

## **UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES MEETING #14, April 17, 2007**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Brown, Eldridge, Everett, Kelly (proxy for Chesbro), Hurlbut, Kornreich, Moore, Powell, VanDuzer (chair)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Burges, Chesbro, Grazul, Itin, Sonntag,

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Sally Botzler, PS; Mary Kay, Library; Margaret Lang, ERE; Judith Little, Assessment Coordinator; Steve Smith, NRS; Harry Wells, AHSS

### **I. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. The chair announced the removal of Item IIIA. from the agenda at the request of the Associate Dean of CNRS, who notified the Vice Provost's office that his college had not had opportunity to review this interdisciplinary proposal.
- B. Mr. Kornreich added Item IV.B. to the agenda: International Baccalaureate Program discussion.
- C. Ms. Anderson announced that the minutes for Meeting #11 will not be available at this meeting, as originally planned.
- D. The chair noted that given the present campus climate and the time of year, he has asked the Provost to delay discussion of the courses with low GE rigor survey results. He proposed that the faculty teaching these courses engage in the mid semester evaluation process in the fall in order to look more carefully at those areas where the survey reflects a problem, especially where the faculty are not in agreement with the results. The chair explained there are approximately 30 - 40 courses involved. Ms. Botzler noted that these evaluations are very worthwhile and provide important information. She suggested inviting Diane Johnson to the UCC in the fall to discuss how this process works. She suggested that the UCC may want to consider requesting additional funding from the Provost in the fall for this additional effort, and also consider inviting graduate students to assist, noting that this provides an excellent learning experience for the students. The chair stated that he would like to use the data as a departure point for better align the future discussions regarding the survey results, to which Ms. Botzler suggested this could add a research component to this effort and a rich source of additional information. The chair said that if the faculty vote to pass the scholarship of teaching as another resource in the RTP process, then this type of effort could be quite applicable.
- E. The chair said that he is wrestling with the question of how the UCC can play a greater role in GE without interfering with the processes presently in place. He has discussed with the Vice Provost's office the possibility of reporting new GE proposals or substantive proposed changes to GE through regular updates by that office to the UCC. The chair said that this will be a future UCC agenda item.

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

Minutes of Meeting #11, 2/27/07 : postponed until next meeting.

### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Newly Proposed Interdisciplinary Minor: History & Philosophy of Science (removed from this agenda.)
- B. Proposal from WASC Theme 1 Action Team and WAC Advisory Committee to Expand the WAC Faculty Associate Position to Include Communication Across the Curriculum (CAC)

In informal session, the chair explained that this proposal recommends that the WAC program at HSU be expanded to include both written and oral communication adding that it makes sense to do this if this expansion will encourage greater faculty involvement in the program. He also expressed concern that the WAC program does not seem to be as strong as it could be, emphasizing that his concerns are more a matter of scope than effectiveness. He proposed that the entire program might be reviewed in light of cost benefit factors. Mr. Smith pointed out that there are now several generations of faculty who have attended various WAC workshops during the past three or four years, adding that it would be unwise to consider elimination given the worth that it proven to so many faculty over the years.

Several UCC members stated that if we do approve extending the scope of the program to include oral communication, then they strongly support the continued emphasis on the writing component as the more significant and prominent piece. Ms. Little said that since effective oral and written communication skill has recently been established as one of the university-wide learning outcomes, this proposal now becomes more salient. She added that the UCC may want to consider adding visual communication, i.e. technologically based learning, to the mix. Mr. Powell and Ms. Everett agreed that it is important that we not lose sight of the emphasis on writing when attempting to accomplish this additional piece with too few resources. Ms. Everett emphasized the importance of clarifying our expectations for the next WAC Coordinator. Mr. Eldridge also agreed that it will be important to adhere to the original intention of program and not dilute the writing component. He suggested that the UCC not support anything where there is an unclear commitment of adequate resources. He added that for this program to succeed there must be widespread buy-in from all the faculty and that to achieve the goals of the WAC program the UCC, as an extreme measure, may need to support a second required semester of writing.

Continuing informally, Ms. Botzler stated that last year as the Faculty Development Coordinator she participated fully in the WAC program offerings and gained a great deal from the experience. She said that the second year program seemed considerably abbreviated from the first year program, when Carol Holder was brought to campus as a Special Consultant to introduce the campus to WAC. Ms. Botzler explained that Vice Provost Burges is working closely with all of the faculty associates reporting to her office in order to more effectively support faculty development opportunities. Ms. Botzler noted that when thinking about writing across the curriculum and today's proposal to broaden the program to include oral communication, we are actually talking about a process that is inherently integrated; adding that while she does not want to see the writing portion diluted, oral communication is very pivotal in a student's education. Ms. Little pointed out the importance of constructing assessment activities relative to students' writing and oral communication experiences at HSU. Mr. Powell stated that the rubrics provided by Carol Holder and further developed through the work of the first HSU WAC Coordinator, Peggy Kass, will tie in very nicely with future assessment plans. Ms. Little suggested that the next WAC coordinator follow the example set this year by Ms. Hurlbut, the Distance Education Coordinator, to include preparation of an outline of actions and activities that can be accomplished given the present level of University support. Mr. Botzler stated that the challenge for the UCC is in determining its role and purview relative to this program, noting that we should avoid viewing programs such as this in a piecemeal way, but instead attempt to assess our established student outcomes in a more holistic manner, in terms of our approach.

