

**UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES  
MEETING #13, April 3, 2007**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Brown, Burges, Chesbro, Crawford, Eldridge, Everett, Hurlbut, Itin, Moore, Powell, Van Duzer (chair)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Kornreich, Sonntag

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Annie Bolick-Floss, YES & Service Learning; Sally Botzler, PS; Mary Kay, Library; Margaret Lang, Environmental Resource Engineering; Judy Little, Assessment Coordinator; Steve Smith, NRS; Harry Wells, AHSS

**I. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Kristen Kelly, the new UCC AS representative serving as proxy for the Legislative VP, was introduced.
- B. The chair reminded the committee members that the UCC will be meeting during finals week, at the regularly scheduled meeting day/time.
- C. The chair added a second agenda item titled "GE Rigor Survey to agenda item IV.

**II. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)**

In formal session, M/Brown, S/Powell to approve the minutes of Meeting #10, 2/13/07 with the following corrections. Under Item III. 2<sup>nd</sup> page, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence, change to read ". . . is for interdisciplinary programs to have a structural, university-wide "home" emphasizing the importance of maintaining course offerings across the colleges, . . .". Under Item IV.C. page 3, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, change "Ms. Eldridge" to "Ms. Everett". The motion passed with one abstention.

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Service Learning Experiential Education Annual Report**

In informal session, Ms. Annie Bolick-Floss, Service Learning Coordinator, distributed the handout entitled "Service Learning/Experiential Education, 2006-2007". She noted that the SLEE Advisory Committee has been working on the Service Learning strategic plan and it is now complete. They have developed action items and goals and are now examining the HSU Service Learning philosophy and mission, as well as faculty involvement and support for service learning and student involvement. She noted the SLEE has had on-going discussion about their committee name, and will be recommending it be changed to the Service Learning/Community Engagement Advisory Committee.

Ms. Bolick-Floss said, informally, that her office applies, and has received, annually the \$48,000 grant available from the Chancellor's Office. She said they have been selected as one of six campuses in the CSU to be highlighted in a DVD portraying service learning in the system. She explained that she worked with Professors Beth Eschenbach and Tasha Souza and partners in the community on this piece. The DVD as well as the Strategic Plan will be unveiled on 5/2, from 4:00 - 6:00 in the Kate Buchanan Room at which time Service Learning faculty and students will be honored and community partners will be introduced.

In addition, Ms. Bolick-Floss said that through a large grant received by California Campus Compact, four California campuses were selected to be regional hub campuses. These were HSU, Fresno, UCLA and UCSD, adding the we have been very involved with Campus Compact and have engaged with them in the development of their strategic plan, together with the Office of Community Service Learning and the Chancellor's Office. One major focus in this effort is "Youth to College", which is a program aimed at encouraging students in grades 6 - 12 to understand that college is within their grasp. She explained that through the combined efforts of the HSU Talent Search Office and the Student Academic Services Outreach Program work has begun with four community colleges and students have come to HSU from all over the county, as well as from the Manilla Community Center, Youth Serve Americorp, and fourteen different

schools in the Eureka City School District. This partnering is being supported by ten HSU tutors. Ms. Bolick-Floss said they are also required to partner and mentor and support three other institutions of higher education. We are working with College of the Redwoods, Shasta Community College and Sacramento State, making presentations and providing faculty support and training. This grant is for \$50,000.

Continuing informally, Ms. Bolick-Floss said that we have also been invited to participate in the National Campus Compact celebration, noting that HSU was one of 200 campuses identified on the President's Honor Roll for Community Service. She emphasized that this honor was due to our campuses' many efforts to support aid to Hurricane Katrina victims.

In other informal discussion, Ms. Bolick-Floss pointed out that they are always attempting to be strategic in selecting faculty members for the HSU Service Learning Fellows program from a broad cross-section of departments across the colleges. Some discussion followed regarding the problems encountered in discussions with the Academic Senate several years ago about the use of the "S" designator in Banner for SL courses.

