up by FNRM and submitted through Wagner. Dibble suggested that the issue be left to the departments to decide. Shannon noted that 24 of the last 30 credit hours of the undergraduate degree need to be ESF hours, in order for an ESF degree to be conferred. By this same logic, the student should be able to transfer a substantial number of hours for a minor. Wagner suggested that ESF should require that at least 50% of a minor's credit hours come from courses taken while the student is matriculated at ESF. Dibble noted that the Chemistry minor is made up of 300-level courses, so they are taken later in the degree process, when the student will be matriculated, so this is not a problem in this department. Wagner did not think that leaving the decision to the department will work in all cases. Shannon agreed that the 50% rule is a good guideline, and if it is not workable in the case of an individual student then he or she can always use the petition process for approval of courses. Daley noted that SUNY is encouraging students to transfer credits within the system, and if students transfer in with enough credits why can't they obtain a minor? Wagner pointed out that in these cases we are conferring a minor based on course we don't deliver. Daley explained that we are not accrediting minors, and Shannon added that no one approves the minor but the College. He (Shannon) has never seen a minor where all the courses were taken when the student was not matriculated. Daley noted that under current policy if a student wants to transfer courses into a minor they have to petition to do so. Kyanka noted that when a student applies to a minor program the department has to approve. Dibble reiterated that in his opinion the issue should be left to the department, at least for the time being. Daley summarized by saying that what is on the table is that we should be giving guidance to minor coordinators that 50% of coursework for a minor should be taken while the student is matriculated at ESF. Any courses above this 50% must be petitioned in. The Committee directed Wagner to take the lead on drafting a policy statement based on this discussion. This statement will be discussed at the next committee meeting, from where it will go to faculty review and subsequently to faculty governance.

c. **Discussion concerning possible shared resource course policy.**

Daley noted that the 2007 CoI policy concerning shared resource courses was available on the CoC web site. Cohen asked whether the intention was to get rid of all shared resource courses. No, this is not

the issue under discussion. Wagner has no problem with 3xx/5xx or 4xx/5xx shared resource splits. His problem is with 4xx/6xx splits, as he does not see how an instructor can teach an advanced graduate course when there are seniors present who do not have the capacity for this level of study. This is especially problematic in FNRM, where doctoral students must have a certain number of 6xx level courses to graduate. Bujanovic noted that in her experience with shared resource courses, the 6xx course works much differently from the 4xx level course. At some point she separates the graduates from undergraduates in order to discuss various topics at the appropriate level. Daley noted that this problem is one for each instructor to address and to figure out what the appropriate levels of instruction are. Wagner asked that when a course proposal for a 4xx/6xx shared resource course is submitted to CoC the Committee should encourage the proposer to think more critically about what s/he is proposing. Daley suggested that CoC should develop guidelines about what constitutes an advanced level course. Each committee member should go back to their respective departments and have the department identify models that are accepted instructional models for shared resource classes. Once guidelines have been developed the Committee can submit them to IQAS. Newman will put together an outline for reporting the models and distribute them to the Committee members. These models shall be discussed at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.

The next meeting of the Committee will be on February 11, 2015 at 12:45 in 254 Baker.

Action Items.

- Daley will continue to work on the xxxx96 generic course descriptions.
- Shannon will continue to work on the development of a Study Abroad course.
- Shannon will continue the development of a Minor Enrollment Form.
- Daley and Shannon will confer with the Provost to determine the status of and proposal process (if any) for new areas of study within existing curricula.
- Donaghy will continue the review of the Bylaws and clarification of Committee responsibility.
- Donaghy and Vanucchi will continue the review and compilation of academic policies.
- Dibble and Kyanka to make the discussed revisions to the Curriculum forms; Newman to immediately post these to the web page.
- Wagner to draft policy statement on transfer credits and minors, to be discussed at the next meeting.
- Newman to develop guidelines for departmental representatives to report on the structure of advanced level courses. Representatives are to use this to identify models of instruction for shared resource courses for their respective departments. Information will be used to produce College-wide model guidelines for shared resource courses.