CCOC -- Meeting
28 September 2012

11:30-1
254 Rose Administration

Minutes

Members Attending: Marsha Adams, Beth Bennett, Kathy Bolland, Maurizio Godorecci, Brenda Hunter, Michael Murphy, Mark Nelson, Luke Niiler, Cathy Pagani, Rebecca Pow, Denny Savage, Amy Thompson, Jerry Weaver, Liza Wilson, Z.J. Wu

1. Two committee members, Ryan Earley and Liza Wilson, were congratulated for receiving *2012 Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Awards* from The National Alumni Association of the University of Alabama.

2. Status reports on the 2012 review cycle were presented:

Computer Science – the subcommittee has received all of the C courses to be reviewed in this cycle.

- Two courses have been recommended to the CCOC for renewal.
- Five courses are in review by the subcommittee.
- Two were returned to the department for resubmission and are back in review.

The biggest problem we have faced in this review cycle has been getting the necessary course syllabi in the system and ready for the submitters to prepare for the review.

- Apparently, faculty members in some parts of campus are being told that they do not have to bother with publishing their course syllabi in OIRA resources.
- This non-compliance not only makes the CCOC review difficult, but also places the institution at risk for SACS accreditation reviews.

Natural Science –the subcommittee has received all of the N and MA courses to be reviewed in this cycle. (Z.J. Wu, Chair)

- The ten N courses are in review; none has been recommended yet for the CCOC's vote.
- The one MA course, CSM 116, is not yet accessible for the subcommittee to review on-line (a technical glitch in the program still has to be corrected).
- Though the subcommittee members have not yet reviewed the course, Z.J. opened discussion on CSM 116, which holds a temporary MA designation from Spring 2012.
    - He stated that he and faculty members in the Math Department opposed the core designation for this course, on the grounds that it is not a math course in content nor taught by a faculty member with 18 graduate course hours in mathematics, as required by SACS.

- Mark Nelson explained that the SACS rule for 18 hours did not apply for general studies courses; instructors with doctoral degrees in related areas can teach such a course.
- Z.J. responded that his concern about the course is that it is not essentially a math course in content, and therefore, it would not comply with state standards and would reflect badly on UA.
- Mark reported that according to the original UA guidelines for the MA designation in the Core Curriculum, a course had to meet one of three criteria:
    - Substantial application of mathematical skills, at the level of college algebra or above
    - Illustration of modern mathematical ideas (general), at the level of college algebra or above
    - Modern symbolic logic
- Mark explained that when the Alabama state legislature, in the 90s, established a general studies curriculum to enable the transfer of credit from the 2-year institutions, UA mistakenly thought we needed to narrow our own Core Curriculum to match it. He said he was concerned that not considering this course as a possible course in the core curriculum, simply on the basis that it was not taught by a member of the math department, would set a precedent that would restrict core course offerings at the University.
- Michael Murphy said that he would question the value of a MA course that was not being taught by someone with math credentials.
- Marsha Adams suggested that there were two issues and that people might have different judgments on the two issues.
    - On the issue of faculty credentials for teaching such a course, she said that there were faculty in her college that she would argue could teach a math-related general studies course (i.e., statistics).
    - Course content, she suggested, was a separate issue, and this particular course should be judged as appropriate or not for the designation on its own merit.
- Z.J. said he would feel differently if the core designation were for a course in "Quantitative Reasoning," or some such, rather than in "Math."
- Mark acknowledged that the name of the course might not accurately reflect the math content of the course and offered to have the instructor of the course meet with Z.J. and discuss more fully what the course covers, before the subcommittee makes its recommendation to the CCOC at the next meeting.
- Jerry Weaver said his college had courses that would be appropriate for a MA designation, but that they had not been submitted because the college's students were being covered at present. He asked about whether approval of the designation would transfer for students.
    - Beth Bennett said only AGSC approved courses had automatic approval by the state as general education courses and that such

courses in this review cycle have been designated as AGSC approved courses.
        - Mark said that the AGSC transfer system works to facilitate the transfer of 2-year institution students into 4-year institutions, such as UA; our expectation is that once students are here at UA, they will complete their degrees here. However, "UA only core courses" are indicated by asterisks in the system.
    - Michael Murphy asked if the course had been proposed as a remedy to some problem, e.g., are students having trouble fulfilling the math requirement?
        - Beth responded that she could not speak to the intention of this particular course, but that since the re-establishment of the CCOC, the goal has been to try to broaden our core course offerings for UA students, to respond to the diversity and complexity of the University, beyond the narrow scope of general education at the 2-year institutions.
        - Members seemed to indicate that fulfillment of the math requirement did pose some problems for students.
        - Z.J. reported that the success rate had been as low as 30-35%, but that it was now up to 60%.
        - He said the goal for their program was to reach 80%.
    - Beth pointed out that since the course has not yet been reviewed by the subcommittee, the CCOC would still have the opportunity to discuss it at the next meeting, before members cast their official votes.

