

Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee  
September 16, 2003  
3:30 PM, Cns 100  
(Amended and Approved 9/30/03)

The meeting was brought to order at 3:35 by chair Robert Epstein (English). Also present were James Simon (English), Susan Rakowitz (Psychology), Laura McSweeney (Math), Jesús Escobar (Visual and Performing Arts), Cecilia Bucki (History), Lynne Porter (Visual and Performing Arts), Lisa Newton (Philosophy), Kurt Schlichting (Sociology), and Timothy Snyder, Dean of the College.

Absent: Ed Dew (Politics) and David McFadden (History)

1-3. The first item of business was the appointment of a secretary for the meeting. Falling next in alphabetical order, Lisa Newton was appointed. Next came the election of a new chair. Failing in this endeavor, the Committee turned to the next item, the approval of the minutes of April 8, which was speedily concluded.

4. Dean Snyder offered two sets of Remarks:

1. The attempt by Jack Beal and the Engineering School to gain “Dean’s One-Time Approval” for PS 222 reminds us all that there is no such approval any more. Jack Beal and Vagos Hadjimichael were so advised by the Dean and this Committee. It might be a good idea in future, when we make such decisions, to notify the other deans.
2. State approval of the individualized major. For reasons that no one in the room could recall, the State of Connecticut has to approve all majors in the University. The curriculum committees a few years ago approved the “individualized” major, the course of study designed by a student with the help and advice (and approval) of at least two faculty members. The purpose was to provide a course of study in depth for students whose interests fell between or outside existing majors. Now: whose responsibility is it to get state approval? Traditionally, the application to the State for a major has been completed by the faculty “champions” of the major; in this case, the champion was Vincent Rosivach. He’s on sabbatical, but has agreed to come back, next Monday, to fill out the first half of the form. (The AVP’s office fills out the second half, relating to floor space etc.) Susan Rakowitz has volunteered to help. It is clearly not this Committee’s responsibility. Jim Simon suggested that we ask the AVP’s office what the turnaround time is for the state; we want this done before present students graduate. Let’s bring this back as an agenda item in February.

By this time we had decided that Laura McSweeney would take over as chair first semester, and Cecilia would chair second semester.

Kurt Schlichting noted that at our next meeting, September 30, we will be reviewing a raft of new courses. The hard part of such review is gathering the detailed criticisms needed to help the faculty member submitting the course (and the sponsoring

Department) figure out what the Committee found wrong with the course, so that it might be improved. Needless to say, this is most important when the course is rejected. It might be a good idea to appoint several minutes-takers for the next meeting, assigning one to each course. That idea was approved.

5. Cecilia Bucki's new course (HI 257), a condensation and streamlining of two previous courses (HI 258 and HI 259), was next on the agenda. Kurt Schlichting moved, Laura McSweeney seconded, that the course be approved. After brief discussion the course was approved unanimously. Since the predecessor courses enjoyed US Diversity, Women's Studies, and Black Studies endorsement, HI 257 will also.

At this point, Lisa Newton raised a question on the designation of a course (specifically EV 150, Earth Environment) a course in physical geography, as a science core course. She was told that this is the work of the UCC.

Continuing agenda items:

1. Continuing oversight of courses counted toward interdisciplinary programs  
There was some discussion of cross-listing. Should we insist that an old course accepted for cross-listing by another department or program be reviewed? Or should we just ask that any department or program planning to add a new course to their list from another department notify the committee sometime before the catalog comes out? Probably the latter. (Why are we worrying about this? Just a matter of oversight, due diligence, making sure that departments and programs are doing their homework.)

2. What about awarding teaching credit for "mentoring" students? Answer: this question ought to be taken up by the FTFTE committee (Phil Lane's committee on Full Time Faculty Teaching Equity)

3. What is the status of the Legal Studies Program? Right now it is not in the catalog, and no new students will be enrolled. The students presently enrolled will be provided with the courses they need to graduate. There are differing accounts on the advisability and consequences of allowing the LS Program to engage in limited fundraising on their own. Kurt Schlichting suggested that it was a cockamamie idea to allow such fundraising anyway, and that the unwillingness of the director to continue the Program, stripped of its administrative assistant and part-time teacher, amounted to an announcement that "I'll take my crayons and go home" if I don't get what I want. Dean Snyder remarked that there are many demands for new faculty positions. The Long Range Plan addresses this need, but he expressed concern that two new targeted chairs---in Catholic Studies---are accompanied by yet-another program. He has nothing against Catholic Studies or a Program in Catholic Studies. But he has held back continued program creation in the interest of gaining appropriate support for our current programs, almost all of which receive weak levels of support. Right now we need faculty lines in almost all our departments. Legal Studies grew beyond its available resources, then expected support to follow on. Given the realities of tenure, we cannot move personnel from one department or program to another. This means that all-new resources would be required for Legal Studies. Demanding support while canceling a program is holding the College and the students "hostage." We want growth, but we need incremental,

supportable growth through planning, external grants, development initiatives, departmental or other monies, and so on, to maintain an appropriate level of support during a planned growth.

Kurt Schlichting moved, Bob Epstein seconded, that the issue of Legal Studies should be revisited in 2005. The vote was 7 in favor, none opposed, and one abstention.

4. Use and abuse of turbos. Not quite sure what the issue is here, except that faculty who fulfill their teaching obligations with turbos are not on the campus that much, which is bad, and for that reason we have argued in the past that no faculty member should have more than one turbo a semester. It was concluded that this item should be referred to Phil Lane's committee (see FTFTE, above) and struck from the agenda of this committee.

5. Reduction of student course load: This item is before several committees right now, and this committee has no reason to oppose it.

Future agenda: Shall we ask for a rule that students may have an individualized major but not as a second major? Dean Snyder agreed to look up numbers of students who in fact balance curriculum that way.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous acclamation at 4:40 PM.