

10-25-2016

Minutes, Curriculum Committee Meeting, Tuesday, October 25, 2016

Curriculum Committee

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Curriculum Committee Minutes – Rollins College

DATE: October 25, 2016 - 12:30pm

LOCATION: Bush 176

ATTENDEES: Amy Armenia, Mario D'Amato (Chair), Jonathan Harwell, Nick Houndonougbo, Emmanuel Kodzi, MacKenzie Moon Ryan (fill-in Sec.), Nancy Niles, Jay Pieczynski, Gabriel Barreneche, Claire Strom, Holly Pohlig, Steve Booker, Mae Fitchett, Grant Cornwell

ABSENT: Mattea Garcia (Sec.), Zhaochang Peng, Shaayann Khalid, Meribeth Huebner, Laura Pfister

AGENDA/DISCUSSION:

Old Business

1. Approval of Minutes: JP moves, AA 2nd, unanimous approval.
2. Sub-committee updates
 - a. New course: AA – trickle of proposals, working on revision of forms.
 - b. Appeals: GB – 8 appeals tackled yesterday including late drops, online class concurrent with Rollins, Foreign Language exemption.

New Business

1. Welcome President Cornwell to discuss Strategic Planning tasks.
Framing, assigned tasks related to two issues: imbalance of majors and alignment of mission (MD'A)
(Divided Curriculum Committee into two, representation from every division among faculty)
1A – Mission, Amy Armenia leading with four team members + Carol Lauer
1B – Majors, Mario leading with six members + Gabriel, Claire, Tiffany
gathering institutional info – Robin Mateo, Steve Booker, Claire Strom, Udeth Lugo
look at peer and aspirant schools – Gabriel
gather studies and higher ed commentaries – MMR
outreach to faculty - in-person colloquia scheduling, online survey
Phases
 - a. gather data and information
 - b. gather ideas and proposals
 - c. deliberate ideas from proposals
 - d. come up with a few top recommendations from faculty + CC to provide possible endorsements
 - status: halfway through, hoping to bring together early November
 - goal: what are we trying to accomplish? (Mario reflecting, met with Claire)

What is the idealized distribution of majors that we would like to see Rollins move toward?
-by what means do we establish that? Possible ideas include:
-10/1 faculty ratio: majors should match faculty (perhaps)
-total # students divided by # of majors = average per major
-division: some degree of parity among students across divisions
-Carnegie: accommodate accreditation (met with Udeth)
-multiple principles possible and possibly combination of those
-trying to steer ship, not implement quota or limit, but consider general direction
- philosophical, pedagogical and financial considerations

How do we get there?
-proposals by Grant (reflective declaration of major + 2nd major/minor in new division)
-then consider policies to support

GC: Grateful to provide strategic planning context: why ask questions? what are hopes and aspiration?

1A Mission: elaborate and specifying terms of mission

- four terms exactly right for us, yet also vague
- provide some guidance but need to elaborate
- since mission = promise, set of qualities be true of our graduates
- every single program, dept should make substantive (and easy) case what they contribute
- disparity in where depts. are themselves in defining themselves in relation to mission
- inductively: reading where faculty think we are,
- also exercise license for deductive creativity, elaborate terms based on our understanding
 - i.e. what does it mean to be a global citizen?
 - should be able to articulate with precise rhetoric, but also learning goals
 - next step: formulate our assessment deliver on our promise (but not drive project)
- greater rigor and specificity by what we mean on these terms
 - set a list of graduate qualities for approval/consensus by faculty and staff
 - “this is what we show up to accomplish everyday”
- needs to take the time it will take, philosophical project

Discussion

MD'A: definitions, clearer articulations, plus learning outcomes, are goals?

GC: should involve robust faculty discussion, don't expect uniformity of view

AA: inductive piece is accomplishable by end of semester;

currently some disconnect btw mission, learning outcomes, and assessment

what happens when we re-think how to do this?

that stage will take longer; spring semester continuation?

GC: leave aside assessment question right now, avoid fatigue, tedium, but focus on principled, philosophical discussion of issues.

MD'A: Stick college-wide rather than program-specific

GC: adopt discipline about asking critical question about what our programs offer/deliver

think highly of AAC&U, might be helpful to consult, but should not be drop-down menu,

have local understanding of our mission that we create

1B Majors: Motivations (GC)

- organization – created administrative challenge.
 - Business too much center of gravity pulling students and resources.
- student learning and intentionality
 - thrives when they choose it intentionally, reflection, and autonomy of thought
 - (not with predetermined belief, unduly influenced by parents, or mistaken connection between major and career = need to disrupt!
 - But our policies don't afford us that disruption
- ideas: ask students to be more intentional, choose major on purpose, having broader experience with areas of inquiry
- feasible? some majors have courses that must begin in first year (lock-step)
 - can begin courses on tracks, but doesn't necessarily need to declare
 - look at scholarships tied to declaration of majors
 - accomplish through advising

Discussion

GB: peer institutions: many declare spring of year 2

GC: it's the norm, with good reason. Can do something much more robust than policy: assertion of one's identity. Would like us to explore idea of process, make a statement, case, intention in writing, conversation with advisor, reasons *why* declaring major (then advisor to sign off on)

GB: Bowdoin – sit-down conversation with advisor, map-out process to graduation, then ok'd

MD'A: Hampshire – akin to creating own major.

GC: feeds into post-graduate preparedness: engender habit of reflection and intentional planning:

study abroad, what internships where and why, building towards a direction?

career & life planning: when I get there, I have a clear idea of why I'm here and where I'm going

What is the sense of faculty right now on major declaration?

NH: closely tied to system of advising – who is going to be having these conversations?

-keep existing system of faculty or more to centralized advising system?

GC: as you seek to declare major, student have conversation with potential major advisor.

-Courtship period, if you like during sophomore year.

-Application, so to speak: here's why I want to be a major and have you as an advisor.

TG: Shaayann – from the student perspective, wants safety net in Tiffany's office.

NH: seeking neutral advising, then specific advising in major.

MF: used to have major declaration day through TJ's and advising support.

-Assist with undeclared transfer to major.

-First-year advisor, general advisor (had 2-3 professional advisors)

-Transitioned out with Student Success coaches and shifts to GAs

-Part of major/minor fair in spring of freshman year.

-Course co-taught with explorations to aid student decision-making.

AA: 3/2 program – compressed schedule.

-Goes against exploration, reflection, being formed by experiences.

CS: many majors need to track. Are we talking about a subset of students or majority?

MD'A: Trying to change culture of how students relate to their majors.

Minor in Different Division

GC: drawing on dinners with hundreds of students: I came here as an X major, and discovered Y and realized how they connect

-Best of students find own way to liberalize and integrate own education.

-Promise to encourage this by academic policy?

GB: Reaching out to other schools: BA – yes require minor, BS + BSW no, many do require.

TG: Plans to complete degrees related to Financial Aid (i.e. too many credits)

SB: need to leave one course in major to be eligible for Financial Aid and NCAA scholarships

MF: look at large majors to reassess if begin to require minor (HP: also dual degree and 3/2)

EK: Helping students figure out in major of consideration: front load a lot of things in first-year

-need to adjust from HS to college, so encourage to take 20 credits?

-make decision intentionally and informed, not as a guess (on thoughts or experience?)

JP: against waiting a year to declare, but in favor of intentional process

-suggests meta-major: explore within division, then take "track" in first-year

-consider ripple effect on entire curriculum

MD'A: example: math-skills inventory then CHM 120 – function as head's up if ready for this path

MF: How do we help the students who need to re-evaluate path?

-Consider RCC as place for exploration of liberal arts?

JP: Teaching RCC, does content, but thinks role of RCC is more exploration.

-rFLA role?

- # of classes in major to create room for minor?
 - How and when decide major?
 - parental influence?
 - What type of students are we recruiting?
 - What skills to do students entire with (Pre-Calc vs. Calc II, for example).
 - How did we get to this place of imbalance? Lab vs. no lab?
 - Lots of questions to answer and think through as we plan and then implement policy.
- GC: Look to peers to see what they're doing, since we're all struggling with this questions/issue.
- Does Rollins limit # of courses in particular department? No.
- TF: Advising choices. Bottleneck at intro level, can't get in to try if seats taken by upper-classmen.
- GC: Range of required classes in majors?
- 10-class to 18-classes required: largest? three business and CHM at higher end.
 - Learning to which we aspire for our students
 - senior exercise to choose problem/question and integrate their major + minor
 - engage in integrative analysis, how rich that would be.
- EK: Admissions.
- Is there a way to engage parents?
 - Help them understand that their children/our students need space to make own decisions.
 - Reassure children are in good hands?
- Imbalance of majors.
- thoughts go toward business, but at the time created, it was international business:
 - always require a language (plus area studies) would help control #.
 - Helped ECON, which took non-language/area studies.
 - Major is large, but minor is easy with language + area studies requirements
 - But with new business major: no language, increased numbers substantially.
- MMR: concentration embedded in Business keeps students in BUS rather than exploration beyond
- EK: promised no new resources, had to make do with existing, also conversations about 128-credits
- Adjusted INB major:
- OLD: 3 language + 3 area studies + AACSB accreditation
 - NEW: 5 courses with 300-level language + 300 area studies required, three others your choice
[both imply hidden prereq]
 - INB made decisions themselves, didn't consider competing with BUS/SEB/COM
- MF: INB majors typically have minor. BUS, SEB, COM typically do not have minors.
- Also shift in numbers from INB to BUS/SEB in Mae's experience.
- NH: no competition currently because just one department.

Announcements

1. Colloquia next week: Wed., Nov. 2 and Fri., Nov. 4 from 4-5pm (Claire to organize room)
 - a. Invite all faculty for free-flowing discussion of issues surrounding two questions: idealized distribution of majors and how do we get there?
2. Late faculty line requests for next academic year (Jenny Cavanaugh): have those go through CC THIS semester as trial run. Submitted by Nov. 7 to be turned around by Nov. 23.
3. Next week: History rFLA course count towards major. Continue Strategic Planning discussion.

Adjournment

AA: move to adjourn.

NN: Seconded. Meeting closed at 1:43pm.