

Curriculum and Instruction Committee Meeting  
February 8, 2017 Minutes  
FAB 1339  
1:30 pm

Present: Meghan Courtney, Robert Ackerman, Joanne Hildebrandt, Sharon Lean, Barrett Watten, Douglas Barnett, Aaron Martin, Victoria Dallas, Smity Gupta, Paul Beavers, Qin Lai, Jennifer Hart (chair)

Guests: Loreleigh Keeshly, Sally Roberts, Lisa Alexander, Tom Fischer

Absent with notice: Diane Levine, Michelle Porter, Mark Van Berkum, Erika Ruch

Tom Fischer – general updates

- Ongoing updates from subcommittee work will now go onto the Engaging Gen Ed website and are starting to go up now
- The linkages between the first year courses looks like it will not be possible given the heavy demands for requirements in some majors like Engineering. There are some implications about de-linkage that we are still pursuing. Some of those issues include: The committee is considering only requiring one signature course instead of two. And “signature course” is being renamed.

Loreleigh Keeshly and Sally Roberts – Quantitative Experience

- How has quantitative experience been conceptualized/operationalized in current gen ed? – currently conceived of as mathematics, but quantitative literacy goes much broader than that.
- The committee has looked at a number of example
- The committee has been considering the question of “what is math competency?” What do we mean by “foundational math skills/knowledge”? Is that what we mean by quantitative literacy? Or is that something more like a prereq.
  - The way that quantitative literacy is conceived in most places assumes some foundational math knowledge.
  - Current understanding: Wayne State students will have to demonstrate fundamental math knowledge (like Math 0900) through testing out or taking a basic course. If they can demonstrate that knowledge, they can move directly into quantitative literacy courses. If not, they will need to secure those skills through a basic math course (i.e. Math 0900). (The committee is now directly involved in the broader conversation in GEOC about math competency requirements and these different groups are working together to address shared concerns.)
  - Driven by the reality that many majors have math/quantitative content, but not all do. So, for students in majors without math requirements, they will need to take a quantitative literacy course, and there would be a variety on offer that

- would not necessarily be offered in the math department (i.e. logic courses in Philosophy; Stats courses in the social sciences; digital humanities courses)
- Part of the GEOC conversation about fundamental math competency includes: improving placement tests to be more diagnostic, defining what foundational math skills are, and distinguishing the difference between foundational math skills necessary for students going into STEM fields and into non-STEM fields. GEOC voted yesterday to try to vote on a proposal on February 20<sup>th</sup> and then advance a proposal to the Provost regarding recommendations for the revised math competency/quantitative experience.

#### Lisa Alexander – Diversity Sub-committee

- Concern over whether the requirement would have a local/global focus. The committee looked at a number of examples with other Michigan public universities and other universities that share our Carnegie designation
- The current understanding is that there is one required diversity course which would require students to choose between locally- and globally-focused courses. The committee members recommend that the university considering adopting two courses – one local and one global – but that is not currently part of the proposal. The committee also continues to debate the names for the requirement broadly as well as its local and global dimensions. The committee is also in discussion over 1) how many outcomes a course would need to fulfill in order to count for a diversity course, and 2) what percentage of the course content would need to fulfill the learning outcomes.
- The committee is currently assembling courses from across the university.

#### Thomas Fischer – Engagement Courses

- The requirement has been renamed – “Engagement” – which the sub-committee believes better reflects the intent of those courses.
- The process of thinking about engagement courses is inspired by the University’s Strategic Plan, which identifies community engagement and experiential learning as a strategic focus area.
- The sub-committee has suggested that the university consider establishing a “portal” called something like “Wayne Engage” that will bring together resources and opportunities across the campus to put faculty into conversation, identify resources, and centralize information to share with students.
- Community-service requirements delivered at the scale of Gen Ed is not feasible. Instead, the committee suggests that there might be multiple means of achieving this goal of “engagement”. The committee is currently working to specify learning goals and outcomes for these types of courses. Many experiences already offered on campus could fulfill the intention behind “engagement” in many different ways – study abroad, community research, internships, directed studies, community service. As much as possible, the committee thinks that this requirement should be embedded within the major. For students in majors that do not already provide these opportunities, there

would be additional courses available so that the university could guarantee that all students get to have these experiences.

- The sub-committee is now thinking about what kinds of resources that are necessary to do this work and how some of those resources might be centralized and institutionalized within the university in order to help/encourage faculty to develop these courses.
- The committee intends to keep its description open in order to incorporate many kinds of experiences.
- The committee continues to debate some central issues that bear on the learning outcomes and the way that the requirement is defined (e.g. how do we define “community”?)
- The engagement course requirement would be a distinctly Wayne State requirement even for people who come with an MTA transfer.
- Important to make sure that these learning outcomes and goals reflect/respect federal laws and guidelines concerning experiential learning

#### Jennifer Hart – Breadth Courses

- The different categories of breadth have been renamed in a way that emphasizes the methodological intent behind these courses and also allows for the fact that many departments and programs teach across the historically entrenched categories that often structure the university’s curriculum (“arts and humanities”, “social sciences”, “natural sciences”).
- The GERC steering committee is considering some ongoing questions related to this re: what used to be the critical thinking requirement.