Liberal Education Program Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 17, 2013
3:00- 4:45pm – ASC 201
Meeting Minutes
Present: Jen Ruggiero, Wendy Hardenberg (recording), Polly Beals, Wes O’Brien, Elliott Horch, Joe Fields, David Petroski, Jim Tait, Liz Keenan

- Meeting was called to order at 3:09 p.m.

- Announcements
  - PaCE seminar with Todd Schwendemann on Friday

- Wes moved to approve the minutes of April 3rd with a correction to the spelling of Joe Fields’ name, David seconded, minutes were approved unanimously

- Committee and Ad Hoc reports
  - Affinity groups – update, Polly Beals
    - Polly met with Creative Drive today and had a productive conversation leading toward defining their area and creating an assessment rubric
    - Natural World is continuing to meet and has a draft rubric
  - WAC - Deb Carroll
    We are choosing the student writing contest winners tomorrow. We requested and received funding for the prizes from Student Government.

We are still waiting to hear about the WAC graduate assistant for next year. The Position was awarded. Robin Troy and Tim Parrish are interviewing candidates. I worked with Tom Ferrucci to design the tasks for the WAC Graduate Assistant.

The WAC website has significant shortcomings following the transition of the University’s website last Friday. We are aware of the problems and are working to fix them - with our very limited time and expertise (or lack thereof). I met with the Cengage representative this morning about purchasing a site license for Aplia English - an online remedial English program. We will have free access to 'try out' this program. Anyone interested in seeing the capabilities of Aplia should contact me for username/password information.

The next edition of the 'Write Stuff' Newsletter will be coming out at the end of the semester. We will feature the writing center and other writing resources on campus. Polly, Mike Shea, Bob McEachern, Astrid, and Michael BenAvie are continuing to meet to discuss writing portfolios.
Old Business

- Role of affinity groups – revised statement (see attached clean document and document with tracked changes)

New Business

- The Natural World I & II Affinity Group propose to clarify the language of Key Element 3: "Significant Lab or Field Experience" as follows:

  - *Whereas to be consistent with professional standards regarding courses in science we propose:*
  *All Tier 2 Natural World I: The Physical Realm and Natural World II: Life and the Environment courses shall be required to include a minimum of 24 instruction hours devoted to collecting and analyzing scientific data in a laboratory or field setting or activities directly related thereto.*

LEPC Discussion Points

- Is this a substantive change? It would result in at least one current course not meeting the standard
- There is currently no lab hours requirement in the LEP; adding this component would reduce opportunity for courses taught by departments without significant lab space.
- The amount of time spent should be related to the pedagogy of the course, not an arbitrary number based on past practice.
- AG vote was not representative of all those teaching in Natural World.
- Significance is in educational value, not seat time
- Even some national model classes don’t fit this proposal.
- Natural World coordinator could come attend an LEPC meeting to provide more clarification if the Affinity Group feels it would be helpful.
- Possibly legitimate concerns about matching practice at other universities
- Departments could be afraid that too many classes with lesser lab requirements will cause students to abandon classes with the standard 12.2-hour lab model (except there aren’t nearly enough other classes to substantiate such fears).
- Perhaps language could be modified to refer to 24 lab hours as normative but still leave room for difference.
- Different fields have different observation to analysis ratios (i.e. homework can’t be regulated by time).
- Are we watering down national standards with the current Key Element? (maybe certain fields really should have the standard labs, but others don’t need them).
- Is it possible to come up with another way of defining “significant” that doesn’t involve specific numbers?
- A conversation would probably be better than a simple vote
- Should there be a joint LEPC/Natural World meeting in the fall?
The committee is unable to support the proposed definition of significant (i.e. 24 hours of lab). The LEPC chair, Natural World coordinator, and LEP Director will meet to discuss next steps.

- Key business for LPEC fall 2013 proposed as follows:
  - Committee meeting day/time for 2014-2015
  - Southern’s 30 credit “package” for transfer to other ConnSCU facilities
  - Articulation agreements with ConnSCU facilities for 6 floating Credits from TAP Section B
  - TAP learning outcomes and incorporation into LEP
  - Presentation of Version 3 LEP Document incorporating changes from 2012-2013
  - LEP Assessment – Michael Ben-Avie to be invited to LEPC meeting

- Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.
Affinity Groups

Approved by LEPC 4/17/13

Affinity Groups (AG) for the Tier 2 Areas of Knowledge and Tier 3 shall be open to all interested faculty members. The goal of the AGs is to ensure continuous assessment and improvement of the courses in the Tier 2 Areas and Tier 3. While the AGs are not able to make changes to LEP policy, they are encouraged to bring any such recommendations to the LEPC for discussion and further consideration.

The AGs shall convene regularly in order to:

- Share and review information regarding the curricula and pedagogies in the Areas of Knowledge.
- Determine at least one annual action item that would strengthen student success.

**Coordinators**

Each AG shall have a Coordinator to be selected by the Group for a one year term with a limit of three consecutive terms. The Coordinator shall have either had a Tier 2 in the relevant Area or a Tier 3 course approved or submitted as a proposal. It is recommended that Coordinators receive appropriate reassigned time. The Coordinator shall facilitate faculty activities in each Tier 2 Area of Knowledge or Tier 3 as required by the LEP Document and other university policies. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Convening AG meetings as needed
- Working with the LEP Director in handling transfer and other student issues
- Communicating with those who teach in the relevant Tier 2 Area or Tier 3
- Facilitating the sharing of syllabi and other instructional materials
- Serving in an advisory capacity to UWIC

**Consultants**

Consultants are self-selected members of the AGs who have expertise in their Area and are familiar with the LEP course approval process. Consultants should be capable of assisting faculty members in creating or adapting courses in their Areas or in Tier 3. The Coordinator and the LEP Director shall match interested faculty with Consultants. AG Coordinators may also serve as Consultants.
Liberal Education Program Committee

Affinity Groups

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