

Arts & Sciences Curriculum Committee
Meeting of 11/12/13
Minutes Approved at December 10, 2013 meeting

Members in attendance: Dean Robbin Crabtree, Assoc. Dean Manyul Im, Profs. Johanna Garvey, Anita Fernandez, Terry-Ann Jones, John Miecznikowski (chair), Kathy Nantz, Michael Pagano, Doug Peduti, Vincent Rosivach, Glenn Sauer, Chris Staecker.

Approval of Minutes of October 8, 2013 meeting

No corrections or comments were presented from the committee. Prof. Rosivach moved that the minutes be accepted, Prof. Peduti seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair's Report

Prof. Miecznikowski presented his monthly chairs report, which had been emailed to the secretary. The report is as follows:

Chair's Report for ASCC

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

The English department changed the subtitle of ENW 336 to "ENW 336 Issues in Professional Writing: Multimedia Writing." I approved of this change and this course will be offered in the Spring 2014 term.

I permit PS 390, Condensed Matter Physics, to be offered as a Special Topics course for the Spring 2014 term. I recommended to Prof. Das and Prof. Biselli that they complete a new course proposal form for the course and get it approved by the ASCC so that the course can be offered in subsequent terms.

FTM 107 Television Genres: Sitcoms (H) and FTM 106 – Film Genres (H): Disaster and Apocalyptic Films will be offered this Spring term. Both FTM 107 and FTM 106 are shell courses and the specific course titles that will be offered this term are Sitcoms and Disaster and Apocalyptic Films.

I reviewed and approved the Special Topics course, TA 300A, Theatre Administration and Management.

MFA five year program review (invited guest Prof. Michael White)

Prof. White gave an overview of the program review findings. It has been five years since our residency program first began. We've had 8 classes graduating, one every 6 months. It's a low-residency program for 9 days in the summer, 9 days in the winter. The students work one-on-one with a faculty mentor, and this has become a standard format nationally. When our program started there were 25 programs

nationally, now there are about 70. We have 14 faculty teaching in the program, including 2 new hires with a core of 7 or 8 who have been there since the start. We have added a third term project on "socially conscious" topics, also added options in Galway and working on an option in Florence. We have started a post-grad teacher training program run by Prof. C. Gannett, and 4 of our graduates are now adjuncting at Fairfield U. We have the Fairfield book prize, Bellarmine museum poetry prize, students working on our literary journal Mason's Road, and we are publishing an MFA post-grad survival guide. We have started a formal assessment of the students with Prof. A. Perkus, and are about 1 year into this- collecting writing samples from when students enter and when they leave. Any questions?

Prof. Rosivach asked if there were written objectives for the program. The document describes assessment, but not objectives. Prof White agreed- there are objectives but they aren't clearly articulated in the document. Prof Crabtree added that there were learning objectives in the program's original proposal, which could be copied into the present document. Prof. Rosivach emphasized that all programs should have broader objectives, not just short-term learning objectives, and Prof White agreed.

Prof. Nantz asked if the teaching workshop led by Prof Gannett awards a formal certificate. Prof White responded that there is not a formal certificate, which would require state approval, but there is an informal one, which the graduates can reference on their resumes.

Prof Nantz asked about fees and credits awarded for the 5th semester. Prof White responded that some students do the 5th semester because they have fallen behind and need another semester. Those students pay the usual fees and get the usual credits. There is also an optional modified 5th semester with a reduced fee and structured mentoring rather than traditional courses.

Prof Rosivach asked about the programs resources. The document includes projections for the future, but no report on the current use of resources. How has this shaken out over the 5 years? Prof Crabtree replied that the data exists but was not included in this document. The program's total revenue was about \$4 million over the 5 years. This data should be appended to the present document. The revenue has been strong apart from one disappointing residency (5 students vs a target of 15) when competitor programs were starting and our tuition was the highest in the country. But revenues from the teaching seminar and 5th semester made up for this.

Prof Rosivach asked if this revenue stays in the academic division and in the CAS. Dean Crabtree replied that the English department gets a budget augmentation of about \$4-5 thousand. In general there isn't a revenue sharing model at Fairfield U, which is a problem.

