

Minutes of the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee, 12/11/01

Members present: Phelan (chair), Boquet, Hannafey, Schlichting, Rosivach, Simon, A. Hill, McSweeney, Rakowitz, Snyder (Dean)

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11/13/01 were approved unanimously.

New Business

CL 399

Rosivach explained that there was time pressure because two students would like to do the course in the Spring. Boquet asked whether it was a course or an independent study. Rosivach explained that it would be run as a tutorial, with topic choices somewhat constrained by resources here. Boquet moved and Simon seconded approval of the course. The course was approved unanimously.

Late submissions of new course proposals

Rosivach raised a question about meeting in late January to deal with courses being offered next Fall. He said the Registrar's office was not able to give him a final deadline for such courses, but it would probably be in late January or early February. The committee agreed to meet on January 29th and notify our colleagues now that new course proposals need to be received by the chair by 1/21 in order to be considered for the Fall. The chair will send out a memo to this effect, also reminding faculty that the Dean is reluctant to give one-time course approval, and that department discussions should be robust rather than perfunctory.

Review of College's recommendations for New Course Proposal Form

Boquet and Hill summarized the proposed changes from the college as adding an item about diversity, adding a course format option of "other", and moving one of the items under the chair's section of the form to the proposer's section of the form.

Boquet raised concerns about the diversity question because it implies pressure from the committee to submit courses for diversity. Rosivach felt that the diversity question implied a misunderstanding of the difference between the UCC and the A&SCC. Phelan asked for the purpose of the question. Rakowitz suggested that the question would signal to the committee that a relevant course was not going to be submitted for diversity, so that the committee could recommend such submission to the proposer. Boquet indicated that guidelines approved by the UCC already say that the approval letter sent by the chair of the A&SCC should, when appropriate, suggest diversity submission. This current structure, unlike the proposed addition, avoids implying that all courses should be considering diversity, and/or that diversity considerations might affect a course's overall prospects for approval.

Boquet moved that the A&SCC recommends against the addition of the question "Will the course be submitted to the US or World Diversity Committee" Schlichting seconded. Rosivach moved an amendment that if the College faculty still feel strongly about the issue, they should amend the document rather than sending it back to the committee. Simon seconded the amendment. The amendment passed unanimously as did the original motion.

On the question of moving 11b to 6b, Simon suggested that the proposer would have the best perspective on that issue. Rosivach felt that the chair would have a broader, and therefore, more relevant perspective. Boquet suggested that the chair would often look to the proposer to answer that question. Rosivach suggested that the original placement was not arbitrary, but that it could be

changed. Schlichting argued that the faculty member, rather than the chair, would be responsible for obtaining a letter from the director of the interdisciplinary program. Boquet suggested that a more relevant question for the chair was whether the department could spare the faculty member for interdisciplinary teaching. Hill moved to change question 11b to 7b (changing 11a to 11). McSweeney seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Rosivach moved that “please check all that apply” be added to the course format question. Rakowitz seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Rosivach moved to add “other (explain)” to the course format section. Hill seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The newly amended form will be sent back to the College with the recommendation that it not be sent back to us.

Report from subcommittee on Process for Course Approvals

Boquet summarized subcommittee’s recommendations. First of all, the chair of the A&SCC needs to send a memo with deadlines at the beginning of each semester, keeping in mind that the process would work more effectively with a year’s worth of advance planning. She also suggested the importance of trying to get the registrar to loosen up the time frame for scheduling in order to avoid such long lead times. Dean’s approval would be used sparingly and in the context of departmental review of the course. Phelan asked whether the emergency circumstances for Dean’s approval would be specified. Rosivach suggested that leeway was needed for unforeseen situations, though an example of an acceptable reason (i.e., new faculty) was provided in the subcommittee’s recommendations. He pointed out that the memo discussed above for the January meeting is the first step toward these changes.

Hill suggested that most faculty assume Dean’s approval is for “test drives”. We could direct the faculty of the new policy or direct the Dean of these guidelines. She said that based on her experiences as chair of the A&SCC, most courses that came to the committee for approval had been taught previously. Rosivach pointed out the “test drives” were never a formal policy. McSweeney suggested referring to Dean’s approval as “one-time Dean’s approval”. Schlichting suggested adding “unusual” to the extreme cases clause of Dean’s approval so that faculty won’t seek it simply because of their own poor planning. Boquet suggested that the word is already starting to get out that the Dean is reluctant to grant Dean’s approval. With our memo about the January meeting and a supporting memo from the Dean, faculty might get the point. Hannafey suggested that the chairs could also be targeted for education on this score. Snyder said he could address this issue at the monthly chairs’ meeting. Phelan suggested including the subcommittee’s recommendations in the memo about the January meeting. Hill agreed that that would be a good idea. Rosivach argued that we emphasize the importance of departmental review. Snyder reported that some submissions for Dean’s approval are quite incompletely thought out, and these changes would deal with that problem as well.

Phelan will try to send out the memo including the first 4 points on the guidelines (with the insertion of “one-time” and “unusual”) by the end of this week. Hill raised concerns about the adequacy of departmental review, and suggested quoting the Rationale and Procedure document point 3 regarding departmental review.

Rosivach moved that we direct the chair to do all of the above. Hill seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Simon suggested that the same material be covered at the next College meeting.

Changes in Philosophy Department course titles and descriptions

There was some discussion over whether approval was required, or whether we were being notified of the changes. Rosivach moved to thank the department for notifying us. McSweeney seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Communication courses

Concerns were raised about the insufficiency of the department minutes. The chair will request further information.

Old Business

IS/AS 327

Minutes of American Studies were received by the chair, so the cross-listing is approved.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Rakowitz