**CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

November 17, 2014

Present: Grimland, McCandless, Miller-Francisco, Oline, V Smith, Ayers, Highland, J Smith, Waters

Guests: Alison Burke, Greg Jones, Erik Palmer, Alena Ruggerio

The meeting began at 8:30 a.m. The minutes from the November 10 meeting were accepted.

Alison Burke from CCJ presented their curricular changes, and provided some context in relation to staffing and faculty resources. In response to a question about CCJ 460 Comparative Criminal Justice), and whether it was taught as a requirement, or offered as an elective. Burke confirmed that it was an elective.

Grimland requested if previous catalog year students will be held to the current requirement of 71 credit hours or if they will reduce to 67 pending this catalog change. Oline asked about teaching out the previous major; Burke confirmed that students on catalog years prior to AY 2015-16 will take 71 credits.

McCandless moved to accept CCJ’s changes; Grimland seconded. No discussion; voted and passed with no abstentions.

**COMM**

Erik Palmer, Greg Jones and Alena Ruggerio joined us for the COMM proposal.

Ruggerio introduced the changes, noting that these help respond to student needs, as well as program capacity. All students need basic digital and media literacy and skills, to which this proposal responds. Currently, two concentrations fall under COMM: Communication Studies (CS) and Film, Television and Convergent Media (FTCM). This proposal splits FTCM into two concentrations: Digital Cinema and Social Media and Public Engagement; few changes were proposed for the CS. Ruggerio noted that part of the motivation, also, was to encourage students from each “side” to draw from the other concentrations in their degree plans.

This proposal will also eliminate several existing prefixes (VP, FLM, JRN, CM), retaining COMM. Approval was enthusiastic. Several courses are being eliminated.

Highland noted that there have been many changes in concentrations in COMM recently and whether this set of changes will “take”. Ruggerio noted that this is due partially to the nature of the discipline to which the program must respond, and due also to changes in staffing.

Palmer noted that the proposal helps serve prospective students’ inquiries about what they should do and what they should major in – more clarity in what kind of student wants to major in COMM versus EMDA. Grimland asked for clarity on relationship with EMDA.

V. Smith expressed support for creating new concentrations and related the current program’s to discussions starting in prioritization; i.e. low-SCH entities such as concentrations were discouraged but this creates two new ones: thus, should we support?

Oline asked Ruggerio to comment on the changes in staffing: were these program reductions? Retirements? Ruggerio explained that in recent years, COMM has lost 2.5 FTE in JRN while gaining Erik Palmer. COMM has also lost faculty in media studies and film person; and the main faculty member in VP will be retiring soon. Others have been lost to administrative positions. Grimland and Oline asked how much of the program changes will depend on 1-year hires? Palmer responds – what we have in-house is a bare minimum (including adjuncts) and any departure will require some commitment to provide faculty resources. The changes proposed here are “headcount-neutral” – and will not require new or additional resources. In addition, COMM’s catalog changes eliminate classes due to declining enrollments and departed faculty members

Grimland asked if data that support the changes with respect to job opportunities and career preparation. Palmer noted that his own experiences on the job market for the types of occupational categories that these courses will serve, as well as his connections in digital, social media, journalism and education reinforce the viability of the proposed changes (reinforces some of these. Waters suggests that the skill set is not only marketable for COMM students, but probably for all students and suggests that COMM consider looking to develop COMM 195 as a University Studies course. J. Smith agreed but reminded that the current 2-credit structure would need to be revised to reach 4 credits. Highland added that COMM might consider working with Jeanne Stallman and others involved with high school/ASC and other outreach activities to help students curate their digital identities. Palmer thanked the committee; says that COMM will run this next term as a pilot – with expanding and considering other hybrid, weekend, etc. formats as options in mind.

Jones noted that another synergy in the BCE division is achieved by COMM adding BA 131 as a requirement – hopefully filling a hole that CS 115 formed – all programs in the division requiring this would be a big benefit. Students tend to be behind in their digital skills and “office” skill literacy. Palmer agreed; students are not really up to where they should be in Excel, PPT, etc. Highland also noted that basic skills are getting missed in some majors as they are not utilized. John Stevenson might be able to open up for students to learn some of these marketable skills.

Oline asked COMM to clarify what answers a parent might receive if asking what jobs their COMM students will get. Skill sets are relevant to all types of jobs/careers; technologies have provoked emerging categories of job – “online community manager” or “content strategist” or others. Managing social media presence at various levels of organizations is a new problem and many of these not being met by higher education in general.

COMM was invited to consider several matters prior to approval of this set of changes (and will likely need to return):

a. Course title changes:

COMM 201 title change needs to reflect the actual course. Is it appropriate to change from Media Across Cultures to Media Literacy without changing catalog description or bringing a new course proposal forward? Waters observed that the course has evolved and the description, at least, should change, if not a new course proposal.

FLM 290 course change: Smith is hesitant as the change from FLM 295 to 290 happened recently and will be confusing for students.

COMM 460B: Waters asked that the new course title be reconsidered as the new title reflects a different content area. Is this really what was intended?

b. Upper division electives:

Oline observed that there is a significant difference between requirements listed for CS and the two new concentrations; it’s possible that in the two new concentration, a student could take very few 300 and 400 level classes to achieve the degree. Disproportionate amount of 300 and 400 level coursework between CS and the other. Will these students be able to make their BS and BA requirements? Palmer concurred that there is a paucity of 400 level courses in the production but that a wave of 400 level is in development. Highland suggested adding copy to require that a certain minimum number of 300 or 400 level courses be required.

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 with the proposal that COMM be invited back to address these questions.