THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA

MINUTES
Core Curriculum Oversight Committee
8:30 to 9:30am, February 24, 2016
NERC 1012

Agenda

People attending the meeting: Jennifer Greer, Margaret Peacock, Joe Phelps, Ed Merrill, Cynthia Sunal, Jef Naidoo, Thomas Robinson, Ray White, Marysia Galbraith, Carmen Mayer, Heather White, Jaclyn Combs, Ryan Earley, Javonda Williams, Brenda Hunter, Ginger Bishop, Dixie MacNeil, Amanda Thompson, Zarie Blackburn, Amelia Rizzardi, Jacob Jones, Denny Savage, David Cordes

1. Review of the DRAFT minutes from the last meeting – corrections? approval?
    a. No corrections noted, minutes were approved

2. Course Review Status
    a. 153 courses have been fully processed (152 approvals, 1 rejection)
    b. 2 courses still out for voting by the entire committee
    c. A handful of courses (late submissions) are working their way through the review process

3. Continuing our discussion of the purpose of the core curriculum
    a. Initial draft of the purpose of the core is shown below

        The purpose of the core curriculum is not to return to the past, but to establish a balance among legitimate interests in the present, so that professional education, general education, and freedom for electives are balanced in proportions that the University community deems appropriate. In short, the core curriculum is based upon the assumption that no one can become knowledgeable in every field, but that there are nevertheless certain skills, subjects, and methodologies that no educated person should be without. The essential skills include writing, both as an analytical tool and as a means of communication; critical reading; and the ability to perform mathematical computations beyond the level of college algebra. In the broadest sense, the essential subject matter is a knowledge of one's own culture and an awareness of other cultures. And the essential methodologies may be listed as symbolic and deductive (e.g., mathematics and symbolic logic); quantitative and inductive (e.g., physical, biological, social, and behavioral sciences); and rhetorical (e.g., ethics and aesthetics).

    b. In the "Guidelines for the Core Curriculum Oversight Committee" document, there were specific comments made regarding each of the various sections of the core. Those comments are captured in one of today's handouts.
    c. Today's question is "**How well do our current operational guidelines match these comments?**"
    d. Process
        i. Meet with your subcommittee (HU/L/FA/FL or Math/NS or C or W or HI/SB)
        ii. Look at the general comments from the "Guidelines" document

iii. Look at the current evaluation criteria for your subcommittee
iv. Do these two items match or are there disconnects?

e. Committee Reports
   i. Computing
      1. Good mapping in spirit of "guidelines" document and checklist rubrics
      2. Suggest that the distinction between "doing programming" and "advanced use of an application" is important for C courses
   ii. HU/L/FA/FL
      1. Match of the "guidelines" document and checklist is not good
      2. Areas exist in "guidelines" document that are not listed in the checklist
      3. There is a good match for the core designations that are listed
      4. Group spent time trying to understand rationale behind the guidelines (and how these guidelines different from other area guidelines)
   iii. W
      1. Good convergence of "guidelines" document and checklist
      2. Not sure about enforcing the inclusion of evaluation rubrics in course syllabus
      3. Discussion followed – it was pointed out that, in previous years, there was a concern that student writing was being evaluated properly and that the syllabus is the only material that our committee has for its reviews
      4. It was noted that the checklist for W courses identifies what should be in the course syllabus, not what is in the course itself. The C and W checklists seem different from the other checklists in this regard.
   iv. Math/NS
      1. Checklist mapping to "guidelines" document for NS is fine
      2. Checklist mapping to "guidelines" document for Math has issues. There seem to be at least two items that are missing. First, the idea of requiring college algebra as a pre-requisite is missing. Second, the idea of requiring quantitative reasoning is missing.
      3. The guidelines document specifically says "math course must have a math designation" but that is not in the checklist.
      4. There is a lot of overlap (Math and NS) in the checklist, should figure out how to better discriminate the two.
   v. HI/SB
      1. Checklist and "guidelines" documents are similar
      2. Observation – the "guidelines" document talks about the applied nature of a course, while the checklist references professional skills. These are not necessarily the same.

General discussion followed. The proposed process is to figure out exactly what we are doing now, why we are doing it, and what the original goals/plans were. Once we understand what we are doing – including what works and what does not work and what is inconsistent with the "guidelines" document – then we will know how to improve the situation. People are encouraged to get feedback from their colleagues on these discussions. Feedback on possible paths forward can also be forwarded to David Cordes.

REMINDER: Final meeting for the year is Wednesday, March 23, 8:30 – 9:30, NERC 1012
