

College Curriculum Committee

Minutes: January 19, 2012 – 3:15 – 321 Linton

In attendance: Dunn (AAH), Beretta (L&L), Rauscher (PHL), VanWieren (REL), Grubbs (RCS), Colson (THR), Blythe (WRAC), Pierce (Undergrad Student Rep) Dai (Grad Student Rep), Fisch-Ferguson (Grad Student Rep), Hoppenstand (UCC Rep), Swenson (Assoc Dean), Roraback (Dean's Office), Walker (Dean's Office)
Guest: Arthur Versluis

1. Approval of the Agenda

APPROVED

2. Approval of December 15, 2011 Minutes

APPROVED

3. UCC updates (Hoppenstand)

Hoppenstand reported that all CAL curriculum passed at the UCC.

4. Teacher Education Council updates (Swenson)

The meeting was cancelled because there were no items on the agenda.

5. Curricular requests*

a. REL

Versluis addressed questions regarding changes in the Religious Studies program and course changes. He noted that the program changes resulted from a departmental review of RS curriculum.

Program Change

Religious Studies BA

APPROVED with friendly amendments.

Religious Studies Minor

APPROVED with friendly amendments.

New Course

REL 175 Religion in Film

It was suggested that topical listings in Item 11 remain consistent. Versluis noted that the films shown in this class are typically viewed outside classroom hours. He explained that freshmen and sophomores are the target audience for this class since the department hopes to interest them in the major while they still have time to meet requirements.

APPROVED with friendly amendments.

Change in Course

REL 491 Special Topics in Religious Studies (W)

Versluis noted that this is an existing course that is likely to fill and there is a need to remove a restriction requiring approval from the Department for enrollment. It was suggested that the enrollment number be raised to 25 from 10.

APPROVED with friendly amendments.

6. Review College Cognate Requirement

Swenson referred members to current College policy on cognates and noted the emphasis on departmental approval. She also noted the Provost's current concern about students' time to degree.

Several questions were raised:

Is there sufficient breadth within CAL to allow for cognates within the College? What is relationship to time to degree in terms of cognates? Are departmental policies consistent with the College's language on cognates?

The committee discussed the use and nature of cognates and differences among departments:

Pierce noted that cognates are helpful but vary by student and their degree of care in tailoring them to their interests.

Rauscher noted that Philosophy majors often declare their majors late in the process, so cognates allow a way to group courses that work together.

Blythe noted that he often tries to help students develop one cognate that will help with career preparation and one that emphasizes what the student loves and will enjoy studying. He also noted the importance of foreign language cognates.

Swenson noted that cognates can be useful for broadening or finishing the degree in timely way. Other considerations include credentials and debt to salary ratio. She noted some colleges have certificates, but these are not monitored at the university level; this may change in the near future.

Rauscher asked what concerns there are about cognates, especially in terms of the number of credits for cognates, specializations, minors?

Swenson noted the potential for specializations (CCC guidelines suggest 12-18 credits for specializations) and/or minors (CCC guidelines suggest a minimum of 15 credits for minors) to fulfill the cognate requirement.

Members were asked to speak with advisors to gain their perspectives on how students use cognates, to provide departmental examples of cognates, and to determine whether they are most often used to enrich majors or to reduce the

time to degree by making productive use of credits earned before entering the major. The CCC will revisit this issue when additional data is available.

7. Violating Course Descriptions

The committee reviewed a list of departmental course description violations provided by the UCC. Two types of violations were most common: 1) courses offered at undesignated times and 2) and courses not offered when they are listed as available.

It was noted that some issues may not be resolvable, for example, when the only faculty member who teaches the course is on sabbatical. However, departments need to be aware that students depend on the listing of course offerings to finish their degrees in a timely way. Departments are asked to align their practices with what is on the books.

8. Other Business

Kirk Kidwell will be invited to talk about IAH in an upcoming meeting.

** Curricular requests can be viewed at <https://www.reg.msu.edu/forms/formsmenu.asp> “Academic Programs” and “COURSES.” If you have difficulty accessing any of the information, please contact Theresa Walker (walkerth@msu.edu) to request hard copies.*

Reviewed by Swenson.