Westfield State University

Curriculum Committee Minutes from Tuesday, November 5, 2013

Members in Attendance: Eric Bressler, Brian Jennings, Carsten Braun, Aaron Reyes, Marsha Marotta, Heather Brown, Liam Harte, Tarin Weiss, Steven Mailloux, Hugo Viera, Susanne Chuku,

Guest(s): Gabriel Aquino (He's been to more meetings this semester than many members...seriously.)

People who think they know everything are a great annoyance to those of us who do.

- Isaac Asimov

Let's address some CARs.

(3:59) Meeting is brought to order without quorum. (Making this a meeting a scrimmage rather than an official one? Practice makes perfect.) Liam starts the discussion of CAR 13-44, which was previously tabled. Discussion of the previous discussion on the course description is discussed.

It's not clear that even the people that were there last time have any recollection of the previous discussion.

Aaron Reyes and Eric Bressler weigh in.

(4:03) Course inclusion in the core is discussed. The Diversity portion is addressed first.

The committee sits in silence....our heart just isn't in it today.

No issues are brought up.

(4:06) The inclusion in the Social Understanding portion of the core is now discussed, as is the correct spelling of the work 'mulatto' in English.

Aaron Reyes asks a question about how the course will satisfy the individual differences requirement on the core inclusion form. Gabe Aquino responds, answering the question to Aaron's satisfaction. Gabe then discusses the ambiguity of the questions on the Core Course Inclusion forms.

Steve Mailloux brings up double dipping status of some core courses, and whether this should be allowed. Gabe responds that such issues should best be addressed in APC rather than CC, since it is a policy rather than curriculum issue.

The possibility of updating the forms is discussed, since they have been dated as circa 1995.

Susanne asks if the Ad Hoc Committee's work will influence the forms. Eric responds that perhaps it will, but not anytime soon given where the work of the committee currently is.

Aaron and Gabe continue the conversation about the usefulness of the forms.
Liam (as chair) adds that since we are simply a recommending body to AUC, meaning that we cannot make any policy, no matter what decisions CC makes. However, we do have some CC policies regarding double (or more) dipping in the Core.

Brian brings up that precedent for double dipping exists, many courses do, and some very new courses have been approved to do so.

Liam brings up that perhaps the committee should take up its’ own discussion of our policies.

(4:20) Gabe recommends that clarification of the type of information that CC wants in the Core Course Inclusion forms, since some faculty find it difficult to understand how to fill out the forms.

Eric brings up his ideas concerning the roles of the forms, namely his interpretation is that courses should adhere strictly to the details in the forms. Gabe asks about how such a policy was (or would have been) decided, where is is laid out in detail, how is it supervised?

Liam addresses Gabe's questions by discussing the philosophy (it is his thing) of the Core, and how it is structured.

(4:26) Marsha brings up that she agrees with Eric's interpretation of the information on the inclusion forms. Her policy when dealing with students is to not allow core credit for a class unless it has been approved by governance.

(4:29) Eric supports his position with specific questions from the forms before us. Gabe responds. Liam and Marsha bring up that the important thing is that the forms tie future sections to specific requirements, even though that impinges on academic freedom.

(4:35) Aaron asks who, amongst the tenured faculty, pulls out the core course forms each time they teach a core course to make sure they comply with the specific governance approved documents. Only Liam says he has...and that is why he's our Chair.

(4:39) Susanne brings out a zinger of a question about the specifics of the potential requirements of the precedent set by strict adherence to the wording of the form. The contextual meaning of the word 'would' becomes crucial to understanding the issues.

At this point I think this non-quorumed (yes it's a word, I can spell it and I know what it means) committee has flushed out that all functioning of the Common Core is fundamentally flawed, and we should all go home and pretend we didn't start this discussion. I feel like the guy who first realized the whole Y2K problem.

(4:45) The minutes from the last meeting were criticized.

(4:46) The committee takes up discussion on CAR 13-51.

Eric asks about the relation of the Gerontology minor and the Sociology major. Gabe responds.

Eric asks about the GERO designation of the Gerontology courses, even though they are in the Sociology department. Gabe replies about why these courses were labeled as such, and the logistics behind that choice.
Eric asks if Gerontology is on a divergent evolutionary path from Sociology, and asks about whether other disciplines teach GERO courses.

Aaron adds that the interdisciplinary nature of the program is a great strength. Gabe says “aging is something people from many disciplines are becoming interested in.” (Baby Boomers and what not.)

(4:55) Steve Mailloux asks about how the courses in the GERO program will work into the elective credit of the Sociology major. Gabe responds. (These student members this semester are real contributors.)

(4:56) Liam asks Aaron to share his thoughts/concerns about the CAR creating the Gerontology minor that was voted on, and approved, at the last meeting. Aaron clarifies that he couldn't find in the minutes from the last meeting enough specific information to answer his question. This secretary isn't surprised, the last guy was a hack.

(4:59) Eric asks if the prerequisites for the GERO independent study is the GERO minor core courses. Gabe says yes. The prerequisites as originally listed on the CAR were a hot mess, but they were straightened out in the CC conversation before it was approved.

(5:00) The meeting dissolves.

And Here It Is, Your Moment of Turkey Day Zen: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIBgBHMsqug