Government/Political Science Core Curriculum Subcommittee

Minutes of 3/28/2012 meeting

Present: Shannon Fowler (chair), Anita Chadha, Peter Li, Lee Usnick, Azar Rejaie

SF reviewed information and distributed handouts, and reminded members of the proposal call announced by the Task Force for course proposals made on 3/9 by Dr. Stading. Since this announcement has gone out we will not be making a call for proposals, but instead we have been asked to provide guidance to those constructing proposals.

- Members reviewed the charge of the Government/Political Science Core Subcommittee, including integral components: we are to lead the selection of courses that meet the a) Content Description, b) Learning Outcomes of this component area.

- Discussion of current classes in the UHD catalog:
  - Current classes offered by the Political Science area were considered. AC confirmed that the content required is present in current classes, but that current objectives and outcomes that emphasize content knowledge do not necessarily meet the new outcomes required. This PoliSci area, however, is already drafting changes to their curriculum due to other TCB mandated requirements that Texas and US Government be taught in separate classes.
  - AC and PL expressed concern about this change in the PoliSci curriculum in advance of the Core changes required by 2014, and the advisability of making sure more immediate changes to classes reflect the 2014 requirements.

- Discussion turned to the TCB Learning Outcomes for the G/PS area of the Core and evaluation of course proposals.
  - LU offered the use of rubrics used by the College of Business in several classes evaluating critical thinking skills. While she is not fully satisfied with the rubrics in place, she believes they can provide us with a starting point for the creation of a rubric to use for the evaluation of course proposals.
  - Concern was expressed by several members regarding the Personal Responsibility learning outcome and its measurability. Communication Skills and Critical Thinking skills can be assessed, of course, but Personal Responsibility is much harder to measure with any assurance. Discussion included various measures of critical thinking skills in current classes.
  - Conversation clarified that no prerequisites are allowed in the core, but that this does not present the same problems apparent in other Core Curriculum areas. All course proposals, to be approved, should provide examples of assignments intended to meet the learning outcomes.
    - LU offered to provide sample syllabi used by the College of Business, standardized for accreditation purposes, for their rubrics, which includes learning outcome tables.
  - AC asked if/what other courses could be fit within this area. SF responded that the Provost is stressing innovation and has made it clear that classes used to satisfy the
G/PS Core requirements do not have to come from the PoliSci area, but can come from any number of disciplines across the university.

- Discussion of deadlines, tasks, and our eventual process for evaluating course proposals ensued.
  - The primary task identified by the committee was to create evaluation criteria for proposals by the end of the Spring semester. LU is to send SF the rubrics she identified as being helpful for distribution to all committee members.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Minutes submitted by Azar Rejaie