Informally, the chair thanked Ms. Bolick-Floss for her very informative annual update.

(The agenda was taken up in the following order to accommodate the "time certain" items)

#### **IV. BRIEF DISCUSSION**

##### **B. GE Rigor Survey**

Informally the chair stated that he would send the web link containing the survey data results to all faculty participating in the GE rigor survey, and to the broader campus community. He suggested that UCC members contact him if they have questions. He added that he hopes to capitalize on this experience by generating a conversation around general education. Mr. Van Duzer noted that he has been asked to analyze the data to identify the ten percent of courses in each area with the lowest rigor score, which he plans to have conversations with the deans and associate deans, offering assistance for making improvement. He explained that some courses consistently ranked in the bottom 10% regardless of the instructor teaching the course suggesting a potential weakness in the curriculum rather than in the teaching of the courses. And some courses with the same instructor were ranked in the bottom thirty. Mr. Eldridge said that he appreciated the Executive Summary and was impressed with the design of the website. Mr. Powell asked how the UCC will use these results and whether the UCC is expected to make a statement. The chair responded that the way to understand this data is to consider it "on average." He said it is critical that we think about this data as a way in which students are perceiving their GE experience. Mr. Van Duzer stated that he would very much like to run this survey again in a more targeted way, adding that the present data will be useful as baseline data. Mr. Powell added that among his courses being surveyed he found that his students were seriously deluded about the grades they were going to receive, suggesting that perhaps further investigation might include examining students' overall perceptions of grading in GE courses. Ms. Brown pointed out that in CNRS, many of the courses surveyed served as both GE and majors courses. Mr. Van Duzer explained that he did an analysis of majors courses versus non-majors courses and there was not a significant difference with respect to rigor. Ms. Brown expressed concern that in the GE calculus class that she teaches which was surveyed, none of students were taking the class for GE credit. She stated that it seemed problematic to measure some of the science courses in which students initially learn rote, but in later courses learn in greater depth. Mr. Van Duzer stated that several factors are examined to determine whether a course is rigorous enough, such as readings assigned, types of assignments given, level of writing required to do well in a course, and amount of workload.

#### **III. NEW BUSINESS (continued)**

##### **B. Engineering Dept. Proposal: Completion of ERE Major as a Means to Satisfy GE Area E**

In informal session, Ms. Margaret Lang, chair of the Environmental Resources Engineering Department, provided some background for this proposal. She noted that there has been a push in the CSU to reduce

majors to 120 units recognizing, acknowledging that some professionally accredited programs may not be able to meet this limit. She said that her department examined their program in light of other similar programs in the CSU and they realized they had the highest number of units at 140. She explained this proposal before the UCC is one attempt to reduce the number of units ERE majors must complete. She added that the number of units required for most professionally accredited programs in the CSU is between 128 and 132. The ERE Advisory Committee has suggested that they attempt to reduce the required units from 140 to 130. She explained that they have already reduced the required number by seven units by consolidating courses and by moving one upper division course from a required course to an elective. Ms. Lang said through this proposal they are mimicking what some other CSU Engineering majors have already had approved - that is permission to allow students in their major to gain Area E credit through completion of the major. Mr. Van Duzer stated that he would prefer to receive an explicit mapping of the way in which students' satisfy the Area E learning outcomes as they progress through their major requirements. Ms. Lang said that most of the Area E learning outcomes are addressed in the Engr 215 course, which examines ways in which groups of people work together to achieve an objective. She noted that the students are required to work in learning teams, to self evaluate and address conflict resolution through their roles on the team. They also address time management in this course, she explained, as well as communication issues and career management. She explained that in Engr 492, the capstone design course, similar topics are addressed. She explained that students currently enrolled in Engr 492 are working with the Yurok tribe on a climate/energy project in the Klamath Basin.

