

Minutes EPC 2011-04-07

Present: Frank Gollop, Bill Keane, Brandon Marianacci, Michael Martin, Michael Moore, Bill Petri, David Quigley, Akua Sarr, David Vanderhooft, Barb Viechnicki, Greg Herbers, Nick Lessin, Beth Wallace, Kathy Dunn, Tom McGuinness

I. Minutes of Feb. 3, 2011 meeting were unanimously approved. Also, minutes of Mar. 17, 2011 were unanimously approved.

II. David Quigley introduced the draft report of the A&S Academic Affairs Sub-committee regarding credit hours in A&S for undergraduate courses, noting that the EPC aims to send a fuller version of the report to the Provost's office by June, 2011.

--Bill Petri provided an overview of the document. He introduced an analysis of process in response to the federal DOE guideline pertaining to valuation of a "credit hour."

--In terms of process, the EPC does not propose to review all university syllabi to verify compliance, but expects department chairs in A&S to present a large number of their more than 1,100 courses that will, without dispute or discussion, fill the DOE regulations of a "normal" 3-credit course (as per paragraph 1a of the federal guideline cited in the draft report).

--D.Q. suggests that the EPC will sample randomly to confirm compliance. Discussion ensued about the procedures for sampling and data collection, as well as the purposes of sampling. Some statement will need to be included in the report to the Provost's office concerning this matter.

--The process of evaluation might have application for adjusting course credit valuations, at the earliest, in 2013.

--Discussion followed concerning the evaluation of non-standard course meeting time, either with professors (e.g., in a directed readings course or lab) or otherwise.

--Required discussion sections beyond the 150 meeting minutes in a standard course are now not always treated as an additional credit hour (but sometimes are). Nick Lessin inquires if such discussion sections beyond 150 mins. should be uniformly assigned 1 credit. The consensus seems to be that they might.

--Kathy Dunn inquires about nursing labs that meet for 2 hrs and earn 1 credit, and notes that other configurations exist in nursing which may require re-valuation.

--Frank Gollop suggests that DOE paragraph 2 be more closely defined to clarify that "equivalent amount of work as required in [DOE] paragraph (1)" include stipulations for *both* direct instruction and extra work.

--Bill Petri then discussed process point 3., which requires chairs to give a list of non-certifiable "standard" courses to EPC.

--Petri also asks that process point 4, valuating individually arranged courses, devolve to departments. The members of the committee discussed whether "one hour of individual instruction is of special value" should be augmented by the phrase that "one hour" of meeting time in such individually arranged courses is expected. The precise significance of this expectation was subject to discussion. A mandate for one hour of direct meeting seems unworkable, and yet the expectation that students will regularly consult with faculty is taken for granted.

--The committee agrees to continue to evaluate how the proposal to the Provost will define this "expected" meeting requirement, its duration, and its spirit. An additional possibility is for departments to justify their meeting requirements and advisement on same to student.

--Point 5 of process was accepted as stated.

--Point 6 requires comment on ongoing random sampling of courses. Beth Wallace suggests moving point 6 after point 8.

--Point 8 notes that a process must exist for evaluating discrepancies. No discussion, but the outline offered in the draft report was considered a good first step.

--Quigley notes that Honors, Perspectives and Pulse will require special attention in connection with the credit valuation review. Directors of these courses/programs should be contacted and the draft report of the A&S sub-committee ought to be provided to those directors. Pulse in particular might be invited to present to the EPC its rationale for assigning credit hours to the service component.

--Quigley then emphasized that the EPC must broach the issue of how to value service under DOE paragraph 2, and urges that we need to offer some language on this requirement to the Provost by this summer.

--Quigley also inquires about whether a consistent standard of instructor meeting time ought to govern seminar courses, which now have slightly varying meeting times. A longer required meeting time could result in significant pressures on meeting space.

The meeting adjourned at 5:25

Respectfully submitted by David Vanderhooft, April 19, 2011.