Prof Rosivach recalled that part of the original impetus for starting this program was that the revenue would stay in the department and the college, because we didn't

want to dilute the undergrad experience- we would add new (undergrad-focused) faculty lines in English using the revenue. Dean Crabtree replied that there has been a new line added in English, not repurposed from pieces of other lines, but a real new position. Prof Rosivach said that this should set a precedent that if a grad program brings revenue, it should fund new lines in its department. The money should not go to a new lacrosse stadium.

Prof Rosivach moved to endorse the review and send it along to the relevant committees. The motion was seconded by Prof Sauer. Prof Rosivach emphasized again that the document should include additional financial information. The motion passed unanimously.

Changes to American Studies curriculum (invited guest Prof. Peter Bayers)

Prof Bayers introduced the changes. The AS faculty have been through 2 years of self-study and external review which resulted in these changes. We want to move away from the old concentrations model, which is not truly interdisciplinary. We also felt there wasn't enough guidance for the students.

We have kept the final project in our 399 course, and changed the intro course to AS200. To create more rigor, we wanted more required upper division courses. We also like having an entry-level course, so we now have the gateway course for majors. The goal is more interdisciplinarity for the major and minor. Another change is the introduction of a formal internship for the major. Students like this and the university supports programs like this. We've developed very specific criteria for the internship to connect the experience to AS. Any questions?

Dean Crabtree asked about the fact that AS200 (by the way, AS200 needs a better name) is the only course required for all majors. Do the AS majors have a reasonably common experience over their 4 years? The new "themes" are pretty complicated. Has there been discussion about narrowing things? Prof Bayers responded that this has been a major point of conversations, and it is a double-edged sword. We don't want limitations on the students- they should be engaged with trying to assemble courses and themes themselves. Prof. Crabtree commented that it seems one step removed from an individually designed major. Prof Bayers said that it's more than one-step removed- there are specifically mapped out trajectories for the students to follow.

Dean Crabtree asked about the required independent study project. Since there's a small number of students now this is not a big burden on faculty. What if the program grows? Could you have a capstone course model? This would help provide a more common experience for the majors. Prof Bayers said that there are pros and cons to each of these models- there seems to be good community among the students already.

Prof Rosivach asked to what extent the various faculty teaching courses which get AS credit are engaged in the interdisciplinary ideas and AS in general? Prof Bayers

responded that the self-study has been very helpful in this area, with 90% of faculty teaching in the program being involved in the review. We've had pedagogy workshops, and these conversations should continue informally until the next 5 year review.

Prof Miecznikowski asked how this new major compares to AS programs elsewhere. Prof Bayers said that some are more disciplinary-concentrated, but generally the trend is toward interdisciplinarity as reflected in this proposal. Dean Im added that the full self-study document is available if anybody would like to see it.

After Prof Bayers left, Prof Garvey moved to endorse the proposal, and Prof Pagano seconded the motion. Prof Fernandez spoke in favor of the motion, saying that it sounds like a good combination of structure and freedom. The motion passed unanimously.

AS 200 Course Proposal

Prof Garvey moved to approve the proposal, and Prof Peduti seconded. Dean Crabtree reiterated that the course should be renamed, probably omitting the word "introduction". The motion passed unanimously.

AS 350 Course Proposal

Prof Nantz moved to approve the proposal, and Prof Pagano seconded.

Dean Im said that the prerequisite for this course should be listed as AS 200 or AS 201.

Dean Crabtree suggested that the course should be listed as variable credit, allowing 1-3 credits. Students often elect to take fewer credits for several reasons. Prof Miecznikowski asked how many on-site hours are required for 3 credits? Dean Crabtree replied that 10-15 hours per week are typically required for 3 credits.

Prof Pagano said that there should be a syllabus in the proposal. Dean Crabtree agreed- it's not a typical course, but all internship courses have syllabi. Dean Im said that internship courses are not technically required to have syllabi. Prof Sauer added that the typical syllabus information is already present in the document so it should be easy to collect this into a syllabus.

Prof Miecznikowski asked if the required essay of 6-8 pages is a typical length. Dean Crabtree replied that this requirement varies tremendously.

The motion passed unanimously. Prof Miecznikowski said that he will email Prof Bayers about listing the 200 & 201 as prerequisites, allowing variable credit, and creating a syllabus.

Department review of new course proposals from programs

Prof Rosivach said that we are not ready to discuss this yet. There is a document

under preparation, but it should be considered next time.

Physics program requirement changes invited guest Prof Angela Biselli

Prof Biselli introduced the proposed changes. The AP Physics C exam is at or above the level of our 2 semester general physics course. In the very rare case that students score a 4 or 5 on the AP Physics C exam, they should place into our modern physics course. In recent years two high school students who took this exam came to Fairfield U and enrolled in modern physics, and they were the best students in the class. Anyone who does well on this AP exam will be better prepared than our own sophomore students.

Prof Miecznikowski asked about their lab skills, and Prof Biselli replied that the AP Physics C exam includes a lab component which is perhaps more extensive than our own course.

Dean Im asked about the 8 credits that these students would miss. How would these credits be made up? Prof. Biselli replied that they should get 8 credits for free as transfer credits. Dean Crabtree said that AP courses should waive prerequisites but should not be counted as university credits. Prof Biselli replied that this sounds fine. The current proposal is about prerequisites and is not intended to change any existing policy about credits awarded. Prof Miecznikowski suggested that professional guidelines from e.g. the American Physical Society could be consulted on how many physics credits a typical physics major should have before graduation.

General discussion followed about the awarding of university credit for the skipped courses. Eventually all agree that the proposal concerns only a waiver of prerequisites, not an awarding of university credit for the skipped courses.

Dean Crabtree asked if there would be a recruitment advantage in adopting this policy. Prof Biselli replied that there would be- students with a strong physics background will be more likely to show interest in our program if they can skip these courses. Prof Sauer asked how many students per year would do this. Prof Biselli said that since she has been chair, she has seen 0 incoming students with the AP Physics C exam. She believes that we don't see these students at all because they are deterred by our current policy.

Prof Miecznikowski prompted Prof Biselli to discuss the other proposed changes. Prof Biselli said that the goals are to make the physics minor more accessible. Currently we require modern physics, physics lab, plus one other course. But there are only two choices for this other course, and we've received many requests to allow Optics to fill this role. Currently optics has E&M as a prerequisite and we'd like to drop this requirement. The course can be taught without relying on the E&M material, and this will relax some of the rigid sequencing of courses that we've been requiring of our majors and minors.

Prof Sauer asked if the proposed prerequisites for optics would then be only modern

physics, and Prof Biselli agreed that it would.

Prof Nantz asked how many minors and majors we have per year. Prof Biselli replied that these numbers vary. We have about 5-10 minors, usually engineers, and at the moment we have 11 majors in all years, typically we have 2-5 per year.

Prof Rosivach asked about the proposed changes to Physics 399. Prof Biselli replied that the proposal will change the current 392 to a capstone course, and are changing the number to 399. This course has been a capstone informally for years, so this change will reflect the current practice. Prof Rosivach asked if students can take the 399 more than once, and Prof Biselli replied that they can, since the topic will be different every time it runs.

Prof Miecznikowski asked what kind of written requirements will exist for the capstone and independent study. Prof Biselli replied that there are scheduled meetings where the students will present to each other, as well as an end-of-semester presentation open to all students and faculty. There has been some discussion of a written paper, and we will be preparing a formal list of goals and outcomes. Currently we have each faculty member listed as a separate section- eventually we'd like to have a single course listing with several faculty mentors.

Prof Miecznikowski again suggested that professional societies may have guidelines for outcomes of independent study and REU projects in physics, and Prof Biselli said that she would check the literature for these.

After Prof Biselli left, Prof Rosivach suggested that the changes to the 399 and the prerequisites for optics could be handled by the chair as minor things, but that the committee should vote on the AP issue. Prof Rosivach moved that we endorse the AP Physics C exam as an alternative prerequisite for modern physics, with no change to any policies regarding any credits granted by AP exams. Prof Fernandez seconded the motion.

Prof Staecker said that the issue of credits is a bit complicated, but the basic prerequisite change sounds like a no-brainer. Prof Rosivach agrees that this is the basic spirit of the AP exams- placing students into advanced courses. Prof Sauer added that the physics program review will give insight about possible course credit adjustments, and Prof Miecznikowski said that the credit requirements would probably eventually be changed for those who place out of general physics.

The motion was unanimously approved.

After a brief preview by Prof Miecznikowski of the next meeting, Prof Fernandez moved to adjourn, seconded by Prof Pagano. The motion carried unanimously.