Informally, Ms. Brown stated another way of viewing the importance of maintaining the WAC program involves examining how departments are establishing learning outcomes for their majors, especially in light of how these outcomes relate to the recently established University outcomes. She noted that the Math Department, in their recent program review, included competence in written and oral communication as an outcome. In order to achieve these outcomes the Math department will need assistance from programs like WAC, Ms. Brown pointed out. Ms. Hurlbut asked the committee to consider how it would evaluate whether this program is achieving its goals - and the even bigger question as to how the university as a whole can determine that these efforts such as Distance Education and WAC are achieving the broader goals. There was discussion about the need for outside funding to support both of these efforts. Ms. Hurlbut said the only mechanism for seeking funding for these types of activities is through research grants. Mr. Powell suggested that those who are responsible for overseeing outside funding efforts should be invited to a future UCC meeting to better understand what is needed and why. He suggested that the UCC consider developing statements of what we are striving to accomplish and what we are unable to do in the present budget climate in order to develop a model research project. Mr. Crawford said that his biggest concern is that opportunities such a WAC program arise for political reasons and now may not be the right time for this type of added emphasis. He suggested that the UCC, before agreeing to this proposal, consider assessing what is presently occurring in the departments with respect to oral communication efforts, noting that in his department they are well aligned to meet the University's oral communication outcome because they

have a Scientific Technical Writing course. He noted that while there may be a need for this added emphasis in the WAC program, it is not a demonstrated need.

Continuing informally, there was general agreement that this proposal be returned to the WAC Advisory Committee for further consideration in light of today's discussion. Mr. Eldridge suggested that we could endorse this proposal in principle, and then request that the revised WAC proposal include the following as initial assignments for the next WAC coordinator: (1) gather information to discern whether there is a demonstrated need for the added oral communication piece, (2) develop a cost benefit analysis, (3) prepare an effective plan in order for the WAC program to achieve greater effectiveness across campus. The chair said that he would develop a list of items from today's discussion and share this list with the UCC prior to forwarding it to the WAC Advisory Committee. This item was tabled and referred back to subcommittee.

### C. DCG Subcommittee Report

Informally, Mr. Eldridge said that the subcommittee has continued what was begun last year as an informal program review. Ms. Anderson explained that this effort was originally termed a progress report of the DCG program, rather than a program review. Mr. Eldridge explained that the subcommittee has surveyed DCG courses offered this past Fall which were either not previously surveyed by the subcommittee when this effort was begun in Fall 05 or which were previously surveyed now are taught by a different instructor. Mr. Eldridge said that of the 43 courses surveyed they received responses from 31 faculty, adding that the subcommittee has yet to collate the results of the surveys with the results gathered last year. However, according to Mr. Eldridge the subcommittee determined that well over three quarters of the DCG courses surveyed either adequately or exceptionally articulate with the DCG goals and the syllabi express well how the course design will accomplish these goals. He said he plans to contact the individual instructors of those courses in which improvement is needed. Mr. Crawford pointed out that this mid-term review is an attempt to get the pulse of what is happening with the DCG courses, but the effort really had no teeth. Consequently their approach was to treat the faculty volunteering the data very respectfully, avoiding a chastising situation. In response to the chair's concern about the few faculty who failed to respond to the subcommittee's request for information, Mr. Eldridge said that they may send out a blanket reminder to chairs of departments offering DCG courses reminding them of the required course content and the need for the itemizing statements on the courses syllabi.

Continuing informally, Mr. Eldridge said that the subcommittee will hear a proposal next week from the Registrar, Hillary Dashiell, regarding DCG articulation with community colleges. He said that OEM has been eager for this to occur for quite awhile, with additional pressure coming from College of the Redwoods (CR). He explained that CR does not have a list of courses for HSU to consider as satisfying the DCG requirement. The Registrar will be presenting to the subcommittee ways in which they we can reach some form of agreement with CR. Mr. Eldridge said that the subcommittee is also discussing ways in which they can improve the composition of the DCG subcommittee. The chair proposed they look into developing a relationship with DPAC (Diversity Plan Action Council).

In formal session, M/Powell, S/Everett to accept the report of the Diversity and Common Ground Subcommittee. The motion passed unanimously.

The agenda was taken up in the following way to accommodate the "time certain" item.

