**Curriculum Committee**

Wednesday, November 1, 2017

**Present:** Andrew Gay, Emily Miller-Francisco, John Sollinger, Laura Jessup, Anna Oliveri, Vincent Smith; Karen Adams, MaryAnn Neely, Donny Nickelson, Lee Ayers.

**Guests**: Sherry Ettlich

The meeting began at 9:00am.

The minutes from the October 25th meeting were accepted with one small change regarding how often the new Philosophy class is expected to be offered.

**COMPUTER SCIENCE and MATHEMATICS**

Sherry Ettlich discussed the proposed changes in Computer Science and Mathematics. She said the Computer Science changes are largely to clean up prerequisites, including a couple small changes to keep wording consistent across CS courses. The changes also address some confusion about what electives would count toward the major. She clarified that the GPA requirement has to do with credits applied toward the CS degree, not all courses with a CS prefix. The goal is to avoid problems with people who have GPA issues but don’t realize it until they get to the capstone. Regarding the addition of a note about the e-Commerce certificate, she said that she recently found out about that certificate and it seems like something good for Computer Science students to know about. Another change added phrasing to clarify what degrees can be combined.

Smith asked how this language about combining majors and minors came to be. Ettlich said the program looked for areas of overlap. Smith said the Committee had a conversation around that issue last week, and he wondered if we might want to consider replicating something like what Computer Science has proposed. Ettlich said that with the Statistics minor there is more overlap than she would normally would be comfortable with, but she allows it because it helps on resume for graduates to show a minor in Statistics.

Adams noted that the Applied Statistics minor was sharing 5 major courses with the Mathematics major. Ettlich said she talked with Matt Stillman about this and it’s the one exception. Students really need to be able to show math and statistics. Adams raised the question of if a student is completing this area of study as well as the major, does it really exist as a new area of study. Ettlich said she looks for the overlap being under 50% usually, and this example is one course off. Neely said there’s no explicit policy, but maybe 50% would be worth considering taking up by Academic Policies Committee. Ettlich said she thinks the Statistics minor should be the exception rather than the norm.

Neely mentioned that it’s possible to double or triple major and have concentrations, etc., but the student has to get two degrees. Ettlich said the program can clarify the issue and remove “or triple” in (4) under choosing a major section.

Nickelson asked if there was any reason Applied Statistics is not a certificate. Ettlich said that it is not as robust as she thinks a certificate should be. She uses the total credits required as the way of judging. Smith said he thinks they should be fundamentally different things, not just different based on credits required. Ettlich mentioned that a student can come back after graduating and get a certificate, but that is not the case with a minor. Applied Statistics has a mathematics core, and the program encourages students to take the statistics course in their focus area. Smith said that pre-retrenchment the concept was like that with certificates, and noted that some universities are going toward badges; we’re having a conversation that sounds somewhat similar.

Smith said a minor suggests emphasis in another field; by contrast, a concentration is within the field of one’s major. Ettlich said this example is more geared towards setting up a career portfolio. The goal was to do what was most helpful for the students.

Ayers asked if something more applied could be added to up the ante and make it more like a certificate.

(The recorder was called out of the room. According to Committee, the only substantial item decided during this time was to add “and PSY 225L” next to PSY 225 in the listing of lower-division applied statistics courses in the Applied Statistics minor. This addition clarifies that PSY 225 has a co-requisite, so students know ahead of time.)

Smith said he doesn’t see any problem in the curricular changes as submitted, but would like clarification from Academic Policies Committee regarding the language on overlapping majors and minors before giving final approval. Ettlich asked if this would risk not adding the proposed changes to the 18-19 catalog. She said that the clarification was requested by Enrollment Services, and all that was done was to codify existing practice. Gay agreed with Smith that Curriculum Committee would need input from the Academic Policies Committee before approving the overlap language; this is not a curricular change but a catalog language addition.

Smith said that this is not the only situation that will raise this issue, and it will have to be addressed in other programs. We may have to grandfather in other programs who’ve made this decision already.

Ettlich said there is some benefit for packaging courses with a particular label to show students useful packages of classes; it’s sort of an invisible advising tool that works well.

Gay asked if there were any further questions regarding the proposed changes.

Adams mentioned the possibility of adding language regarding prerequisite grades. Students can register before grades roll, so there’s a possibility of registering for a class, then getting dropped because of a grade in a prereq that is lower than the minimum. Ettlich said that might suggest that the language doesn’t already mean that. Isn’t that always the case with prerequisites. Adams said the C- minimum requirement for prerequisites should be included in each description if it is needed. Ettlich said in that case we should add for every MTH and CS course that each prerequisite has to be passed with a C- or better except for those that are set at B. The ones that require a B or better help make sure people will succeed in the course.

Ayers said there might be a danger of grade inflation. Smith said there are some programs where Ds are more accomplished than others. Ettlich said STEM is not known for grade inflation. STEM does frequently enforce the C- minimum on prerequisites.

Gay suggested that someone could make a motion that we will table catalog language pertaining to the overlapping majors/minors issue from any program until we get a ruling from Academic Policies Committee. Smith suggested crafting the motion in such a way that the language is conditionally approved pending that ruling.

Smith/Miller-Francisco moved to approve the proposed changes in Computer Science and Mathematics with several qualifications:

* the proposed catalog language regarding major/minor overlap for both programs is conditionally approved pending an Academic Policies Committee ruling
* “and PSY 225L” will be added next to PSY 225 in the Applied Statistics Minor lower-division course listing to make clear that PSY 225 has PSY 225L as a co-requisite
* All Computer Science and Math Courses will require a minimum of C- for all prerequisites, with the exception of those courses for which a minimum of B is required.

The motion passed, 6Y/0N/0A.

Ettlich encouraged the Committee to make sure to take into account how things will show up on a student’s resume; we should make sure we’re titling things in a way that will serve students well. Smith said that the distinctions between minors, concentrations, certificates, and etc. are important, and need to be applied generally, not just piece by piece. Ettlich said that one way to codify these distinctions would be to put them in the curriculum change manual.

Ayers said it might help to invite Academic Policies Committee to one of our meetings to see what we’re coming up against.

The meeting adjourned at 9:42am.