

MINUTES
Liberal Arts Core Committee
April 13, 2007
Student Involvement and Activities Center Meeting Room,
Plaza level, Maucker Union

Present: Maria Basom, Ken Baughman, Jerry Caswell, Cyndi Dunn, Siobahn Morgan, Ron O'Meara, Jean Neibauer, Jerry Smith, Lori VanHooreweghe

I. Call to Order:

Morgan called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

There was a minor correction to the minutes. Baughman moved to approve the minutes of March 23, 2007. O'Meara seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Announcements

A. Category review updates: Susan Hill (Category 3B) mentioned that the review is going well and it will be available by mid April and distributed on April 20, and the review team will be on hand on April 27. The Category 3A is going a little bit more slowly. A draft of that review will hopefully be done by the end of the semester. Still no updates on Category 2A.

The Category 4 review will kick off on April 17.

B. Capstone sections are now all full for the most part. 820:140 sections are capped at 25 to allow additional registration over the summer (maximum is 35). A few sections of Capstone have active waiting lists. This is only for the sections that are pre-existing courses (non-010:159 listings). The courses 48C:128, and 640/650:194 are also used for some majors for credit and they have waiting lists implemented on them.

There was discussion about the way students on the waiting list were added to the course, in that department majors were given access to the course before others on the waiting list (non-majors). This was of concern since it may result in Capstone courses that are made up of students from only a few majors and not a diverse background. More on this later.

C. There was an update on the LAC Design Team's (also know to some as the "Dream Team", quite appropriately) presentation about their model of the LAC to the Curriculum Taskforce last Friday. In general the proposal was viewed quite favorably. There will be updates to the LAC committee as a whole as things progress on the LAC re-design, and we get new flashy uniforms. There was also the suggestion that open forums for the university community occur once a model is devised, and after it is presented to the LACC. These forums would probably be well attended once the proposed LAC has been publicized to the university. The

Curriculum Taskforce is not a Faculty Senate body, but will be working to bring curriculum issues to the forefront and will likely present proposals to their respective bodies (LACC, and UCC) and possibly to the Faculty Senate. The work of the Curriculum Taskforce was discussed. While it might appear that all of their work is on the LAC, this is in part due to the excellent work of the “Dream Team” in making progress over the last few months. The UCC hasn’t been as active this past year, but other groups are also working on the curriculum, such as the length of majors in the COE and other areas.

IV. Fall Semester

- A. Members of the LACC for 2007-08. Dunn’s position is up for re-election this spring, since she is finishing up someone else’s term. Dunn is willing to serve another term. Smith will be leaving the committee (officially) as a representative of the CBA. No word yet on his successor. As a matter of clarification, here are the expiration dates for the terms for the committee members:
 - Smith, Dunn: 07
 - Davidson: 08
 - Baughman, O’Meara, Caswell: 09
 - Basom: 09 (depending upon term as Senator)
- B. Morgan will be sending out a letter to LAC instructors in the fall reminding them of the syllabi statement, the goals and purposes of the category they are teaching.

V. Capstone Management

Before we discussed the management of Capstone it may be prudent to clarify the definition of Capstone – the guidelines for the new Capstone model were discussed and it was noted that any changes in the guidelines would require approval of the Faculty Senate. One aspect of many of the new Capstone courses is that many are 3-credit courses. Only a few are 2-credit – here are the 2 credit courses –

- Leadership and Professional and Civic Competencies
- Lies and Lying in Personal and Professional Life (though it should be 3)
- Obesity and Diabetes: Science, Sociology and Economics
- Socio-Economic Reality of Central America
- Environment, Technology, and Society

The current model being worked on by the LACDT favors a 3-credit Capstone course. If there are going to be any changes in the description/definition of Capstone, it should come from the work of the LACDT/Curriculum Taskforce.

Dunn suggested that in the LAC course proposal instructions/form there are instructions about including a well defined syllabus, including course requirements, grading/evaluation criteria, lists of texts or readings – basically a really, really good syllabus. Also courses that may want to be included in some college or department specific areas of the LAC, such as a Music course that wants to be included in the Physical Science part of the LAC should have letters of support from the departments currently in that area (the Physical Sciences), since the LACC would no doubt consult

with those departments any ways. The basic upshot is that the instructions should just be as clear as possible to make the course proposal process as painless as possible.

Capstone registration was next discussed, and this raises the issue of waiting lists and majors getting into the course ahead of non-majors. It was suggested that for courses to be included in the Capstone category they must meet the following criteria – “Registration preference (priority?) can not be given to students based upon their major.” Another suggestion is that the LAC Coordinator manages the waiting lists for the courses. This might be a point of contention for some courses that were originally major courses.

The logical method of management for enrollment control of Capstone should lie with the LAC Coordinator. If departments want to use the course for their majors then they (the departments) should offer more sections of the course or remove it from the Capstone category. Priority enrollment would be for graduating students (last semester seniors), and those that have a limited option for course selection, due to a looming graduation date. Currently only a few of the new Capstone courses can be counted towards specific majors. Currently Morgan has contact with the instructors for the Capstone courses about their class sizes and limits. In the future, if the LAC Coordinator controls the enrollment, it is foreseeable that this relationship will continue in a manner of collegiality. It is also likely that as part of the assessment of Capstone courses, an important indicator of their success is student major diversity. This was reported on previously to the Faculty Senate and it would be possible to monitor this each semester and note any “clusters” of majors in certain courses.

The assignment of instructors to courses was discussed next. It wasn't known if any sort of policy existed concerning the assignment of instructors, or the prevention of such assignments. This may be an issue of the collective bargaining agreement. In general faculty assignments are made by the department head. With the Capstone courses now on the books, it is possible that instructors could be assigned to a course that might not be appropriate. What sort of limits does the LACC have in preventing inappropriate assignments? It might be best to have the LAC Coordinator or the LACC act like a department head in approving instructors.

VI. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was made by Dunn, seconded by O'Meara. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Next Meeting – April 20, 2007

Respectfully submitted,
Siobahn Morgan