

Minutes, Educational Policies Committee: 25 Apr 2013

Members present: Chair: A Gilinsky), C Baker, M Dingle, A Kittelstrom, M Milligan, F Palsson (proxy for C McDade L Lee, J Reeder, and C Works.

Minutes: J Reeder ☺

11:04. Quorum in place. Meeting begins.

One item was added to the agenda: a communication from Mark Merickel, Dean of Extended Education (paper copy distributed to all members).

Minutes of the 11 Apr 2013 meeting were approved.

Further discussion and any action on the discontinuation of the M.S. in Nursing Leadership and Management (concentration) has been tabled.

Chair's report, from A. Gilinsky:

There has been some discussion on a potential reduction in the number of majors, perhaps to around 35. There is also continued work toward modifying the SETE forms so that they're fully available in electronic format.

Report from E. Sundberg:

She attended the WASC annual meeting. There will be new leadership within the organization which may lead to some change, and at the same time WASC is working on revising its handbook. The CSU has decided to take the approach that all campuses will be meeting (regionally) to work on the five competencies (from WASC). A number of SSU faculty and administrators will be participating in the next regional meeting (tomorrow, 26 Apr 2013), including CW.

Recently (past few days) there has been a very specific push to review and increase 4-year graduation rates among CSU campuses. There may turn out to be some funding behind this. One thing that is being looked at is what can be done to improve graduation rates for GE-ready students that are completing the major. To accomplish this, there is an examination of impacted majors, GE courses, statutory requirements, etc., as well as looking at ways of increasing the average student load from 13 to 15 so that it will be possible to complete requirements. Apparently it will require about \$3.6m just to make the university function viably, and apparently this is also something that the governor's plan examines. It's noteworthy that SSU has the highest 4-year graduation rate in the CSU (excluding Maritime) at 31.2%. The chancellor seems to be behind this also.

From the institution's side, this also implies that there need to be efforts made in scheduling within and between schools to avoid scheduling conflicts. ES said that it's important to be sure that the current students can be taken care of properly before there's an effort to recruit students out-of-state or internationally.

MM: How is the graduation rate defined? ES: It's the percentage of the entering freshman class that graduates within 4 years.

CW: Is there discussion / implications about support staff costs for doing additional courses, such as night courses and the necessary associated costs? ES: Yes, that's precisely what their group has been looking at.

Laura Watt: Presented the proposed revision to Water Resources Management concentration. The background and justification for the change is briefly presented to the committee (and is included in EPC packet for 25 Apr 2013). One interesting feature is that the proposed program will be unique among public universities in California in that it makes available a social sciences focus (since there is the choice between the BS / BA degrees).

CW: If students are 'math-ready', should it be a requirement for them to take pre-calculus? One solution might be to require a 'minimum of pre-calculus' or equivalent (discussion; some revision to the proposal may be needed in this area). CW: Are there ways to work around courses that haven't been offered in a while (e.g., Environmental Toxicology)? LW reported that all of the departments in the sciences were consulted about the list of proposed courses in the "Water Electives..." section, and they were asked to review the list for appropriateness and/or for omissions. ES: pointed out that BIO 130 A/B is currently in the status of "experimental course" but that it will be proposed for permanence soon. Discussion ensued about this point – and the dilemma presented by either presenting a proposal that might reference courses that aren't taught currently or by referencing courses that aren't fully approved. ES pointed out that if courses in the proposal are no longer available (i.e. if BIO 130 A/B is not approved as a permanent course) then the curriculum would have to be modified to reflect that.

Action: none taken. Revisions to the proposal will be made and it will be presented again to EPC in the fall.

John Kornfeld: Brought a draft of the University Studies Curriculum Committee (the rationale for which was presented at the EPC meeting of 11 Apr 2013).

AG: Would this committee have representation on other campus committees? JK: Probably not, this committee would function much like a school curriculum committee; it would interact with the GE subcommittee and with EPC as necessary.

FP: Would this committee then become a link between departments? JK: Yes, when there are elements in common that overlap with the departments. MD: If there is already interaction with the departments/schools, why is a new committee needed?

JK: at the beginning of new initiatives that it's much more important to have regular meetings to work out issues; once things are 'rolling along' it's much less necessary to meet. AG: suggests alternative language for the first bullet point; the suggested revision is "*advise the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies on collaborative curriculum development with the schools*". JK: responded positively; will consider that.

CB: Asks for clarification between “proposing” vs. “vetting” proposals. As stated in the draft, it’s somewhat unclear whether the committee’s role is to propose new courses or to review proposals for new courses. JK: It’s envisioned that it’s much more of the latter. Current curriculum committees don’t propose. JK says he’ll consider removing the term ‘propose’ to clarify that. MD: suggested that there be representation from the schools on the committee. CW: thinks that it’s not necessarily a bad idea that the committee be allowed to ‘propose’ curriculum, so that perhaps it’s OK to leave that term in to allow that committee to become a place from where new courses could arise. JK: will consider ‘propose and review’ as alternative language for the 2nd bullet point.

AK: points out that “what is ‘University Studies’?” is, by itself, a somewhat vague and confusing notion. Is the purpose of creating a new committee to *pro forma* comply with the need to meet a procedural requirement, or is it something else? The question: “is there a way that disciplinarity can be emphasized in a way that ensures that the academic components of the disciplines be respected and maintained?” becomes important in preserving/establishing academic integrity and rigor. JK: The original idea behind Univ. Studies, many years ago, is that it was a place where Student Affairs could create courses and ‘dump’ them through a sort of ‘back door’. Now, there is an effort to make it have a multidisciplinary perspective or approach. JK took one of those courses (238) through the curriculum committees for feedback. Now that course has an academic core, but JK would appreciate oversight to make sure that courses that come through there will have a rigorous and academic-based oversight.

FP: Is it feasible to have at-large representatives instead of specific designees from each school? FP: What exactly is the role of University Studies, and how is it that SSU defines multi-disciplinarity? This should be a discussion and is something that should be defined. JK: agreed. CW: Agrees with FP in that it’s necessary to define the program’s mission. CW: What is “co-curriculum”? What are the issues surrounding the fact that many transition elements and leadership issues are now ‘academic’ courses?

JK: Asks EPC to provide its feedback on whether it’s necessary to have such a committee. CW: Yes, it’s necessary to have faculty oversight, but not necessarily to the extent of having a committee. LL: Given that there are already faculty in the program, maybe it’s unnecessary to have additional representation? JK: notes that a committee might be able to give an ‘outside’ perspective. FP: Suggests an *ad hoc*, or experimental, committee to determine interest and potential scope of the committee. Faculty could be invited from the schools. JK: Thinks that’s a workable idea. FP, AG, and CW volunteer to serve; JK will contact them to work out details.

MD: GE report: ARTS 491 (1 unit lecture series) will count for GE. A&H learning communities addressed oral learning objectives. Also, discussion on the procedure of designating courses for ethnic studies.

LL: APC report: Larry Schlereth talked about the idea for an ‘exhibition garden’ that could be linked to *Prelude* or other areas. This possibility is being discussed with different groups on campus (CRC, ExCom, etc.) to see what might be done in this

area. Connections with corporate sponsors (e.g. Whole Foods) are being investigated.

12:53. Meeting adjourns.