MEMORANDUM

TO: Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
FROM: Debbie Tahmassebi, Associate Dean
DATE: October 14, 2014
RE: Materials for Special Curriculum Committee Meeting 10/14/14

Agenda

1) Approval of Minutes from September 30, 2014 (pages 2-3)
2) New Business
   a. UCC Membership review of Department level input/motions/memos on Revised Core Proposal – Spring 2014 (pages 4-6)
3) Adjournment
MINUTES OF THE
UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETING
September 30, 2014


Alternates Present: A. Phukan

Guests Present: M. Mayer, N. Moayedi, K. Moran, A. Stoll

Debbie Tahmassebi brought the meeting to order at 12:15

• Approval of minutes from May 13, 2014. There was discussion requesting more detailed minutes. With the inclusion of an attachment (C. Adler memo), the minutes were approved. The minutes (and attachment) have been forwarded to the Executive Committee of the Academic Assembly.
  
  Motion to approve: A. Orona/C. Adler – 16/0/2

Announcements:

• Noelle Norton – An article from The Chronicle of Higher Education titled “End the Protectionist Policies in the Liberal Arts” was handed out and briefly discussed.

• Debbie Tahmassebi – Committee members were reminded of updated procedures regarding the agenda and proposal materials. A brief discussion followed where it was decided that the Course Proposal Action Sheet will be modified to more clearly articulate when Department Action Form needs to be completed (revised form attached).

New Business - Expedited Actions

1. Music 499 proposal – unit change: revising existing course from 1 unit to variable 1-3 units. No objections – approved.

New Business - Non-Expedited Actions

1. Revised core proposal/Core Governance: Discussion centered on the Explorations - Scientific Inquiry and the proposed change to a 4-unit science inquiry requirement as compared to the current requirement of 1 natural science and 1 physical science course (1 with lab). Among other issues, considerations for student scientific literacy, the value of compromise, a focus on student learning outcomes and the potential for impactful course re-design were addressed.
  a. Motion to recommend a revision to the proposed Explorations - Scientific Inquiry requirement to 2 science courses with at least one being a lab (one in natural and one in physical science). Because of time and a desire to get department-level feedback, the motion was postponed until the next meeting.

Extra meeting to continue discussion regarding the new core and core governance scheduled for Tuesday, October 14, 12:15-1:15pm in KIPJ-Boardroom.

Adjourned
**Integration** (Preceptorial, 1st year integration, advanced integration)

- Some English faculty are interested in attaching 121 to LLC’s; others are not.
- Concern expressed about the 3 Learning Outcomes for the Integration component – probably over-ambitious with limitations of 1-unit and faculty director time. (Math&CS; 11/0/3)
- LLC activities should not take away from academic components of preceptorial courses however integration, addition of time and 1-unit, is a critical component of the 1st year experience. (EOS)
- **Motion** (Math&CS) – Change the references to “4-unit preceptorials” to “4 or 5 unit preceptorials.” (rationale: some preceptorials are already 4 units; 11/0/3)
- **Motion** (Math&CS) – Remove the requirement of the Advanced Integration component and project. (5/2/7)
- **Motion** (Math&CS) – Remove Learning Outcome 2 for the Advanced Integration experience. (10/0/4)
- **Motion** (Music) – Eliminate the proposal to change Preceptorial courses to 4 units, and consider integration an objective achievable within 3-unit Preceptorial courses. (Music Department is unanimously opposed to changing Preceptorial courses to 4 units and opposed to any requirement that courses use Friday afternoons for integration activities; note – some faculty in Philosophy are also opposed to use of Friday afternoons for integration activities).

**Foundation** (Theological and Religious Inquiry, Philosophy, Ethics)

- Recommendation to remove or appropriately modify the statement “the contribution by any other unit is possible” for the ethics sequence (Philosophy)
- Support expansion to 2 diversity courses with one focused on American experience (especially on the history and legacy of racial discrimination in the US). (Poli Sci & IR)
- Concerned about ability to teach stated diversity learning outcomes (Poli Sci & IR)
- **Motion** (Music) – Reinforce the prior UCC recommendation to recommend removal of the geographic distinction in the DISJ requirement, such that two DISJ courses are required, and all courses with a DISJ designation may fulfill the requirement equally. (Rationale: current proposal makes an explicit distinction that studying these issues *domestically* is required, while studying them in an *international* context is strictly optional.)

**Exploration** (required inquiries: artistic, scientific, social & behavioral; selected inquiries: historical, literary, technological)

- Proposal alternate model in which all areas of inquiry are ranked equally and students may select any five out of six. (English – all faculty with 1 exception; rationale: concern and objection to the perceived privileging of certain areas of inquiry over others)
- Support selection of 2 of 3 in historical, literary and technological inquiry (EOS)
- **Sheehan motion** to add additional science class
  - Do not support (History – 5 responding faculty); concern that motion negates several years of thoughtful and productive negotiation and compromise and may jeopardize the entire core reform and encourage every stakeholder to lobby for more representation in the Core; (Chemistry and Biochemistry – vote of 10 to 3); several faculty value the idea of having more breadth and topics covered in the core
  - Department is split - switch to 1 science course may be acceptable if majors that deal with issues related to the natural world expand breadth of their majors to include relevant science materials/course/s; 1 course requirement must be taken at USD (no AP or transfer courses accepted); learning outcomes must address scientific method. (EOS)
Competencies (writing, mathematical reasoning & problem solving, quantitative reasoning, second language, final year experience)

