

EPAG Minutes
Monday, September 28, 2009
3:30-5:00
Campus Center 214

Kendrick Brown, Terri Fishel, Chen Gu, Carleton Macy, David Martyn(chair), Kathy Murray, Michael Orr, Ann Minnick, Jayne Niemi, Patrick Schmidt, Robert Strickling, Tom Varberg, Eric Wiertelak

1. Our newest committee member from MCSG, Robert Strickling, was introduced to the rest of the group.
2. The minutes from September 21st were declared “far out” and approved.
3. David initiated the discussion of the Curriculum Development Plan (hereafter known as the CDP) by briefly describing its background and purpose for the students. After a brief digression about the joys of digression itself, we talked about what would make a useful CDP. It can't be too high level, nor can it be too specific. How would this document help us to make important and difficult decisions? Are there new directions that we should follow based on other dynamics, such as technology and new media? We tried to approach it from the perspective of when we want to have the document finished. Can we make that decision without knowing the intended shape of the document? Do we want to have this in place for allocations in the spring? There was some support for that. We won't know whether we will be hiring new faculty until we know more about the number of applications for the next incoming class. Kendrick reminded us that this year's EPAG is uniquely positioned in term of “veteran” EPAG members, and encouraged the completion of the CDP before the year is out to take advantage of the experienced players. David trotted out his new found talent with arrow-making, distributing a document on the evolution of the curriculum. It made clear that the CDP only comes to bear in the allocations process. Its name implies that it's more than the allocations tool that it was meant to be. Section VI of the handbook is illuminating about the history of allocations guidelines. We are caught between two levels of specificity. If individual opinions play into allocations, the decisions may seem arbitrary to those outside of the committee. But guidelines that are too strong tie the hands of the committee. Is there value to adding a “wish list” to this process if such a list is negotiated with the faculty? Could we say no to the request for an Albanian program, for example, in light of the things we *could* be doing? If that's the case, another version of the joint committee report might be a good option, as long as we aren't feeding the perception that saying no to one request means we are necessarily doing so in favor of another specific request, but for the flexibility of the college to respond to new trends and scholarship. One question - is a wish list only comprised of growth areas? Perhaps, but the CDP is only one of the criteria used in allocations. To clarify, “reversion” in the handbook means reverting to the College, not reverting to the department. Our current rules about the structure of departments make reversion a potentially devastating outcome for a small department. We went back to the handbook language that was voted in last spring that describes

- what the CDP is intended to accomplish. The curriculum of the future is what that was addressing. Being too specific could have disastrous results (the road to hell was mentioned in a variety of ways) and perhaps there should be an *allocation development plan* (which includes more than just new areas) which would be intended to have the best possible input from the greater faculty. Since we don't want to spend the semester trying to change the name of the document, we want to make clear what the scope of it really is. How do we give the assurance that positions are not allocated by horse-trading by some committee? We seem to be leaning towards a form like the joint committee report, with a call to the faculty for input. We are not ready for the faculty meeting or prime-time – not yet! We talked again about the timeline of allocations, and how that informs the timeline for the CDP. Maybe we can take the joint committee report, start from there and edit and augment as necessary. To be a *useful* tool, should it be a short list? Should it be a highly prioritized list? Discussion to be continued....
4. Kathy described the changes she proposes adding to the call for allocation requests. They concern anticipated budgetary implications and a request to include EPAG's response to the department's most recent external review. We agreed these were reasonable changes.
 5. We considered a student's request for retroactive Q credit. This request was approved for her and others in the class. The committee agreed that future requests of this type may be handled by the Gen Ed committee.

Adjourned at 5:00.

Respectfully submitted,
Jayne Niemi, Registrar