

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY  
MINUTES  
Wednesday, January 7, 2015  
11 am-1:30 p.m., Kerr Hall, Room 307**

Present: Faye Crosby, Matt Guthaus, Sean Keilen, Barak Krakauer (staff), Mark Krumholz, Roxi Power (NSTF Rep.), Mary Beth Pudup, Tchad Sanger (Registrar, *ex-officio*), Heather Shearer, John Tamkun(Chair), Susanna Wrangell (staff).

Absent: Provost Rep., Max Hufft (SUA Rep)

Guest: Margie Claxton (Associate Registrar), VPDUE Hughey

### **I. Announcements and Consent Agenda**

The committee extended invitations to VPDUE Hughey and Associate Registrar Claxton to attend meetings for the Winter Quarter.

Members discussed Professor Padgett's report on retention and graduation rates from the previous meeting, and found the information to be useful and interesting. The committee will extend an invitation to Professor Padgett for further consultation and updates in the Winter and Spring Quarters. In addition, Chair Tamkun has agreed to join the Student Success Steering Committee led by Professor Padgett.

The committee discussed how best to coordinate its efforts to review writing instruction on campus with the Senate Executive Committee. Members agreed that writing is a campus-wide issue, and that CEP should continue to study the effectiveness of the Disciplinary Communication requirement in the context of the other writing requirements on campus that are prerequisites for the DC classes (*viz.* C1 and C2). Chair Tamkun will send out a draft rubric about writing requirements for members to review. The committee subsequently discussed the potential benefits of a review of the Colleges, who currently administer the C1 requirement in their Core Classes. Members will continue this discussion at a future meeting.

The consent agenda items were approved, as were the minutes for December 3 and December 10, 2014. Members discussed the History of Consciousness External Review Closure Meeting letter and decided to revise the letter before approving it. The revised letter will be discussed at the next meeting.

### **II. Consultation with Merrill Provost Abrams on Independent Study Abroad Course**

Provost Abrams met with CEP and discussed a course proposal being developed by Merrill College. This course would be a continuation of a course currently being offered as an independent study that would involve a three-week trip to Africa to attend the World Economic Forum.

Members found the course as proposed to be intellectually and academically rigorous, and felt that it could provide a unique and important educational opportunity to the students enrolled. However, members were also concerned that this course presented several serious logistical issues that must be addressed. Since this trip involves students being out of the country for several weeks at the end of the quarter, it is possible that they will not be able to take any other classes on campus for this quarter; the committee did not want to assume that students would be able to take incompletes or otherwise work out "deals" with other instructors that would allow them to travel to Africa. Furthermore, the trip itself is still dependent on

successful fundraising, visa applications, and so on; it is possible that the trip could be cancelled well into the Spring Quarter.

Members made various suggestions about how some of these issues might be addressed. It may be possible, for example, to set the course up in such a way that it bears seven credits, and it may be possible to arrange for independent studies for the students with other instructors to provide more credits. It may also be possible for these students to find online courses that would allow them to participate while they are in Africa. It may also be possible to set up a companion course that meets on a “block” schedule, so that its hours of instruction are “front-loaded” in the beginning of the quarter. The committee also requested that this course have a “back-up” plan for instruction, should the trip be cancelled at the last minute. Finally, members expressed concern about further issues that should be addressed were this to be made into a regularly recurring class; in this case, the fundraising process would need to be made more sustainable, and the instructor of record could not be a lecturer without salary.

The committee looks forward to reviewing this course proposal once it is completed.

### **III. Program Statement Procedures**

Every year, CEP reviews the program statements for each department, division, and academic program that are published in the catalog. Chair Tamkun discussed the process for program statement review and ask members for feedback on any concerns and clarifications about how to conduct these reviews. The committee will begin approving program statements at its next meeting.

### **IV. Double-Counting Exception Petition**

A student requested that a thesis written count for credit in two majors. Although this is generally not allowed by policy, the committee agreed that this thesis is a good candidate as an exception, and is in accord with the policy as written. Both departments support this waiver. Members agreed to allow this particular thesis to be double-counted.

### **V. Qualification Policy Report from MCD Biology**

CEP discussed the qualification to the major report from the MCD Biology Department. Members commended the department for the thoroughness of the report, and noted that most departments would not be able to provide the kind of data about major qualification that MCD has provided.

The report noted that the current minimum GPA requirement of 2.3 does not seem to be an effective predictor of success in the major, and that it may be preferable to lower the GPA requirement to 2.0. The committee agreed that this would seem to be appropriate. The committee also discussed whether undergraduates were being encouraged to take Chemistry 1A too early, which in turn shunts them into the calculus series early, which may pose a problem for a student’s academic development. This issue may best be addressed by developing a more realistic course sequence, and making sure that students get appropriate academic advising.

Members will continue discussion of this report at the following meeting, and discuss what kind of data should be asked of other departments.

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