

College of Liberal Arts Curriculum Committee
Minutes for 18 December 2007

Present: Ann Coone, Babak Elahi (Chair), Christine Kray, Bill Middleton, David Neumann, Linda Rubel, Richard Santana, Tina Lent

The Curriculum Committee discussed Policy I.B.2 to resolve the question of whether the core course requirements in Social Science and Humanities should specify that the 2 courses in each of these areas be drawn from different “departments” or different “disciplines.” The Committee also considered the Proposal for a Minor in Urban and Community Studies: Urban Issues and Urban Policy, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, College of Liberal Arts. The Committee also discussed the committees work in the coming month. It was also resolved that the committee will gather all minutes taken so far this year, and post them publically.

I.B.2.: Disciplines, Departments?

A General Education Steering Committee document from October 2004 specifies Departments. Other arguments were offered for or against the use of departments, disciplines, or no designation. The use of the word “departments” might restrict students from taking courses in interdisciplinary programs, such as Women’s Studies. The use of the word “disciplines” would allow students to take two different courses in different disciplines but within the same Department (e.g.: a music course and a visual art course in Fine Arts). Furthermore, members of the committee argued that the use of the term “departments” does not reflect current pedagogical and scholarly work that is cross-disciplinary.

Motion: That neither of the terms “discipline” nor “department” be used to specify how students are to choose the two courses required within the Humanities core or the two courses required in the Social Science core. The motion carried unanimously.

Urban Issues and Urban Policy Minor:

The minor proposal included a number of inconsistencies in its references to course numbers and names: “Sustainable Communities,” and “Crime, Justice and Communities.” Furthermore, the proposal did not specify whether courses from other departments included in the minor had pre-requisites or not. The Committee recommended that the proposal consider these questions. The Committee also recommended that the authors of the minor proposal also consider the question of prerequisites that precede the five-course sequence of the minor. Other minors—e.g. Economics and Psychology—do have prerequisites. The Committee recommended that the Department of Sociology and Anthropology consider the balance between pedagogical rigor and student flexibility and facility in completing the minor. Members of the committee argued for pedagogical rigor and referred to both Economics and Psychology as successful models.

Resolved: The Department of Sociology and Anthropology will resubmit the minor proposal after making appropriate changes, including any supporting materials (such as comparisons to existing minors), and include reference to prerequisites for courses drawn from other departments. The revised proposal will be considered on 8 January 2008.

New Business: Middleton distributed a proposal for a minor in Archaeological Sciences, to be considered on 8 January 2008. Elahi reported that the revised proposal for a B.S. in Applied Philosophy has been resubmitted. The Committee will discuss this proposal on January 15, 2008, and invite the Philosophy Department to attend the second half of a two-hour meeting scheduled for that date.

Submitted by Babak Elahi