Minutes of Core Review Committee
September 25, 2007

The Core Review Committee met Sept. 25, 2007 in Kirby 108. Members present: Brian Whitman, Andrew Miller, Ernie Trujillo, KarenBeth Bohan, Diane Wenger, Amy Patton (ex-officio), and Carl Santana (student representative). The meeting was called to order at 11:07 a.m.

Minutes: The minutes of September 13 were approved as written.

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Math Department Proposal: Professors John Harrison and V. Ming Lew presented the Math Department WAC proposal. Professor Lew explained that assessment is done in the form of a portfolio of the senior project. (Professor Bohan noted the need for a rubric and assessment plan).

Professor Harrison explained that in computer science there is a lot of documentation and problem writing as well as a research paper.

Professor Lew said that the challenge in his department is getting faculty buy-in, and he requested guidance in implementing the program. A workshop presented by an outside facilitator on WAC for math and sciences would be helpful; Dr. Lew will raise the issue with the Dean.

Dr. Whitman indicated he is willing to talk to the department and that he will also urge the Provost to fill the vacant WAC director position.

By unanimous vote the Math Department’s proposal was approved.

Multicultural/Global Component: Dr. Whitman summarized the CRC’s actions on the multicultural/global awareness component of the Core/Gen Ed curriculum. There has been discussion about calling this “human awareness.” The committee has approved the four components, but after hearing from some faculty members, we realized we need more emphasis on the global awareness piece. The committee agreed to invite the Provost to a future CRC meeting to give us his charge on the general education curriculum.

WAC Proposal, School of Pharmacy: Professor Ed Foote, chair of the curriculum committee for Pharmacy, and student Dana Manning presented the School of Pharmacy WAC proposal. Professor Foote explained that there is a robust writing component in the curriculum, including technical and reflective writing. The department recognizes the need for an improved assessment program. Dr. Bohan is helping with this; she explained that they are reviewing electronic assessment programs for pharmacy, but will do a manual portfolio this year. The department may also bring in an expert on the pedagogy of writing.

By majority vote, the School of Pharmacy’s WAC proposal was approved (Dr. Bohan abstained).

First-Year Foundations Program Document: Professor Andy Miller explained that the document in question came out of FYF faculty discussions. Professor Wenger noted that working in groups does not seem to fulfill a goal of “openness to diversity.” Morrison commented that there is a body of knowledge about diversity, and we are missing the boat by not including that in FYF. Professor Miller reiterated that there is a tension between consistency in FYF and academic freedom (not to mention faculty resistance in some cases). There has been a concerted
effort by the FYF committee to deal with diversity; there is a difference of opinion about how this is accomplished. Dr. Wenger suggested that FYF seems like the ideal place to include diversity and global awareness issues in a meaningful way.

Carl Santana offered the student perspective; as a transfer student he did not have to take FYF, but he has heard from his friends that it is “a complete waste of time and an easy 4.0.”

Professor Bohan commented that the FYF course outcomes (as shown on this draft document) are geared toward faculty rather than being student-focused objectives. No action was taken on the FYF document.

WAC Proposal, Communication Department: Professor Mark Stine presented the Communication Department WAC Proposal, explaining that writing is central to the discipline. Majors do a number of forms of writing, and all courses (including public speaking) have a writing component. In addition, the department has solid assessment goals and has been assessing the program since 2003. In addition to senior seminar papers, assessment is conducted in a number of other courses, including internship experiences, where the student and faculty receive feedback from the professional community. The only area where the department could use some help is in a formalized program for adjuncts to help them teach and evaluate writing.

The Communication Department’s WAC Proposal was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Wenger