APC Minutes - 12/4/2012


APC absent – P. Martin


APC called to order at 2:00

First agenda item - foreign language - foreign culture requirement

Chair Smith invited to the table to speak to the topic - reiterated support for the foreign language requirement. Open to questions as we deliberate. Current requirement on p. 38 of the catalog - 3 ways - (1) competency at 102-level in foreign language through placement score and foreign language sequence, (2) nine credits of foreign culture or study abroad, (3) combination of study abroad, foreign culture, and/or language courses.

A member of the department of history requested that foreign culture not be separated from global learning. However, the majority opinion was that the global culture be separated from foreign culture. The chair was actually quite adamant about this interpretation. The faculty member who is arguing to merge the two feels that in her particular field they are equivalent because they are taught on this campus by people who are not American born. It is a position with support in her field subset but not across the entire history field.

C. Smith - Could be incorporated into skills (1, 3), knowledge (2, 3, 4), Responsibility (1, 2, ?3)

Margaret - could you clarify the past global learning operational definition/requirement to make a distinction from foreign culture requirements.

M. Goulet - last time we heard from the committee and approved the rubric for global learning requirements/outcomes. Global learning outcome three - use appropriate skills in linguistic and culturally diverse requirements (which seems equivalent to foreign language and foreign culture).

J. Pratt - The issue is staying true to liberal education learning outcomes (at the University level). Do we want a specific requirement or fulfill these requirements through our integrated learning goals and outcomes.

S. Duckworth-Lawton - global learning outcomes are transnational - e.g., slavery - not just in the US but in Jamaica, etc. You could study slavery "only in the United States" or in the context of global slavery (including Jamaica and so forth). Global is the intersection of issues across national borders, whereas cultural requirements relate to issues within the national borders.

B. Nolan - last year in a discussion within the English department - the consensus was both. A foreign language requirement should at least be an aspirational goal.
L. Bica - The question of what goals is foreign language and culture meeting that global learning is not?

B. Nowlan - different aspects of those goals are better met by one requirement than the other. He made the point that both goal areas are met by the entire undergraduate experience, not just one goal.

L. Bica - If they're meeting common goals and objectives, can we merge them into one requirement and then expand the descriptions of the elements encompassed by the broader requirement?

J. Markgraf - Colleagues share the concern of the distinction between global learning and foreign culture. Some discussion of concerns that the distinction is not clear enough to warrant two separate requirement. In library searches, students tend to shift beyond the level of foreign culture to something that is more global.

S. Duckworth-Lawton - learning a language is not the same thing as learning about another culture. Those are two distinct areas.

C. Smith - reiterated the distinction between language acquisition and foreign culture, although there are obviously overlaps between learning in many cases. There are also overlaps with global learning but some distinctions.

S. Duckworth-Lawton - learning about a foreign culture is very different than learning about other transnational relationships, which is global.

Motion - all in favor of retaining the foreign language foreign culture requirement as it stand - 3 for, 6 against.

L. Bica - with that said - we'll be returning to the global learning outcomes for further review

Jean - Moving the the course two prefix limit/requirement - no more than two courses of the same prefix. Balancing issues of breadth and also concerns about a requirement that may bottleneck students access to a broader range of courses.

D. Mowry - the intent was to encourage students to get a well-rounded liberal arts perspective by only enrolling in two courses of the same prefix out of the entire 42 credits. Also, arts and humanities two courses (6 credits) outside the students major.

J. Pratt - the six unique credits allow students to have multiple courses within their major but not limiting them/creating a bottleneck - also get the breadth which is desired in liberal education.

B. Drout - concern is how can we clearly explain to students what their requirements are and how we can assure that they know what they're looking at. The issue is understanding the degree audit - three ways to view the degree audit. The idea of limited general education overall to no more than two courses from any one prefix, we have to have at least two views/chunks to address total credits and distribution of varied prefixes. Emphasize - it's not a workload issue - it's an issue of ensuring that students understand the requirements and can interpret/plan through their degree audits.

