

## **Curriculum Committee Minutes April 23, 2002**

**Present:** Abbott, Barry, Beck, Clark, Derryberry, Greene, Hannaford, Kline, Kontogeorgopoulos, Mehlhaff (chair), Neff-Lippman, Pasco-Pranger, Sable, Sackman, Washburn, Weinman-Jagosh.

Mehlhaff called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

### **Correction and approval of minutes:**

Pasco-Pranger corrected the minutes of 4/2/02 to show that the courses approved for Natural Scientific Approaches would also count for Natural World in the old Core, rather than for Historical Perspective. With this correction, the minutes of 4/2/02 were approved.

Weinman-Jagosh corrected the minutes of 4/9/02 to reflect more accurately the staffing of EDU 411. With this correction, the minutes of 4/9/02 were approved.

### **Announcements:**

Mehlhaff reported on and summarized his year-end report to the Faculty Senate of the business conducted by the Committee this year and the business foreseen for next year. He passed on thanks to the Committee from the Dean and the Senate for its hard work this year.

### **Request from Philosophy Department for postponement of 5-year review:**

Mehlhaff reported that the Philosophy Department has requested a one-year postponement of their quinquennial curriculum review scheduled for Fall 2002. The Department makes the request on the grounds of the retirement of Larry Stern this year and the resulting uncertainty about future staffing. Neff-Lippman M/S/P granting the Philosophy Department's request to postpone its quinquennial curriculum review until October 2003.

### **Chemistry Department Curriculum Review:**

Clark reported that Subcommittee was satisfied with the Chemistry Department's review of its curriculum. The Subcommittee had made inquiries to the Department on a number of points.

First, the Subcommittee was concerned about the Department's decision no longer to have American Chemical Society certification as a standard part of the major program. The ACS has changed its requirements for certification to include Biochemistry (CHEM 460 in our catalog). Rather than adding CHEM 460 to the courses required of all majors, the Department has decided to simply advise students that they should take CHEM 460 if they want ACS certification. The Department chair assured the Subcommittee that a lack of certification is unlikely to affect students' job or graduate school applications.

While the Department's major program requires writing all the way through, the Subcommittee was somewhat concerned that T.A.s did most of the grading in the first and second year courses. The Professional Standards Committee has investigated this practice and approved it. After examining the templates provided to T.A.s for grading, and receiving the chair's assurances that faculty do nearly all the grading in the upper-level courses, the Subcommittee felt its concerns on this point were allayed.

Finally, the Subcommittee was concerned that all of the Department's teaching units are used teaching Chemistry courses. The Department is considering dropping CHEM 111 from its course offering in order to add some flexibility to their staffing; all the programs that require CHEM 111 also accept CHEM 230 as an alternative. The Subcommittee asked whether, if the Department

decides to drop CHEM 111, it might consider devoting some teaching units to extra-departmental programs and Core categories such as Science in Context, First Year Seminars, or Connections.

Clark M/S/P approval of the Chemistry Department's curriculum review.

#### **Humanistic Approaches / Humanistic Perspective / Historical Perspective Subcommittee Report:**

Weinman-Jagosh M/S/P approval of HUM 201: The Individual and the State for inclusion in the Humanistic Approaches Core category; in accordance with the Curriculum Committee motion of 2/5/02, the proposer designated this course as continuing to fulfill the Historical Perspective category of the old Core.

#### **Science in Context Subcommittee Report:**

Greene reported for the Subcommittee on a request from Robin Foster that SCXT 318: Science and Gender be given permanent approval as a Science in Context course. Foster received approval to teach the course alone the first time and has since taught it with a visiting instructor. The Subcommittee was satisfied that Foster had made an effort to find a partner in developing and teaching course (and indeed had done found one temporarily), and that Foster's own interdisciplinary expertise would allow the course to continue to meet the Core guidelines. Foster agreed to continue looking for a partner in the course. Greene M/S/P permanent approval of SCXT 318, Science and Gender for inclusion in the Science in Context Core category.

#### **Fine Arts Approaches / Fine Arts Subcommittee Report:**

Neff-Lippman reported on the Subcommittee's consideration of a number of courses proposed for the Fine Arts Approaches Core category. The Subcommittee had encountered two stumbling blocks in its applications of the Core guidelines.

Guideline III requires that Fine Arts Approaches courses "introduce students to methods of aesthetic and formal analysis and require students to reflect critically, **both orally and in writing**, about art and the creative process" [emphasis added]. The Subcommittee was unsure whether just a requirement for class discussion was adequate to address the oral component of the guideline or whether a more formalized oral critique was intended. The question arose in relation to a set of Music courses proposed by Geoff Block which require substantial listening but no formal oral response; the instructor assures the Subcommittee that the course includes frequent discussion but is reluctant to make discussion a required element of the class. Weinman-Jagosh (who was on the task force that drafted these guidelines) remembered that formal oral critiques were the goal of the wording in Guideline III. Barry remembered instead that writing was really the goal. Weinman-Jagosh clarified that Studio Art courses were at issue in the task force's discussion of this guideline: in Studio Art oral critique and round table discussion of work is the normal mode; the task force did not want to exclude this mode of critique, but did want to insure that written critique was also part of these courses. Sackman suggested that there could be some middle ground between requiring formal oral presentations and simply holding class discussions with no requirement for consistent participation. Greene agreed and expressed concern that we not allow students to use shyness as an excuse for not participating in oral analysis and critique. Barry observed that this requirement for both oral and written critical response appears only here in the Approaches guidelines and suggested that it thus presented a problem of consistency and justification. Weinman-Jagosh observed that the guidelines are designed to help faculty understand the goals and methods expected in the course, but that they don't mandate how faculty evaluate students' adherence to the guidelines. Abbott weighed in in favor of a more formal interpretation of the requirement for oral critical analysis, observing that students who are exploring an area that is outside their regular interests are less likely to participate in informal discussion. Neff-Lippman, returning to the example of Block's courses, observed that they otherwise exceed the Subcommittee's expectations for Fine Arts Approaches

courses and that finding time for the inclusion of a formal oral assignment would call for some drastic revisions to the very full schedules of the courses. Sable suggested that the Subcommittee return to Block with a flexible interpretation of the guidelines and ask that some expectation of oral analysis be included in the syllabus and Neff-Lippman agreed.

The second problem involved Guideline II: "Courses in Fine Arts Approaches examine significant developments and representative works of **an artistic tradition**" [emphasis added]. Barry observed that a Music class on World Music had raised the question of how strictly the Subcommittee should take the reference to a singular tradition. He asked whether the goal of the guideline was attention to continuity and change and development over time and whether this could be accomplished in a course studying multiple traditions. Neff-Lippman observed that the course makes reference to a critical approach, ethnomusicology, that unifies it, but that this doesn't quite seem to be what the guidelines envision. Barry pointed out that the guidelines don't say "only one" tradition, and suggested that a comparative approach could still address continuity and change. Clark suggested that the Committee might consider "music" the artistic tradition at the center of such a course. Neff-Lippman agreed to address this question to the proposer.

#### **Natural Scientific Approaches / Natural World Subcommittee Report:**

Derryberry M/S/P approval of the following courses for inclusion in the Natural Scientific Approaches Core category; in accordance with the Curriculum Committee motion of 2/5/02, these courses will also fulfill the Natural World Core category of the old Core:

GEO 102, Time, Life, and Rocks  
GEO 104, Physical Geology of North America  
GEO 110, Regional Field Geology

Neff-Lippman M/S/P adjournment at 8:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Molly Pasco-Pranger