Westfield State University

Curriculum Committee Minutes for Thursday, March 6, 2014

Members in Attendance: Brian Jennings, Joe Camilleri, Christine Irujo, Steven Mailloux, Aaron O. Reyes, Andrew Bonacci, John Ohotnick, Carsten Braun, Tarin Weiss, Liam Harte, Sinuk Kang, Tom Raffensperger, Heather Brown, Jennifer DiGrazia, Megan Kennedy, Susanne Chuku, Max Saito, Hugo Viera

Guest(s): Robert Bristow, Tim LeDoux

(3:47) Meeting is brought to order. Liam teases us with mentioning his attendance at the SCUP meeting he told CC about at our last meeting, and he says he will fill us in with detail at the end of the meeting. Megan asks is there was anything meaningful that came out of the meeting…Liam mulls that over for a second and says ‘No’, though he will give us the larger picture after we get to some CARs.

(3:49) CC looks over the minutes…no corrections are noted (no corrections two weeks in a row, I’m going to start getting cocky). A motion to approve is made and seconded. The motion passes with a vote of FOR 15, AGAINST 0, ABSTAIN 0.

(3:51) Liam asks Joe if there is anything for the Ad-Hoc committee to report, Joe says there is not anything to report at this time, but we should have something soon.

(3:52) CC welcomes guests Robert Bristow and Tim LeDoux from the Department of Geography and Regional Planning.

(3:53) CC revisits CAR 13-13R. Tim LeDoux explains the rationale behind the CAR. John asks for clarification as to whether the portal version of the CAR is the one we are looking at, and the consensus is yes. CC then enters the late 20th century at uses the power of the World Wide Web to confirm. Liam asks what will we do without wax tablets and sylus’…probably put them in the same box with abuscus’, slide-rules, and what not.

(3:55) Aaron notes that some of the language in the CAR is wrong. Rob Bristow notes that addressing the problems with the language would be an edit of something they are seeking to edit, so there is no issue really. As listed on the CAR the Criminal Justice course (listed as CRJU XXXX GIS Applications in Crime Analysis) should be listed as CRJU 0359 Geographic Information Systems Applications in Crime Analysis. Liam focuses us on what he calls perrequisites John says he’d call them prerequisites….perrequisites, prerequisites…let’s call the whole thing off. Megan asks how the minor of the CAR will work for all of the various majors it will likely draw from, in terms of prerequisites. John, Andy, Megan, and CC guests discuss how non-GARP majors can navigate the GIS minor. All parties are satisfied with the resolution of questions.

(3:59) Liam asks about the reference to a particular faculty member in the Bulletin language. Brian asks if altering that language would be considered an editorial edit (is that a phrase?), and is fine.

(4:03) A motion to approve as amended is made and seconded. The amendments to the CAR are that CRJU XXXX GIS Applications in Crime Analysis is changed to CRJU 0359 Geographic Information Systems Applications in Crime Analysis, and prerequisite is changed is prerequisite (and briefly there is a discussion of percoset). The motion is approved by a vote of FOR 17, AGAINST 0, ABSTAIN 0.

(4:04) CC takes up CAR 13-57. Rob Bristow explains the rationale behind the CAR. Andy asks about any 4-credit non-lab courses. Rob says they have none, but they are open to the idea. A motion to approve is made and seconded. The motion is carried by a vote of FOR 17, AGAINST 0, ABSTAIN 0.
CC takes up CAR 14-12. GARP and Political Science were evidently expecting a tussle, since they came in numbers. (Anyone else picturing West Side Story? When you’re in GARP you’re in GARP all the way…) John asks about documenting official support from all departments related to the support courses of the minor. He says that in line with precedent CC should have written support from all departments whose courses are included in the minor. Liam notes that the Philosophy Department is concerned about student numbers related to PHIL 0102 Introduction to Ethics course that is required for the minor. Liam asks John about his thoughts on reserving seats in a course for students fulfilling a minor. John responds that the database doesn’t care if a student is a minor or a major. Liam notes that they (databases) cannot care about anything. John has a wounded look on his face and says that it cares about what he wants it to. John then explains a bit about how the coding in the database works (feels). John expressing deep reservations about approving a minor without the consent of all departments involved. Specifically he recalls issues about placing demands on some departments that have service courses for the Nursing program, without notifying those departments.

Steven Mailloux notes that as a political science major he’s almost finished with the minor without even trying. He then notes that there is something odd about a GARP minor that doesn’t require any GARP courses. Rob Bristow explains that the goals is to force students to take courses outside their major department. Megan Kennedy asks if there was any thought about requiring coursework from at least 2 departments, and Rob notes language that does exactly that. Steve asks if we want to expand the language “All majors are required…” to “All majors and minors…” John notes that we have no policy about double dipping courses for minors, essentially for minors the sky is the limit. John wants to keep CC hands off of academic minor policy and let departments decide limits on double dipping.

