

MINUTES
Liberal Arts Core Committee
April 4, 2008
Student Involvement and Activities Center Meeting Room,
Plaza level, Maucker Union

Present: Maria Basom, Ken Baughman, Adam Bentley, Nadene Davidson, Donna Hoffman, Susan Moore, Siobahn Morgan, Jean Neibauer, Jake Rudy, Lori VanHooreweghe, Donna Vinton

I. Call to Order:

Morgan called the meeting to order at 8:15 A.M.

II. Approval of March 28, 2008 Minutes

Moore moved for approval of the March 28, 2008 minutes. Bentley seconded. Discussion followed. After some discussion about killer rabbits, no glaring errors were found. The minutes were approved unanimously.

III. *Computational Modeling and Simulation* Proposal for Category 1C

Morgan conveyed information based on her discussion with the Mathematics department. For some reason the original proposal did not come to the attention of the Mathematics department when it went through the curriculum approval process. The overall impression of the course was positive, but there was some concern about the abstractness of the material and if all students would benefit from the course. In particular there was concern that the course material may be beyond students with poor math skills and as such would not serve those students well. Other items were mentioned in the discussion with the Math department including the idea of having the course offered as an honors course, or as a Capstone course (likely with enhanced content). The Math department would like to have the course approved provisionally, and over the next few years data should be collected to determine if the course is meeting the goals for Category 1C. After the test period, the departments of Computer Science and Mathematics would then evaluate the course and determine if it should be submitted to the LACC for inclusion into the LAC permanently.

There was discussion about the type of data that would be collected for the course during the trial run, and who would do that. Also, what exactly are the criteria for this part of the LAC? There was also further discussion concerning the course being offered as a Capstone course. At the present time, the level of the course doesn't appear to be at a "Capstone" level, and a new course proposal would likely be needed. There was also discussion about the recommended student background for the course (ACT level).

Basom moved to amend the original motion (from March 28) to have the course approved on a temporary basis until the next Category Review. She also recommends that Math and Computer Science consult and determine an appropriate ACT level for the course. Data should also be collected during this test run and included in the next 1C Category Review.

Bentley accepted the amendment to his original motion. Neibauer obtained data concerning ACT data and found that scores in the range of 22-23 indicated a readiness to do algebra. Motion, as amended, passed unanimously.

IV. Announcements

- A. Morgan mentioned that there was an error in the omission of a Capstone course from the fall schedule. That is being rectified.
- B. The curriculum handbook will be coming to the Faculty Senate soon and the revisions that the LACC put forward are included in the new version of the book. It should be docketed soon on the Senate agenda.
- C. Morgan noted that the CNS Dean has had a positive response when he asked for volunteers for a Category Coordinating Committee. No news yet from the other colleges.
- D. There will be a concerted effort to promote the importance of the LAC to new students and their parents (as well as the current University community). One way could be to have standard "LAC meeting days" each month. For example during the first week of September, October and November departments would have meetings to discuss various aspects of the LAC. Certain talking points and topics would be provided, such as advising information, SOA, purposes and goals, etc. A recent publication from AACU "Why Do I have to take this Course" would be useful to help faculty promote the LAC with advisees and majors. Neibauer mentioned that the students working at orientation this summer will be required to reflect on their own LAC experiences and convey positive experiences to the new students.
- E. Current status of the Category reviews is as follows:
 - 2A – report is close to finished, currently passing through various departments
 - 3A – report is nearly finished, just waiting on the student survey data
 - 4 – status uncertain, no responses to request for updates
 - 5 – committee is formed or nearly formed

V. New Business

- A. Morgan distributed a draft of the response to the 3B review to the committee members. LACC members should examine it and bring back comments or suggested revisions to it to future LACC meetings.

VI. Old Business

- A. Morgan brought out the form that is used in the Study Abroad program for students to obtain "foreign" credit for major/minor requirements, as well as elective and LAC credits. University departments evaluate the credits for majors and minors while the Office of Admissions evaluates the credits for elective and LAC courses. Baughman wondered if it would be appropriate to have someone from the Office of Admission sit in on LAC meetings. Morgan will look into this.
- B. Bentley reported on the discussion between HPELS and the NISG subcommittee concerning Personal Wellness. Currently a plan is being worked on to have lectures with different topics, such as self defense, or obesity. The issue of decoupling the courses from the activities was brought up by VanHooreweghe, but the group currently in discussion

hasn't touched on that issue. The timeline for completion of the work of the HPELS-NISG group is tentatively set at the end of April.

C. Baughman asked about the status of the proposal for revising the LAC that was put forward in fall 2007 by the LAC Design Team. Morgan mentioned that things appear to be on hold until the revisions in the curriculum handbook are approved, and after that point any proposals for restructuring the LAC can be brought forward.

D. There was also a question about the status of the "Foundations of Excellence" program. This is still in the initial formation stages apparently.

E. Basom asked about the status of the CSBS resolution that was sent to the Faculty Senate. The resolution is as follows: "While we have serious reservations about the recently circulated LAC Design proposal, we welcome an open discussion for the reconsideration of both the philosophy and content of the LAC core in a faculty driven and open conversation". This resolution will be discussed at the April 14 Senate meeting. It was generally agreed that the current revisions to the Curriculum Handbook do provide such a conversation and encourage not only open discussions, but also accountability in making any significant changes to the LAC. Baughman also asked about the status of the CHFA resolution since it keeps appearing on the Faculty Senate agenda. Morgan will try to bring the resolution up with the Faculty Senate at the next meeting, since at that time the Curriculum Handbook will likely be docketed at that meeting and other LAC items will be discussed.

VII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the session was made by Davidson, and seconded by Basom. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Next Meeting – 8:15 AM, April 18, 2008 – **room 210 Rod Library meeting room.**

Respectfully submitted,

Siobahn Morgan

LAC website: <http://www.uni.edu/vpaa/lac/index.shtml>