WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE GENERAL EDUCATION
Minutes of 23 February 2015

Members Present: Tracy DeMars, Sharie Falan, Bruce Ferrin, John Geiser, Willem Homan, David Reinhold, Jacinda Swanson
Members Absent: Raja Aravamuthan, Mustafa Mirzeler, Kathryn Wagner
Liaisons Present: Kevin Knutson, Sharon Van Dyken
Staff: Sue Brodasky, Suzanne Davenport

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by Chair John Geiser.

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Acceptance of the Agenda
The agenda was accepted as presented.

Approval of 9 February Minutes
A motion was made by Ferrin, supported by DeMars, to approve the minutes of 9 February 2015. Motion carried.

Chair's Comments – John Geiser
Geiser's comments included:
- All curriculum changes have to be done by the end of March.
- The Undergraduate Studies Council offered support and encouragement for development of the rubrics. The rubrics will be sent to the Faculty Senate Executive Board.
- Undergraduate Studies Council approved using 5000 level courses for Baccalaureate writing as this would change the General Education policy, it will be sent to the Senate for approval.
- The request from Knutson regarding the catalog exceptions was dismissed by USC due to software limitations. Geiser, Knutson, and the Registrar will meet to further discuss this.
- The course caps for Psychology courses PSY4526 (40), PSY4574 (20), and PSY4595 (30) were received and were as expected, thus approving those courses.
- The Department of Comparative Religion course consideration for [CAS14-139] REL 3015 has been removed by the faculty member.

ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

Review of curriculum proposals
1. [LHC15-12] HNRS 3204 Technology in the Fine Arts – new course; request approval in Area I: Fine Arts; previously taught under HNRS 2900 Honors Seminar

Several items were noted as missing from the syllabus. It was questioned why this course, as presented, was not being considered as Area VII instead of Area I. It was questioned if the course is intended for Area I how is it experiential in nature.

A motion was made by Ferrin, seconded by Falan, to table this item and for the Chair to solicit additional details that were noted as missing. Motion carried.

2. [LHC15-11] HNRS 3203 Introduction to Game Design – new course; requests approval in Area II: Humanities; previously taught under HNRS 2900 Honors Seminar

Concerns were expressed about four games being designed within the course timeline. The required reflection on society is missing. It was questioned if this is computer game design based on the instructor's forte; however there was no mention of technology. It appears to be better suited for Proficiency 4c than for Area II.

A motion was made by DeMars, and seconded by Falan, to table this item and for the chair to request a complete syllabus and additional details. Motion carried.

3. [CAS 15-32] GEOS 2020 Egypt – Civilization and Geology – change title to Civilization and Geology; change description; offer optional field trip for three additional credits; retain in Area IV: Other Cultures and Civilizations

This course is already offered as Area IV and they are asking to retain that status. It was questioned if the course includes western civilizations, while it was clear that it does cover the global perspective. Since the syllabus included was from the course before the implied changes it focuses on Egypt so it is assumed they have not taught the course including other civilizations and no syllabus exists for the new course. The assignments were questioned. The course appears heavy on geology study but light on culture study. With the removal of the trip to Egypt and the substituted optional field trip it was questioned if that removes it from Area IV. Discussion was held regarding using a different course number for the optional field trip.

A motion was made by Ferrin, and seconded by Falan, to table this item and for the chair to solicit additional details. Motion carried.

4. [CAS 15-37] COM 2400 Introduction to Media and Telecommunications – enrollment restrictions; request approval in

Area VII: Natural Science and Technology: Applications and Implications

This course was originally approved in Area VII but then it was removed for a year and now the department is bringing it back. It was noted that the reinstatement of the course after a year being off the books will require advisors having to make exceptions. Concerns were expressed that this course as presented does not meet criteria for Area VII, however the syllabus presented was from when the course had been offered before.

A motion was made by Ferrin, and seconded by Homan, to table this item and for the chair to solicit additional details. Motion carried.

5. [CAS 15-86] CHEM 1900 Chemistry in Society – change title to Chemistry of Climate Change; change description; request approval for Area VII: Natural Sciences and Technology: Applications and Implications

    It was noted that the syllabus was not included. It was questioned that the reply to item number eight only addresses proficiencies.

    A motion was made by DeMars, and seconded by Ferrin, to table this item and for the Chair to solicit additional details. Motion carried.

Development of Rubrics

Discussion was held regarding administrative criteria. It was noted that if the committee agrees upon course caps they can be applied to all the rubrics. Questions were raised about on-line course caps, noting that they are always set at 25, and whether or not they need to have separate criteria. It was cautioned that the committee need not craft a policy that cover all possible instances but rather put a policy in place that allows for the committee to consider exceptions as they apply. It was suggested that student to faculty ratio be used rather than course caps. The current WMU student to faculty ratio is 19:1. It was suggested that the committee look at current enrollment for General Education courses.

ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting is scheduled for March 23. The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m. by Chair John Geiser.

Sue Brodasky, Faculty Senate Administrator