CORE REVIEW COMMITTEE  
November 10, 2005  
MINUTES

The Core Review Committee (CRC) met Thursday, Nov. 10, in Breiseth 103. Committee members present were: Ellen Flint*, Susan Hritzak*, Art Kibbe, Gina Morrison, Amy Patton*, Marianne Rexer, Diane Wenger, and Brian Whitman. Also attending was Associate Provost Barbara Loftus. Chair Whitman called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m. (*non-voting, ex-officio member).

On motion by Dr. Rexer, seconded by Dr. Kibbe, the minutes of the Oct. 27, 2005 meeting were approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Dr. Whitman announced that he has distributed the Writing Across the Curriculum proposal to everyone who needs to sign. Some departments may move slower than others because they want to talk about it with department members, but we cannot move forward without all necessary signatures.

Dr. Whitman noted that we are still waiting for a student representative to be appointed, but he hopes to have that person in place by the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Dr. Loftus distributed a summary of the actions taken by the former Core Review Committee. She explained that the old committee was an ad hoc committee, appointed by then-Provost Jim Rodechko. Its members were: John Hepp (chair), Mark Stine, Janet Starner, Steve Tillman, Bob Tuttle, Will Terzaghi, and Terry Zipay. (This committee is not to be confused with an appointed Task Force on core revisions). With the formation of the present elected CRC, the power of reviewing the core is now returned to the faculty.

Dr. Loftus distributed a document explaining the Learning Goals (LGs) established by the previous for each skill requirement and distribution requirement of the core. In many cases, these goals were added to an on-going assessment process. There is a wide range of completion of the outlined tasks; with the exception of COM 101, HST 101 and PHL 101, there is not an active gathering of data in the general education courses at this time. The LGs were set by a point person on the committee—in some cases in consultation with a small group from his/her discipline, but in others there was no department involvement. In many cases the LGs are very program or department specific. For example, Janet Starner was (rightly) concerned that the initial plan for evaluating the written component would put a strain on the English department, and this has since been changed.

Dr. Whitman asked who has seen this document; are there pre-expectations? Dr. Loftus explained it has gone to the President, Provost, maybe the Chair of the Curriculum Committee, but it has not been distributed to faculty or trustees. She pointed out that they may be some
general concern that the previous committee’s work has disappeared; the CRC agreed that a memo of appreciation should go out to the previous committee members.

Dr. Loftus also distributed a document explaining the General Education Requirements/ Middle States standards. She explained that in 2009 Wilkes will create a document showing the University’s Gen Ed and assessment methods; groups will come together in 2008 to begin this work. Middle States will want to see proficiency in the areas listed on third page (numbered 29). The major weakness that Middle States has been finding is no linkage between Gen Ed skills and abilities and major courses (i.e., outcome-related versus course related). Another weak area (at Wilkes and in general) is information literacy. This used to be housed in the library, but now it is broader than this—it means how we offer students the opportunity to learn how to research. Our weakness is that our methodology on delivering this is not documented; we need “transparency”—evidence of how we are doing this already. (For more information, publications on accreditation, standards, etc., see the Middle States website (www.msche.org).

Dr. Loftus next discussed the Assessment Committee; this committee was crafted to create a culture of assessment on campus, and by now it may have outgrown itself and be ready for a new charge. That is, the Assessment Committee might assist the CRC in assessing Gen Ed by gathering information, models and best practices of how assessment is done. Dr. Whitman asked if it is time for FAC to disband the Assessment Committee. Dr. Loftus suggested that the three elected faculty members could be absorbed into CRC, almost as a subcommittee. (Assessment would then be more of a faculty-led process than it is under present “hybrid” committee).

Discussion followed on how the two committee should relate. Dr. Kibbe disagreed with making Assessment a subcommittee of the CRC because it has a separate function—to tell how well students are doing and how well the CRC is doing. It has a quality control function and should remain a parallel committee. Dr. Flint asked if the Assessment Committee is assessing “delivery” of the core; Dr. Kibbe suggested it was outcomes, not process that is being assessed. The CRC then would decide how to make changes, if needed. Gina Morrison proposed we have more time to think about this critical issue since assessment is so integral to revision.

Dr. Loftus pointed out that some departments may be shooting for the Learning Goals outlined in the old committee document, and she asked if we want them to continue. Dr. Whitman offered to contact the departments for status reports (and to applaud their efforts so far). Dr. Loftus will provide Dr. Whitman with end of year reports from COM 101, HST 101, and PHL 101.

Dr. Kibbe suggested we think about whether we are developing a core based on process or outcomes. (Gina Morrison distributed Temple University’s template, and noted that that institution’s core does both.)

For next meeting (Dec. 8): Dr. Loftus will bring in a draft charge to the Assessment Committee. Phil Simon and Dr. Flint will work with Dr. Whitman to produce a “road map” of reporting structures. Phil Simon and Dr. Loftus will talk to the Assessment committee about
their issues and concerns and report back to the CRC. Dr. Whitman will report on the status of departments toward LGs. Gina Morrison will present models of other cores for review.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Wenger