Writing
• The English department is willing to share the responsibility of teaching 1st year writing with other departments, provided those courses are staffed by faculty trained in writing instruction. (English)
• Recommendation for a University-wide Director of Undergraduate Writing, housed in the English Department, to oversee all writing instruction for undergraduates. (English)
• Preference for a more robust developmental writing instruction program. (English, Languages and Literature – suggestion to use 2 units here instead of for 1st year integration; AA+AH - interest in restoring UD writing)

Quantitative Reasoning
• Support QR and expect skill can be implemented in courses taught by multiple departments (EOS)
• Suggested description of second language competency: “Second Language competency for the Core Curriculum refers to the ability of students to achieve third-semester proficiency in a second language in speaking, listening, writing, and reading, which is the equivalent of the intermediate level of proficiency according to the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) guidelines. In addition, language courses integrate cultural competencies into their curricula as an integral part of language learning. It is recommended that incoming students begin their language studies upon arrival at USD and take language courses in consecutive semesters to avoid gaps in their progress. In order to fulfill the Core second-language requirement, students must demonstrate intermediate-level proficiency by passing a third-semester language course (201) or the equivalent (Competency Exam, AP credit, etc.).” (rationale: new language corrects inaccuracies and provides greater detail than current language). (Languages and Literature)

Final Year Experience
• Motion (Math&CS) – Remove the requirement of a capstone project and/or capstone course as well as reference to capstone courses. (5/3/6)

Core Governance
• Concern that any governance structure must ensure that courses proposed to meet a particular requirement (e.g., Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice, Catholic Intellectual Tradition) be given a fair hearing. (English)
• Preference for more clarity about how learning outcomes will be proposed and finalized (Poli Sci & IR)
• Would prefer details about makeup of governing committee (or subcommittees) be specific in advance. (Poli Sci & IR)
• Prefer membership of governing committees be determined by election. (Poli Sci & IR).
• General support for Core Governance proposed by the CPC (History – 5 responding faculty); support for expertise being independent of department affiliation; (EOS – support hybrid structure but would like committee make-up more fleshed out)
• Objection to creation of new Senate Core Committee that cuts out the UCC. (Philosophy, Languages and Literature)
• Concern about what seems like a new and unwieldy bureaucracy with possibly unfair review process (Poli Sci & IR)
• General concern for how study abroad courses will be reviewed to determine if they fulfill Core requirements (Languages and Literature).
• We recommend the language: “The Scientific Inquiry course must include a lab. We expect courses from the natural sciences departments will make up the majority of the offerings, but natural science courses by any other unit are possible.” Instead of: “The Scientific Inquiry course must include a lab. We expect courses from the natural sciences will make up the majority of the offerings, but the contribution by any other unit is possible.” (Chemistry and Biochemistry)

• Guerrieri proposal
  - Section I.E. (back-to-back CCC/UCC meetings) – meeting schedule would require 2-hour commitment of UCC and CCC membership and potentially no lead time for UCC to review CCC decisions. (Comm)
  - Generation of Senate Core Curriculum Committee (SCCC) – jurisdictional implications of having CAS Dean Chair the SCCC. Suggestion: elect Chair as with any other standing committee. (Comm)

• Motion (Math&CS) – On page 7 of the April 2014 Proposal for the Core Curriculum, in paragraph 3 under Core Area Faculty Committees, change the sentence: “Expertise is determined by a successful record of teaching undergraduate courses in the area represented by the committee and evidence of scholarship within the area” to “Expertise is determined by experience of teaching undergraduate courses in the area represented by the committee or evidence of scholarship within the area.” (12/0/2)

• Motion (Math&CS) – Compensation in the form of either released time or stipends will be provided for those who serve on the initial Core Area Faculty Committees. (rationale: There will be a huge workload for the faculty serving on the initial Core Area Faculty Committees). (11/0/3)

General/Other

• The Environmental and Ocean Science department strongly supports the new proposed core and would like to see it implemented as soon as possible.

• Overwhelming majority of Philosophy Department is opposed to the new core (all those who expressed an opinion) for reasons/factors listed below.
  - Expense (direct payment for administrative tasks, costs of faculty time, infrastructure and implementation) of program which are likely to outweigh any benefits; feel that CPC overstepped their bounds when making recommendations regarding potential infrastructure, buildings and hiring needs.
  - Increase in faculty workload (i.e. increased committee service – estimated at 1360-1520 hours/year)
  - Undermines autonomy of departments and individual faculty (moves oversight towards administrators and committees)
  - Promotes academic politics without end (proliferation of administrative positions and committees intruding on business of academic departments).
  - Case has not yet been made for replacing disciplinary distribution requirements with “learning outcomes.”

• Like the opportunity for interdisciplinary teaching, integrated learning and flexibility students gain in their educational experience. (Philosophy)

• Potential adverse impact on enrollment for certain departments may be unintentional consequence of new Core Curriculum and may lead to decrease in breadth of student exploration through electives. (Music)

• Concern that Core requirements seem to be driven by assessment (Poli Sci & IR)

• Will be more comfortable if implementation plan was more transparent (Poli Sci & IR)

• Motion (Math&CS) – Postpone all further work on core revision until such time as we have a plan for handling the expansion of the School of Engineering. (rationale: Engineering is expanding at a rapid pace and we are not aware of a plan to manage the consequences of this expansion. (8/1/5).