

Committee on Curriculum

September 30, 2015

Meeting Minutes

Voting Members present: Reuter, Bujanovic, Cohen, Stavenhagen, Tao, Verostek, Wagner

Guests and others present: C'Dealva-Lenik, Minard, Newman, Rutkowski, Sanford

Unable to attend: Dibble, Donaghy, Kacoroski, Shannon, Wheeler

1. Call to Order and Introduction of New Members. The meeting was called to order at 12:49 pm. Dayton Reuter introduced himself as new Chair of the Committee and each member/guest also made themselves known. The Chair, as yet unfamiliar with the workings of the committee, asked for the support of the experience of other longer-term committee members. He welcomed all to the new year of business.

2. Approval of Minutes from April 30, 2015 meeting. The minutes of the April 30 meeting were approved with one typo to be corrected by Newman before posting to the Committee web site.

3. Announcements

a. Committee Charge. Reuter stated that the Committee is charged with dealing with the rules and regulations of the College as they pertain to curriculum issues.

b. Committee Website. The Committee on Curriculum website (www.esf.edu/coc) is a major resource for Committee members and the College. Curriculum-related policy, as well as updated course and curriculum revision, may be found there. Reuter stated that later on in the year, when numerous course and curricular proposals need to be reviewed, he may assign specific proposals to subgroups of the Committee in order to reduce the workload of each member of the Committee overall.

c. Deadline for Proposed Courses: March 8, 2016. This deadline has been changed from that in the original meeting agenda, due to the need to align the deadline with subsequent Committee on Curriculum and Faculty Governance meetings.

d. Deadline for Proposed Curricula: February 2, 2016. This deadline has been moved forward somewhat in relation to that found in the original meeting agenda in order to align with subsequent Committee and Governance meetings. Tao asked about the relationship of the course deadline to the curriculum deadline, since it seemed more logical to him to have the curriculum deadline follow the course deadline. Various members of the Committee informed him of the need for more time to review the more complex curriculum proposals, as well as the necessity for seeking two-tiered approval (Committee on Curriculum and Faculty Governance), and the need for extra time to have the curriculum revisions added to the College Catalog.

As a follow-on from the course/curriculum deadline dates, Reuter distributed the proposed meeting dates for Spring semester. He asked that if any committee members have problems with specific dates that they contact him. These dates have been scheduled a week or two before Academic Governance meetings in order that Committee work can be presented there.

e. Proposals posted for CoC and faculty review. There were no proposals posted for Committee or faculty review.

f. Proposals submitted for CoC completeness review. There were no proposals under completeness review.

4. Updates from the Dean. There were no updates from the Dean.

5. Old Business.

- a. **xxx*96 generic course descriptions** . There has been no progress on the compiling of generic course descriptions for the *96 classes. Cohen reported that EFB is currently working on an EFB 696 proposal, since the department currently only has EFB 496 and 796 courses in the Catalog.
- b. **Study abroad course.** No current report. For new members, there was a recap stating that currently study abroad is listed as a section of a 496 class so that financial aid can be applied. The thought is to create a generic course (maybe XXX 399?) so that the international coordinator can more easily keep track of “study abroad” students.
- c. **Minor enrollment form.** Because of the Dean’s absence, no progress was reported on the development of the minor enrollment form. It was made clear that the discussion was on the Minor Enrollment Form, and not on the minor enrollment policy change (on acceptance of transfer credits into a minor) which had been discussed and approved last year.
- d. **Guidance document for differentiation between course levels.** Wagner stated that he is trying to develop a white paper on the different types of split courses available. While he has problems envisaging a 4##/6## split when dealing with his own subject matter, he realizes that it is appropriate in some departments and with other subject matter. For him (Wagner) the 3##/5## split is more appropriate. Reuter stated that a 5##-level course in the LA department is seen as an undergraduate course. These classes are the end-points of the 5-year first professional degree program and are 100% subscribed to by undergraduates. Wagner countered that a 5##-level class is actually a graduate class that may be taken by undergraduates, and quoted from the Catalog on this issue. The Registrar pointed out that the picture is not clear, and that each department may approach this matter differently. Sanford asked if the Committee needed to be concerned with this, i.e. can LSA 5## classes be noted as an exception to the general course numbering policy. Should the issue be addressed to the Dean, or should other SUNY schools be examined to see what their policy is? Rutkowski noted that there may be great variation across SUNY schools with regard to this.
- e. **EFB shared resource surveys.** Cohen noted that the shared resource “survey” was actually part of a larger survey carried out in EFB. Regarding shared resource courses, EFB graduate students reported no problems in lectures or labs, but stated that discussion sections were a problem as the discussion inevitably stayed at the undergraduate level.