History and Social and Behavioral Science – the subcommittee has received five of the eight courses to be reviewed. (Kathleen Bolland, Chair)

- One course has been recommended to the CCOC for renewal.
- Two courses have been returned to the departments – one has been resubmitted; the second, is doubtful.
- Three courses from New College still have not been submitted.
- Two courses are in review – one is the SW course submitted last year for a History (HI) designation.
    - The course has been resubmitted for reconsideration.
    - The primary issues raised in the initial review are similar to those regarding the math course.
        - The issue of credentials: can someone other than a member of the History Department teach a general education course with a HI core designation?
        - The issue of breadth: is the course sufficiently broad in scope?
        - Kathleen said that the course is not a course in the history of social work – rather, it is a course on the history of social welfare in the U.S., which touches on many different areas.
    - Beth suggested that what the CCOC may have to confront, in both cases, is the matter of whether we think the outcomes of the Core Curriculum for UA graduates should be essentialist (content specific) or general (a way of thinking about the world). She pointed out that the issue pertained to her

proposal for the CCOC (from the August meeting) about developing Institutional Outcomes to recommend for UA.

Humanities, Literature, Foreign Languages, Fine Arts – all but three courses from New College have been submitted for the subcommittee to review. (Maurizio Godorecci, Chair)

- None has been recommended yet for the CCOC to vote.
- All that have been submitted are in some stage of review.

Writing – the subcommittee has been working on the courses that have been submitted for review, but that process has taken longer than usual, and we have already sent back 10 courses for revise/resubmit. (Beth Bennett, Chair)

- Since many of the returned courses were difficult to evaluate, due to a lack of highlighting of essential text in the course syllabi, Jerry suggested that perhaps some directions could be developed to help submitters prepare their submissions more successfully. Beth said that she could prepare some instructions to help.
- Besides 13 courses from New College, there are only three W courses not yet submitted: GY 440, GY 458, and SOC 460.
- Among the 25 W courses being recommended to the CCOC for official voting are four courses that exceed the enrollment limit for W courses.
    - HD 422
    - KIN 361, 468, 491
- Despite the fact that the subcommittee agrees that the enrollment figures for these courses are way too high, the courses have been passed on to the CCOC for discussion for three reasons:
    - They meet the rest of the criteria for a W designation.
    - The enrollment problem cannot be fixed by revision of the course syllabus, and the department head is aware of the problem but has no viable plan for addressing it.
    - Ultimately, the problem will only be made worse by non-renewal of the designation for these courses.
- Beth suggested that in her judgment the problem had to be confronted at the dean's level; department heads could not be expected to resolve this issue alone.
    - For this reason, she said, she had introduced the proposal at the last meeting that writing proficiency standards and plans for implementing them needed to be handled at the divisional level.
    - Kathleen Bolland said that if the CCOC approved these four courses, there would be no pressure for the deans to take action.
    - Beth said she was not suggesting voting yet on the courses, but rather was asking the CCOC if it would be willing to recommend a specific proposal to the divisional deans about course enrollment in W courses.
    - Denny Savage was able to produce a spreadsheet of fall 2012 enrollment in W courses for reference (it was distributed separately, after the meeting).
    - Jerry moved that Beth write a specific proposal, upon which the membership could vote at the next meeting. The motion passed.

3. Beth reminded everyone that she would open the recommended courses for official voting after the meeting. She would not open the four courses with over enrollment, yet. Everyone is encouraged to vote on this first round of courses by 19 October.

4. The draft of a document describing the official procedure for OAA reviews of petitions for temporary course designations was distributed (see draft below).

    - Mark explained that we are trying to provide transparency regarding the process, while also trying to emphasize that such petitions should become rare now that we have a regular review cycle for core courses.
    - Beth encouraged CCOC members to review the draft and give Mark their input.
    - The CCOC will vote on the policy at the next meeting.

Remaining Timeline for 2012 Review:

- 19 October – official vote completed
- 9 November – CCOC meeting: subcommittee status reports on resubmissions and discussion on remaining courses
- 7 December – CCOC meeting, if needed: complete official vote and review

Please remember to vote on the recommended courses – and try to keep Friday, 9 November, reserved for our CCOC meeting! Thanks.

Petitioning the Office of Academic Affairs

For a Temporary UA Core Curriculum Designation

Draft

27 September 2012

Having completed three years of reviews and beginning a fourth, the CCOC has now established a regular process for continual review of all courses holding core designations in the UA Core Curriculum. Every program offering core designated courses will have its core courses reviewed by the CCOC, minimally, every five years to retain their core designations. At the time of their reviews by the CCOC, programs are encouraged to submit applications for new core designations for any of their existing courses. Such applications for new designations will be reviewed by the CCOC, along with those core courses due for renewal.

The CCOC does not review new courses (i.e., a course not already approved through *CourseLeaf* and existing in the Banner inventory), nor does it handle petitions for temporary core designations. Temporary core designations are considered on an *ad hoc* basis for individual courses, at the request of department heads or deans, in order to resolve student or departmental scheduling problems that may only be resolved by the immediate granting of the designation. If approved, these petitions are only granted temporary status. Any course granted a temporary core designation that is not submitted for review by the CCOC in the next regular review cycle will have the core designation automatically removed. **All petitions for temporary core designation are handled by the Office of Academic Affairs.**

To petition the Office of Academic Affairs to consider a course for a temporary core designation, the appropriate administrative head must follow this procedure:

1. Construct a formal petition – explaining the need for an immediate decision on the course and why it cannot wait until the regular program review cycle
2. Prepare the course syllabus and supporting materials – identifying how the course meets the requirements for the core designation, in reference to the core designation template
3. Submit both to the Office of Academic Affairs

Upon receipt of the petition, the Office of Academic Affairs will follow this procedure:

1. Review the petition to determine if the necessary information has been supplied
2. Compare the course materials with the core requirements to determine the appropriateness of the petition
3. Submit the petition for review by the Vice Provost, who in consultation with the appropriate representative from the CCOC subcommittee will make the decision.