

Minutes of the meeting of the University Core Development Committee, Monday, November 21, 2011.

The committee met at about 1:05 p.m. in Gasson 105.

Present were Nasser Behnegar, Patrick Byrne, Clare Dunsford, Judith Gordon, Laura Hake, Arthur Madigan, Suzanne Matson, Patrick McQuillan, Catherine Read, and James Weiss. Also present was Mary Crane, director of the Institute for the Liberal Arts.

The minutes of the meeting of November 2 were approved with two corrections.

The main business of the meeting was discussion with Mary Crane about the forthcoming discussions of the undergraduate core curriculum and her role in leading those discussions. Prof. Crane explained that she had come to have this role in the context of the ILA's planning to mark the university's sesquicentennial by organizing a series of general discussions about the undergraduate core. She pointed out that Dr. Garza's statement about discussions leading to possible revision of the core was significantly different from the original charge to the ILA. Her responsibility, then, is not to chair a process of core revision but to lead a series of discussions of the core starting in January 2012. There is, however, some pressure to revise the core, including pressure from some trustees. There are also desires to have more multidisciplinary core courses, to lower the number of students exempted from core courses on the strength of Advanced Placements, and in general to make our core more distinctive, attractive, and compelling. Prof. Crane expects to bring in speakers. She believes that a number of faculty are not aware of the goals of the core. She hopes to bring these goals to their attention and to educate faculty about what departments are doing in their core courses. She distributed a one-page summary of the content and goals of the core that she had written up, largely on the basis of material from Richard Cobb-Stevens and Robert R. Newton.

Prof. Crane invited comments from the group. Numerous comments and questions were forthcoming and a lively discussion ensued.

In the time remaining we considered the draft of a message to departments about learning outcomes assessment of the core. With some small adjustments the draft was approved.

Nasser Behnegar and Patrick Byrne proposed that we make time for further discussion of the cover pages for the various core requirements. Arthur Madigan agreed, noting that we had not yet acted on Michael Clarke's proposed revisions to the cover page for Natural Sciences.

It was agreed that we would meet at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, December 5 to discuss courses proposed for core credit. We then adjourned at about 2:15.

Respectfully submitted by

Arthur Madigan, S.J.