6. New Business:

- a. **Notice of course changes administratively approved over the Summer.** The classes listed (EFB 483 Mammal Diversity, ERE 430 Engineering Decision Analysis, and LSA 632 Plants and Landscapes) had minor changes approved by the Dean over the summer. Administrative changes are seen as those which are not substantive, such as typos or small changes to an existing course that do not need full review.
- b. **Transfer Credit Petition to the Faculty.** The Registrar explained that her office has been talking about revising this form for the past year or two, as transfer students have had problems using the old, generic petition form for transferring courses. This new form is helpful in gathering information specific to transfers. Dibble (by email) had raised the question of adding the number of credits to the form. Minard stated that this would be confusing since some credits to be transferred may refer to quarter credits, and not semester credits. Similarly, a 4 credit course from another college may be seen as a 3-credit course at ESF. The question of credits to be transferred was deliberately omitted from the form and will be determined by the Registrar on a case-by-case basis, in some cases with consultation from the advisor/instructor. Credits are not awarded until the transcript has arrived. C’Dealva-Lenik pointed out that a mailing address for the transcript should be added to the form. Tao asked about the transfer of AP and similar credits. Reuter suggested that there be a signature line for the faculty member whose course is being substituted. Rutkowski said that most departments do not require the instructor’s

approval. With some exceptions, transfers are generally General Education courses, and may be taught by adjunct or visiting faculty who may be difficult to contact for signature. In FNRM and some other departments the transfer of a 3## or 4## level class is agreed to with input from the instructor, but the instructor has not ever had to sign off on the form. Bujanovic stated that she has on occasion asked for the student to consult with the instructor when seeking approval for the transfer of a class. Reuter indicated that, although the issue may be more clear if the instructor's signature is on the form, it is not a deal breaker. Sanford said that if the advisor is not comfortable with the transfer then there is latitude to obtain the instructor signature. Rutkowski noted that the instructor input is more important when the potential transfer concerns a required undergraduate course. Reuter pointed out that if more space for signatures is needed on the form, some of the comment lines could easily be removed. Tao suggested that more space be provided for the type of elective, to which the Registrar replied that the "Other" line may be used for this purpose. Reuter asked for a motion to approve the form subject to the Registrar making changes suggested by C'Dealva-Lenik and others (inclusion of AP, IB or CLEP tests and addition of address to send transcripts). The motion was proposed and seconded, and the vote was unanimous for approval of the form.

7. Other

C'Dealva-Lenik told the Committee that undergraduate students are somewhat frustrated with the outdated nature of some of the course listings in the Catalog. There is an inactive course policy that requires the Dean of Instruction and Graduate Studies to inform Department Chairs each year of courses that have not been taught within the previous three academic years. Somehow the process is broken and courses are not being dropped from the Catalog. Students are finding this confusing, as they see in the Catalog classes they want to take, only to find that they are no longer offered. Reuter pointed out that sometimes a class becomes inactive because an instructor leaves, and yet the department does not want to drop the class from the catalog as there is a hope that a newly hired faculty member will teach it. C'Dealva-Lenik asked if it were possible to note an "inactive" status in the Catalog for such courses. Rutkowski asked if Newman was authorized to delete courses from the catalog, the response was affirmative, as long as CoC has approved the drops. C'Dealva-Lenik will send Newman a list of "problem" courses, and she will look into the possibility of dropping them from the Catalog. Reuter suggested that a gentle reminder be sent to Department Chairs regarding the issue of courses that potentially should be dropped from the Catalog.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:43 pm.

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday, October 28, at 12:45 in 327 Marshall Hall.

Action items:

- XXX#96 generic course descriptions
- Shannon to continue to work on developing a generic Study Abroad course.
- Shannon to continue to develop a Minor Enrollment Form
- Wagner and colleagues to continue to develop a study of the differentiation between course levels in the context of shared resource courses.
- Registrar to revise Transfer Credit Petition to the Faculty.
- C'Dealva-Lenik to send Newman list of courses with questionable drop status.