Mr. Eldridge said, informally, that what is most germane to this proposal can be found in its last paragraph, and he added that this appears to be a very cogent proposal. In response to his query as to whether the Engineering majors already get a "by" on some other graduation requirements due to the fact that they are in a high unit major, Mr. Smith replied that there is a provision in the CSU for which the Engineering major has qualified whereby ERE majors are permitted to double count their Institutions courses for Area D credit and receive credit for Area A critical thinking and upper and lower division Area B by virtue of completing the major. Ms. Hurlbut noted that many Child Development majors on other CSU campuses are not required to complete an Area E course, adding that this larger issue is something the UCC may want to issue at a later date. She expressed concern that transfer students may have articulated transfer coursework for Engr 215, to which Ms. Lang replied that very few Engineering majors are able to substitute for the 215 course. In response to Mr. Itin's query, Ms. Lang stated that the Engineering faculty would rather not attempt to gain Area E approval for Engr 215 as they very much favor the way the current topics work to introduce very important issues. The faculty also have a concern, she explained, that if they had to do a complete alignment with the Area E learning outcomes they might displace some of the material so very important for their majors. Ms. Brown pointed out that the Area E requirement at HSU is geared toward Junior and Senior level students but the Engineering course proposed as better aligned with Area E learning outcomes is lower division. Mr. Wells said that he would like for the UCC to take a serious look at what we are going to do with the Area E requirement here at HSU. He expressed concern that this requirement is becoming watered down, adding that he does not see this proposal as serving a distinct purpose for Area E. He pointed out that if we approve this proposal for this high unit major, then any major should be able to approach the UCC with similar proposals. Mr. Van Duzer said that in his capacity as the UCC Area E subcommittee convener he just this morning met with several of the chairs of departments offering Area E courses as well as instructors who teach these courses. He noted that there was considerable consensus regarding the purpose of this requirement.

In response to Mr. Powell's query Ms. Lang stated, informally, that the Engineering Department faculty felt that the reduction in the number of required units for their majors will make their program more attractive to students, especially since the reductions, thus far, have included a minimum amount of content change. Ms. Everett reminded the UCC members that they had a discussion regarding the importance of the Area E requirement only last year and decided it would be important to understand what was being considered with respect to Area E at the Chancellor's Office level before the campus proposed any local change. She stated that if we do have an opportunity to look at Area E we should look at how the goals may be learned over

time. Mr. Smith emphasized that this proposal suggests exactly this, that through an integrative approach, over time, students are achieving the Area E learning outcomes. He suggested that this may be a far better approach for some disciplines. Mr. Van Duzer said at today's meeting with the Area E department representatives the more common themes for these courses included health and well being relative to cultural and social pressure. He added that these courses had a more inward looking quality about them, noting that he interprets this to be a more implicit quality of Area E courses. Ms. Brown stated that it appears that in the ERE major a large majority of the Area E learning outcomes are addressed through a series of courses, with the majors beginning the self analysis piece very early on in their academic experience. She noted that because topics in the capstone design course may change there is no guarantee students will always address these necessary cultural aspects. Ms. Burges pointed out that there is a lot of variation between the current Area E courses. She explained that some Area E courses have a greater emphasis on the introspective aspect than others, adding that FOR 400 takes more of a systems approach. She stated that what we need to determine with this proposal is whether the students are getting the necessary learning required and whether this can be demonstrated. She said that if outcomes measures are constructed appropriately then any Area E course assessment results should reveal whether students are achieving the outcomes. She emphasized the importance of taking more of an outcomes-based view as opposed to a course specific point of view.

Informally, the following members volunteered to serve on a subcommittee to more carefully examine the Engineering Department proposal: Mr. Van Duzer, Mr. Powell, Ms. Burges, Ms. Moore, Ms. Hurlbut and Ms. Brown.

#### IV. BRIEF DISCUSSION (cont'd)

##### A. UCC Role in GE Oversight - tabled

Meeting adjourned.