

CDP Interim Report 2013-2014

Introduction.

Section 4.VI.B of the Faculty Handbook requires EPAG to maintain a Curricular Development Plan that sets out “the College’s long-range curricular strategy.” Accordingly, in 2010 EPAG composed and affirmed a Curricular Development Plan (CDP-10) based on broad input from the campus community, particularly academic departments and programs. Besides underscoring the broad, long-term curricular principles of the College enshrined in the Handbook -- “the need to maintain the breadth and the shape of the liberal arts curriculum; the need to address imbalances that persist regarding the ratios of enrollments and majors to tenure/tenure-track-FTE across department; and the need for faculty diversity” -- the CDP also identified a number of specific priorities under two general categories:

A. Meeting Core Needs.

- (i) East and South Asia
- (ii) Historical Depth

B. Opportunities for Distinction.

- (i) Collaboration Across the Disciplines
- (ii) The Global City
- (iii) Health and Society

The Faculty Handbook states that the curricular needs described by the CDP “will be one of the factors taken into account when considering allocations requests” (Section 4, VI C) and the Allocations Committee has given due considerations to CDP-10 in its deliberations and recommendations.

CDP-2010 charges EPAG with amending the CDP “as the need arises” while ensuring “continuity”. Concerning removal of priorities, it specifically states “after three years, the committee may decide that a priority is no longer relevant and should be removed.” As for adding new priorities, CDP-10 states “when the committee deems that new priorities should be added to Section 3, it should issue a call to the faculty for proposals. It should then identify priorities on the basis of the proposals it receives.”

In accord with the charge of CDP-10, in 2013-14 EPAG began a review of progress made the last three years in furthering the Core Needs and maximizing Opportunities for Distinction. Already, EPAG has determined that B (i), Collaborations Across the Disciplines has been furthered through a number of campus initiatives, especially the Provost’s Fund for the Advancement of Collaborative Teaching (FACT) which CDP-10 itself called for. Indeed, EPAG has determined that the ‘seeds’ sown by FACT have taken root deeply and broadly across

campus and therefore the fund supporting FACT should be re-deployed as a permanent tenure line. The Provost has committed to continue to offer financial support to up to three promising collaborative teaching proposals apart from the specifically designated FACT fund. So the FACT fund has been eliminated from the CDP as of 2013. EPAG will continue to provide guidance in the selection of collaborative grant proposals. EPAG recognizes, values and will continue to encourage collaborative teaching efforts that have been underway at the college for many years.

The 13-14 Interim CDP recognizes the enormous work of the CDP-10 that laid the ground for a more comprehensive view of the College priorities when allocating positions across campus. Since the three-year review period of the CDP commenced just before the release of the Draft Strategic Plan, EPAG has opted to provide an interim report assessing the “current priorities” listed in CDP-10 rather than establishing a definitive list of priorities and a call for proposals. After broad discussions on campus of the strategic planning priorities, a full review of CDP-10 will be undertaken, including (dis-)continuation of existing priorities and addition of new priorities.

Curricular Priorities:

A. Meeting Core Needs:

Current Priorities:

1. East and South Asia: East Asia encompasses the People's Republic of China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam. South Asia encompasses Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives islands. (It is sometimes extended to encompass Mauritius, Iran, Tibet, and the British Indian Ocean Territory).

From Spring 2011, the first semester after the CDP-10 was issued, through Spring 2013, 23 distinct courses taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty have been offered which bear directly on the study of East Asia. 11 distinct courses taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty have been offered which bear directly or comparatively on South Asia. In addition, 18 courses bearing on either region have been taught during the same period by adjunct faculty, non tenure-track faculty, visiting professors, and by professors who have since left Macalester. This list does not include courses that focus more directly on language acquisition.

The list of departments includes at least twelve departments (American Studies, Religious Studies, History, Art and Art History, English, Music, Asian Studies, Economics, Political Science, Women's, Gender, and Sexualities Studies, Philosophy, Hispanic Studies) and three divisions (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Fine Arts). While the goal seems to have been met with an admirable breadth of courses, the College should remain attentive to this area of study and continue listing East and South Asia as a priority.