Joe asks about the note in the proposed language about additional prerequisites, specifically he is wondering about “Some additional prerequisites may be necessary” line. Rob notes that this refers to prerequisites for listed courses that count toward the minor. Susanne asks for such courses to be noted with an asterisk, that even though the e-catalog helps us see what courses have prerequisites, it is still nice to have the asterisk. John applauds her noting that the e-catalog can help, but that the asterisk makes sense. We look at an example in the Business minor and everyone agrees it is a good thing. John calls it a down and dirty way of helping advising.

Tarin asks about the Physical Science course that is included and Rob notes that Frank Giuliano signed off. FOR 15, AGAINST 0, ABSTAIN 0.

Joe asks for some explanation of how courses were chosen, as they relate to the link between policy and ethics. Rob explains the process and how chairs of related departments were consulted about the selection process.

Aaron notes the prerequisites shouldn’t be an issue due to the large number of courses.

Andy asks if philosophy asked not to include their course. Rob says that they did not make such a request.

John reiterates philosophy asked not to include their course. Rob says that they did not make such a request.

John reiterates that he would like to see written support from departments concerning demand on courses, as well as with regards to credentialing issues. John then talks about the value tearing down silo walls in the traditional academic structure of a university. Liam wonders if the silos we have at WSU have grain in them or missiles. John notes that for philosophy it is definitely missiles.

Steve notes that the criminal justice courses might be inaccessible for non-CJ majors trying to complete the minor, due to major restrictions and overall demand for CJ courses from CJ majors.

Tarin asks if departments have issues about covering major courses with adjuncts is covering minor courses any different. John says it isn’t, but notes that some departments have made it a policy to not hire adjuncts.

Rob offers to get the departmental support that some members are requesting, and then bring that to CC at a later date.

Joe asks for brief (1 sentence) explanations from departments as to how their courses fit into the minor.
A move to table until the departmental support is documented is made and carried by a vote of FOR 16, AGAINST 1, ABSTAIN 0.

General frustration over differences of opinion from many corners (figurative corners, since we’re seated in an approximately elliptical shape) are aired.

(4:39) Jenn asks about the purview of CC, and in particular why we have issue with passing the previous CAR. Liam explains that it is due to the philosophy course being required, and there being no documentation of the support of the philosophy department, and only because of that. John disagrees, and Liam explains that questions of staffing isn’t a relevant factor in CC decisions, that CC decisions are restricted to academic value and composition of the program is.

John explains how he sees the enrollment/staffing issue as being relevant to CC’s work, in addition to the pedagogical and curricular issues.

Liam then explains that he views the work of this committee as about what is logically possible and logically valuable, not about what is practically possible, that is an administrative decision.

More passionate (not in a romantic sense) discussion ensues…

Jenn asks where the line is in distinguishing between the theoretical and the practical when CC makes decisions.

Tarin notes that considering the year that WSU has had we’ll make the headline story of MassLive if we pass a minor in Policy and Ethics.

(4:48) Liam requests that we skip the rest of the CARs on the agenda and discuss the SCUP conference. He tells us that there were three items on the agenda of the conference relevant to CC. The first item is that CC should formally withdraw their rejection of the ROCCC report, to which Liam told the conference that this is not possible since the rejection of the ROCCC report was voted on and passed last year. The second item was that CC should do what the ad-hoc committee has been doing for the last ~18 months. Liam said that this was one for the ‘DA’ list. The third item didn’t understand. He understood each of the individual words in the item, but not how they work when written together. Liam did not share with us exactly what the item was, but given his description I would guess it was something like “Orange Universe Leaks Curricular Anger Beautiful Nonsense Dove” or “Culvert of Action Intuits Slippery Concrete Staffing Issues”. This is like a new form of poetry. After Liam explained how he didn’t understand what the third item meant, it was removed from the agenda. Liam also noted that a member of SCUP told him that CC would report to SCUP, or it wouldn’t be given any resources. He then had a “Stallone” moment where he said that CC will never report to SCUP. What entities CC reports to are spelled out in The Contract, and SCUP is not in that list.

Andy gives a little background to the idea behind the meeting, and also how the meeting went from his perspective. He noted that the plan on how to run the meeting, and what was to be discussed wasn’t well thought out, it was a bit rushed. Tom concurs.

John explains how as a SCUP member (a SCUPPER, SCUPPITE, SCUPMAN/SCUPWOMAN…) he sees the idea behind the work of SCUP as a way to better organize university work, and to better allocate resources.

Andy weighs in with his feelings that the goal and philosophy behind SCUP is to respond to the NEASC report criticism that we, as an institution, have shown a lack of ability to be good at planning.

Discussion of the nature of CC’s work as it relates to the larger work and priorities of the university continues. Many members contribute to the discussion.

(5:20) Meeting adjourns.
And Here it is, your moment of zen:

Is This for Real?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BbNilm3FXU

Why is the guy videoing his TV?