**Curriculum Committee**

Monday, January 29, 2018

**Present:** Andrew Gay, Vincent Smith, John Sollinger, Emily Miller-Francisco; Jody Waters, Lee Ayers, MaryAnn Neely.

The meeting began at 9:00am.

The minutes from the January 22nd meeting were accepted.

**UPDATE ON USEM COURSES APPROVED AT THE JANUARY 22ND MEETING**

Miller-Francisco discussed an issue that has arisen relating to curriculum that was approved at the January 22nd meeting. HSE 186, part of the new HSE 185-7 series, looks like a class the library has been talking about for a while, and looks like a library class, even using standards that the library developed in the description. She tried to check in with her colleagues in the library before the meeting, but was not able to do so in the limited time. She did speak with one colleague, who thought it would not be an issue, but this turned out not to be the case. Miller-Francisco said that in hindsight, she likely should have asked for the proposed courses to be tabled. Ayers said she had reached out to Dale Vidmar when the series was being developed and he said the library was no longer considering such a course for lower division, just looking at doing something similar as an upper division course. After the January 22nd meeting she heard that this is not the case.

Gay expressed his desire to make sure Committee members feel there’s no undue pressure to approve things; we can absolutely table things if you feel uncomfortable. Miller-Francisco said she is not sure the issue is really with the curricular part of it, more about the politics and who’s going to teach the course. Ayers said conversations are underway with the library and she hopes that University Seminar will bring the series back in mid to late February for further consideration. In the meantime, these courses will not be sent to Faculty Senate.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND POLICY**

Vincent Smith discussed the proposed changes in Environmental Science and Policy. Regarding the proposed new course ES 215, he said the program has been offering a couple courses in GIS, but at a higher, more specialized level. They have been hoping to offer a course like this but didn’t have the faculty until now. It’s a lower level GIS course taught for any major who wants to take it. Currently, we don’t have capacity in the labs for all the students likely to be interested, so this is a course developed for online. The program hopes to offer it immediately, and expects that it will likely be very popular. They are also hoping to propose it for University Studies, Strand G. Smith added that students in the ES major could take this as an elective if they wanted the basics of GIS without the coding side that is part of the other GIS courses.

Waters said that there is an issue with approving a course in January to be offered that summer. She said that a less problematic approach would be to offer it as a special studies course this summer, as a 199. Smith asked if students would still get G Strand credits for it. Ayers said yes, assuming it gets approved by the University Studies Committee, the 199 version would allow students to get G Strand credits even before it enters the catalog as a hard-numbered course. Waters noted that the course at the moment is attached to one faculty member and asked if there is any intention to have someone else be able to offer it. Smith said there are several people who could teach the course, but those people don’t necessarily have the time to do so at the moment. Waters asked if it is already being considered as a summer course. Smith said yes.

Regarding the proposed new Restoration Ecology course, ES 483, Smith said that it had been taught many times over the recent years as a soft number course, then the faculty member who regularly taught it left. In assessing students, the program has noticed that they seem to have a lack in this area, which this course should help address. Sollinger asked if it has a 3 hour lab. Smith said yes. He said it pulls out data that’s currently being talked about a little bit in a class taught by John Roden. The course engages with the concepts of restoration ecology and also goes deeper into the actual practice of restoration ecology. It’s been a long time coming, but the program previously didn’t have the resources to hard number it.

Smith discussed the proposed modification to ES 105, which was a geography course that was taken in by Environmental Science and Policy once geography went away. When the instructor went to teach it, the instructor said it looked like the description was outdated and also seemed to fit a course that was part of a group of geography courses rather than what it is now, so the modifications update the description to more accurately reflect the content and context of the course.

Regarding other substantial changes in the program, Smith said Environmental Science and Policy majors are currently required to take climatology, which was primarily taught by Greg Jones. Now the program has to scramble to find adjuncts to teach it, so the proposed changes expand the options to allow students to fulfill the requirement with courses on climate change and meteorology, which will better fit the program’s resources.

Gay asked about the apparent change in credit hours. Smith said that the program is not really jacking up the required credits, just breaking it out differently to make it easier for the students to understand. He said one other change was to un-list the individual capstone courses. They’re not being removed from the catalog, just removed from the section to discourage students who aren’t studying abroad from thinking they can take the individual option. Really, it’s only meant for students who are studying abroad and therefore cannot take the regular capstone.

Smith said that the ES minor requirements were missing CH 101, but had ES 104 listed. The program doesn’t actually teach ES 104. Gay asked if ES 104 should still be in the catalog. Smith said that as long as Chemistry still teaches the 101 there should be no problem getting rid of ES 104. Neely asked if there would be any transfer ramifications around the suspension of ES 104. Smith said no, we basically created ES 104 out of thin air. Sollinger asked if CH 201 would count for this requirement. Smith said yes. Gay said it sounds like suspension makes sense. Smith agreed.

Neely mentioned the catalog language around the upper division 28 credit additional requirements for the ES major. She said it looks like the first two options (a and b) can be combined. Smith said that in retrenchment the program had to get rid of concentrations, so part of this issue comes from that change. He agreed that the first two options can be combined.

M-F/Sollinger moved to accept the proposed changes in Environmental Science and Policy with the following changes:

* Suspend ES 104
* Modify catalog language in the ES major to combine “a)” and “b)” under “Upper Division Additional Requirements (28 credits).”

The motion passed, 4Y/0N/0A.

**LOWER TO UPPER DIVISION PETITIONS**

Waters told the Committee that she and Highland had the first of what are likely to be several discussions with programs around petitions for lower division courses to fulfill upper division requirements. In some cases we were getting requests to articulate 100 level community college classes with 300 level courses. The bigger issue is that we get too many requests for lower division classes to count for upper division credits.

Gay pointed out that the Committee has been having a conversation about course numbers and there are conversations around articulation as well. He asked what role the Committee has in defining policy around this, and whether there is danger of causing problems for the people doing work around HB 2998. Waters said the HB 2998 work doesn’t really touch on this issue, and it would be good for the Committee to have this discussion. Gay mentioned his work with Adams in finding the California State, Northridge example of course levels and said having something like that would provide good guidance. Smith said that it might result in vast renumbering around campus. Ayers said there are different interpretations around how different levels should be defined, so finding the definition that best fits SOU will be important. Having the conversation and encouraging programs to look at their offerings to see if they should renumber would be worthwhile. Many programs have done that since the second retrenchment, so maybe it’s a good time now to send around the language and ask what would change for different programs. Neely added that the discussion would help with articulation as well.

Smith said he likes the idea of providing more clarity and consistency. He sometimes has to explain to students who don’t take certain courses because of the number that in some cases the numbering is somewhat arbitrary. On the other hand, some students learn differently, so a 400 level course may feel easier to someone who learns better a certain way. Gay said it’s important to address this issue of legibility for students; they need to understand what they’re signing up for.

The meeting adjourned at 10:14am.