2. Historical Depth: While a quick study of the curriculum across the spectrum of divisions reveals that historical depth is well represented, EPAG continues to support this priority as described in the CDP-10. While new positions are not urgently needed, on-going attentiveness to historical depth is vital.

B. Opportunities for Distinction

Current priorities:

1. Collaboration across the Disciplines:

As mentioned above, after a careful survey of past FACT grants, EPAG decided, with the support of the Provost, to reallocate the tenure-track line associated with the funding of collaborative teaching grant to the general pool. Up to three proposals a year for collaborative teaching will continue to be funded each year out of discretionary funds.

2. The Global City:

The college continues to look forward to the development of this priority within the curriculum. Given a suitably expansive conception of this priority, there is already evidence of significant traction both within and beyond the thriving Urban Studies concentration. This priority should continue to be supported though it will be important going forward to continually review and re-visit its scholarly, curricular and pedagogical aims.

3. Health and Society:

Macalester offers a rich array of courses broadly related to health and society, especially in the social and natural sciences. Tenured and tenure-track faculty teach many of these courses, and a recently endowed professorship provides generous support for a teacher-scholar with interests in global health. The vitality of the curriculum in community and global health is clear, and student interest in courses related to health is robust. On the one hand, EPAG notes that the college has already attained a critical mass of courses germane to health and society; thus this priority could be dropped from the next full CDP. On the other hand, the demand for courses related to health continues to exceed capacity, and if Macalester wishes to stay current and competitive in its public health offerings, key gaps will need to be redressed.

4. Priorities introduced by EPAG 2010-2014.

This Interim Report reaffirms the two following priorities which were added by EPAG between 2010 and 2013-14:

- Mentoring of student scholarship
- Considerations on other proposals: Review the proposals in light of curricular visioning report in 2013.

New priorities:

Civic Engagement: There are many ways to conceive this priority. The Civic Engagement Center adopts the definition set out in the Mellon Curricular Pathways Grant, defined as:

"Civic engagement classes integrate course work with collaborative community research and/or other work with community groups. Pedagogies encompass community-based learning, community-based research, internships, and policy research as required or optional components of a course. Courses that have only field trips or academic research are not included in this classification."

There are other ways of understanding civic engagement and the college should be open to curricular innovations that answer to a wide variety of conceptions. The important thing is to encourage and support the core ideals of civic engagement promoted in the college mission.

A quick review of Macalester initiatives reveals that ‘civic engagement’ (broadly construed) has attracted a number of faculty of all ranks, divisions, and disciplines in a variety of venues, programs and groups. (Examples include faculty development workshops, conferences, reading groups, discussion groups, supporting student led initiatives by, for instance, speaking at student-led events and sharing their work/knowledge, and the sponsorship of internships and development of courses). While civic engagement can be tied to other priorities mentioned above, the Interim report encourages the college to set out civic engagement as a distinct priority.

Since courses with a strong civic engagement component often demand considerable time and planning, as well as college investment, the college needs to ensure that they are sustainable. They should not be taught disproportionately by visiting faculty, for example. At the same time, the college recognizes that visiting or temporary faculty are often the best positioned to connect students with the community. While we do not recommend designating specific lines to civic engagement, it is an area that has become part of the culture of Macalester and attentiveness to how new hires can contribute will further enhance Macalester's distinctiveness.

Indigenous/Native American Studies: There is a longstanding interest in strengthening Indigenous/Native American Studies at the College. These areas of study has emerged as a desired focus in faculty documents (Curricular Visioning Document; student demand related by 2013-15 student representatives on EPAG, Allocations requests). There is currently a small number of courses on indigenous cultures taught at the College. Over the years, Macalester has seen the departure, through retirement and other circumstances, of several faculty teaching in this area across various divisions and disciplines. In the interest of a curriculum that values diversity, inclusion and scholarly depth, Indigenous/Native American Studies are areas of research and teaching expertise that the college should aim to enhance.

This Interim Report recommends broad consultation of the faculty, in light of the current Strategic Planning report, review of institutional data, and a call for specific proposals, before undertaking a full revision of CDP-10. EPAG also proposes to have a five-year review and assessment of the CDP, thereafter, rather than the previously recommended three-year cycle.