J. Pratt - I believe we can solve the degree audit issue with the right algorithm/query.
B. Drout - To some extent, we are limited by the PeopleSoft/Auricle database issue - she is not aware of anyone to address Jean's algorithm issue.

S. Duckworth-Lawton - Lots of programming issues to address algorithms - "need an "AND" statement" which would address the issue.

J. Pratt - the issue is either we adjust programming or we need manual checks by the registrars office.

D. Gough - needs clarification of what we want to do. You're asking the computer to make some assignments of credits (an artificial intelligence issue rather than an "AND" or "OR" programming issue). If you design requirements that don't repeat courses (have courses meeting multiple requirements), then it is probably possible to program for degree audits to be automatically calculated.

L. DeGrave - Supports having a breadth of courses but concern about systematic blocks - especially within interdisciplinary studies. Some prefixes meet requirements across different areas, so that it isn't necessarily a discipline specific issue when someone has more than two courses from a given prefix. Some students will do it intentionally and others accidentally.

S. Duckworth-Lawton - a computer program won't catch all of the requirements. As advisors, we will have to manually review and ensure that requirements are met.

M. Goulett - With the current requirements, it's possible to meet the university graduation requirements through 4 different prefixes and still have a great deal of breadth. It's artificial for departments to limit by requiring more than two prefixes. Current requirement is 4 prefixes but perhaps 5 would create more breadth.

L. DeGrave - request that the amount of time necessary to provide support for advising will be critical.

J. Pratt - forward any suggestions to her by Friday so that we can include them in next week's agenda.

Last item - discuss the required minor

J. Pratt - what feedback are you getting from the chairs?

G. Scukanec - no concern from the CoEHS faculty - comprehensive majors

D. Jansen - nursing - no concern from the nursing faculty - comprehensive

J. Pratt - no concern as we are comprehensive

Arts and sciences – M. Weil - no consensus across the six departments.

J. Pratt - as we look at the possibility of "instead of requiring a minor" an opportunity to explore additional courses. It seems likely that a lot of them will still take minors (e.g., foreign language minors, multi-media minors). What will facilitate a timely graduation with the opportunity to explore in-depth opportunities to engage in specific areas of interest.
B. Nowlan - it would be interesting to hear what students think - Patrick not present. It seems that some would really value the opportunity to pursue a minor but others may not.

S. Ducksworth-Lawton - I'd like to hear the input from the smaller, minor-only programs.

J. Pratt requested from Dean Baker to send a list of the minor-only programs.

J. Olm - a lot of this conversation is about what the function of the minor is - is it to ensure depth or to demonstrate/designate a specific set of knowledge and skills.

J. Pratt - are we assuming that our students can't make that decision for themselves? If we don't require it, would they not do it or just take random classes?

J. Olm - we want them to have choices but we also want to show them strategies of how to develop a depth of knowledge and/or specific skill/knowledge sets. Perhaps leaving it open enough to make their own good choices.

B. Nowlan - If it becomes a minor, we need to make it known that it remains an option. We need to make clear the potential value of a minor.

J. Markgraf - thinking about this in light of certificates - making a clear distinction between minors and certificates.

J. Olm - minors and certificates are similar in credits.

Jill Prushiek - issue of students having a difficult time of getting into classes. Also, issues of finding substitutions when a minor is dropped or students are having difficulty completing their program and need to find anything that works.

D. Gough - if you eliminate the requirement of a minor we have all kinds of opportunities for certificates and other concentrations (pockets of breadth). It could include a minor, could include certificates, or could include things that are meaningful to the students.

J. Olm - I'm consistently surprised how students make decisions to go beyond basic requirements - (e.g., double majors, etc.).

D. Mowry - Flexibility is good but what are the implications for comprehensive majors if we eliminate the requirement for minors.

Submitted by Jerry K. Hoepner, Secretary for the meeting