## IV. OLD BUSINESS

### A. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Report on Engineering Dept. Proposal: Completion of ERE Major as a Means to Satisfy GE Area E

The chair stated that, given the content of the proposal, the subcommittee could not support the request. He outlined two significant problems: (1) the proposal was unclear as to where the overall Area E goals have been met in the course outlines, noting that Area E usually addresses internal view rather than external view, i.e. environment, culture, psychology, physiology and their affect on the individual. He said the subcommittee had some concern about the degree to which the major promotes this type of introspection in the analysis of self. He pointed out that in the subcommittee's written response they have recommended ways in which this might be

expressed in another proposal. (2) The only Area E standard expressed in this proposal is that students will be reflective with respect to an experience. He added, too, the subcommittee's concern that HSU Area E courses are required at the upper division but this proposal sites that many of the Area E goals are accomplished through a lower division course. Ms. Hurlbut expressed concern that HSU accepts Area E transfer courses at the lower division, asking how can we view this proposal as unacceptable.

Continuing informally, Ms. Brown noted that the chair of ERE, Ms. Lang, provided some verbal explanation at the last UCC meeting that would be useful to incorporate in a second proposal.

In formal session, M/Eldridge, S/Powell to accept the recommendation of the subcommittee and forward it to the ERE Department chair. The motion passed unanimously.

Informally, Ms. Lang said it is her understanding from today's discussion that the UCC is open to seeing a matrix that reflects how the Area E outcomes are being addressed in the individual courses, adding that in the next proposal, one will be provided.

#### C. Institutions Annual Assessment Report

In informal session, Ms. Everett supported the final recommendation contained in the report which suggested that the UCC develop a template for both mid-year and final subcommittee reports.

In formal session, M/Hurlbut, S/Brown to accept the annual Institutions assessment subcommittee report. The motion passed with one abstention.

#### D. GE Pilot Report

In informal session, Ms. Everett, subcommittee convener, stated that the task of the subcommittee this year was to approve four GE Pilot courses for Fall 2007, and to set up the processes for advertising, receiving and selecting proposals, and for accomplishing the administrative work for publishing the courses in the printed catalog and the class schedule. She said while the subcommittee was disappointed to have experienced a cut to their original budget from \$24,00 to \$18,000 they were hopeful three courses would be approved. She explained that, unfortunately, only two courses were proposed which met the criteria. Subcommittee members will be working with the faculty to insure the interdisciplinary GE characteristics of the courses and that the principles of Writing Across the Curriculum are also a component. Ms. Everett said they will also be establishing assessment processes for these courses. Ms. Everett explained that there are several meetings and workshops planned this summer with the faculty teaching the pilot courses.

Continuing informally, Ms. Everett explained that originally they had arranged for two researchers, one quantitative and one qualitative to participate in these efforts. Unfortunately, the budget proposed by the selected researchers was three times higher than was available for this purpose. At this point, she noted, they are back to square one on the assessment piece, but consider this a matter of urgency to resolve soon. She explained that another problem they have encountered is the low enrollment in thee courses linked to the critical thinking course. She has assurance from Mr. Rees Hughes that once the summer HOP students register enrollments will increase drastically.

In formal session, M/Crawford, S/Brown to approve the annual report of the GE Pilot Subcommittee. The motion passed unanimously.

#### B. International Baccalaureate Program

Mr. Kornreich said, informally, that the Senate Educational Policies Committee is still looking at ways to articulate the high school International Baccalaureate program credits at HSU. He said they have developed a resolution and he distributed a packet which included a variety of IB programs. He also provided the website for more readable materials. He said he also has IB exams for Areas A - D, and for Philosophy if UCC members care to review them. Mr. Kornreich noted that one example of how

rigorous these exams are is that the very lowest level Math exam covers number theory, graph theory, linear algebra and calculus. He said that an IB class is more than an exam students take upon completing a class, but is an exam that is also externally accredited. He explained that there are two midterms as well as a final exam in each IB class, adding that there are also learning outcomes in each course syllabus, as well as assessment procedures. Mr. Kornreich added that after the Educational Policies Committee received the learning outcomes it was easy to determine which IB syllabus matched up with each of the GE Area outcomes. He said they will forward the syllabi and outcomes to the departments so they too can determine if any of the outcomes articulate. He noted that a student coming to Humboldt completing the IB program will come in with about 18 GE units plus any units which might articulate with their major, emphasizing that the Senate determined we would articulate with high level and standard level classes only. In response to Ms. Everett's query Mr. Kornreich replied he will inquire as to whether there was consideration given to the fact that HSU requires that students complete one extra unit of lab work in the Sciences. The chair recommended that the UCC could agree that the work done by the Educational Policies Committee has merit and could also be presented to the college curriculum committee's with GE oversight for consultation at that level and to the departments for major course articulation. There was no motion at this time.

#### V. BRIEF DISCUSSION

UCC Role in General Education: no discussion

Meeting adjourned.