

Academic Assembly
April 11, 2011
1:30-3:30pm, STCN 130

MINUTES

Present: Karen Feldt, Andrew Davis, Paul Fontana, Mary Graham, Kristen Shuyler, Allison Henrich, Rob Rutherford, Chips Chipalkatti, Chuck Lawrence, William Kangas, Isiaah Crawford, Jacquelyn Miller, John Weaver, Jason Wirth, Francisco Guerrero, David Reid, Jeremy Stringer, Katherine Raichle, Sonora Jha, Brenda Broussard, SU Student Rep Mark Maddox.

Excused: John Strait.

- 1. Welcome, general by-law comments**
- 2. Minutes from 3-28-11 were reviewed and accepted.**
3. Core Revision: Presentation of Core Revision Executive Report and Faculty Survey Findings & Questions
Nalini Iyer, Associate Professor, College of Arts and Sciences,
Vicky Minderhout, Professor, Chemistry
Jeff Philpott, Assistant Professor, College of Arts and Sciences
Greg Prussia, Professor, Albers School of Business
(Nalini introduction comments) Discussion began with advocacy around core revision, provides core flexibility, ensuring that schools and departments could add as needed. Recognize that it is a work in progress that will/can be flushed out at implementation. Core was conceived through campus interaction, ie. Survey and focus groups, workshops, which allowed for contributions and best practices to be incorporated. Reports and communications have been posted on Web site along the way.

(Jeff Comments) There is a philosophical difference history and literature (chemistry and. As an outcomes based curriculum, specific mandates would not work. The minority report suggests that a person might graduate without taking certain courses, which should be required. All courses must maintain the same learning objectives regardless of course.

Outcomes based core answers the question what do we want students to know? Start with learning objectives and work back toward specific programs and classes. Want it also to be engaging and well integrated process from the student perspective.

Built around four modules: Module 1- asks student to engage with the academic life, (inquiry seminars is a key student experience within this module); Module 2- transcendent and theoretical applications of philosophy and theology (clear part of our identity as a Jesuit university; Module 3- students should experience global engagement exploring new content within the context of the global environment; Module 4- capstone project is expanded upon as key component of the module.

Smaller core, added a second science course, made it more global. Disciplines missing from current core, yes. Faculty are asked to focus a module on their discipline, interests, etc that

reflects their passions. Students will see this passion and select courses based on common interests vs. the time of day a course is running.

(Greg comments) – survey, responses were good, over 1000. Got qualitative and quantitative input. Six items focused on modules and how they would satisfy relevant outcomes. Specific results were discussed for each module and overall how the model design worked. Qualitative results indicated that there is strong support in general for the module. Out of 40 comments (endorsed with reservation), 8 dealt with history and literature. 24 – implementation category, language used were also a few.

(Katherine Raichle and William Kangas comment): Speak to the narrative of the reservations. Nalani: Faculty had options for responding, Selecting a 3 means you can live with it How organizing major reservation vs. reservation in general. People had two options: and there were a minority of comments. Discussed ensued around what it meant to endorse.

Jac Question: 71 min credits, new core is 60 credits.

David - Alison sub person Comment: 54% are opposed to or have reservations about the core. Chips reviewed the document and could see a clear endorsement. Other college endorsements were also pointed out. Discussed ensued around what was meant by reservations with many members suggesting that reservations are spread around the core, not just one or two areas.

Paul – what will happen and how will the minority issues be resolved? (Jeff – couldn't find a clear rationale that made the argument that certain skills can only be handled specifically through literature and history. Not proposing a reduction in number of history and literature course sections.

4. Dissenting Requests by FSA group (Fr Thomas Murphy)
The FSA (a group of 22 faculty within the Arts and Sciences on the Faculty-Staff Coordinating Committee) requests that the Academic Assembly include FSA on its next meeting agenda to advocate for three proposals (these are not motions, unless an AcA member chooses to make them a motion):

- a) to recommend that AcA organize and sponsor for a for discussion across the university about the core revision proposal;
- b) to recommend that AcA sponsor a university-wide vote on the core revision proposal;
- c) to recommend that AcA seek to extend the timeline for the core design phase until the end of spring quarter.

Minority Report Concerns (attached)

Erik Olsen (Political Science), Tom Taylor (history), Dan (philosophy): Proposal made public March 1. Full airing of issues has not occurred, most important decision to be made as faculty governance, what is the rush? Discussion ensued around a behaviorist approach to certain modules that might not be appropriate and should be vetted. There does not exist wide-spread

consensus among the faculty. 54% have reservations or are opposed. Those numbers suggest that there is more work to do and more discussion to go through.

Rob Questions: Is there concensus out of A&S? There will likely not be complete consensus, but there is willingness.

Concerns around learning objectives not just whetehr or not a history course is included.

Sonora: What are you expecting to be the result of delaying? Resolution to have a university wide discussion, up and down vote, and debate and impact statement (budget, faculty).

Chuck: 46 faculty were there at faculty assembly.

A&S is a major contributor and has a great deal of discontent with core. Also, this needs to be handled by faculty governance not a committee.

Dan – Perhaps three models could be presented. What evidence do we have that the existing module is a problem?

David Reid – What problems do you see with the new core other than process? An alternative framework would be useful.

Theresa Earhardt Minority Report: Represent 300 students, faculty and alumni who have signed a petition to maintain the literature and history courses. To delude the humanities requirements suggests that anyone can teach these courses, which makes SU a second rate university, and reduces the curriculm to high school. To educate the whole person, we must challenge students to consider their own prejudices , which they would avoid with the new core. Push out revision to 2013 in an effort to allow the faculty to revise appropriately.

Sonora: Explain clustering of courses? Picking and choosing and who teaches is troubling. Choices allow students to lean toward certain areas in curriculum, which might not be appropriate. Historical understanding and literature analysis would be lost. Anyone can teach anything and disciplines do not matter.

Paul: If history and literature issues were address, would survery results change to be more accepting. Yes, might make ,more feel more inclusive.

Chips: College by college the core is articulated differently. The message is being sent, which is their concern.

Isiaah: Thank you for engaging in process to consider core. Three directives – 1, commencement 2, develop a process for academic strategic action plan, 3, revise the core curriculum. As requested the committee was to develop a model, that was faculty driven, collaborative and open process. Endorses the module and process, which will take SU in the direction it needs to go. It is the best thinking in the nation around general education.

a) to recommend that AcA organize and sponsor a for discussion across the university about the core revision proposal; Has already done this.

b) to recommend that AcA sponsor a university-wide vote on the core revision proposal; The full university has been vetted. The middle category is not as vacuous as suggested. The survey allows for qualification and discernment.

c) to recommend that AcA seek to extend the timeline for the core design phase until the end of spring quarter. From the faculty, the central and clear directive was for curricular renewal and to get it done immediately (by fall 2012). This was done by the will of the faculty, who suggested they were willing to take it on. AcA, representative of the faculty, approved the action plan. Was then taken to the Board and the HEC accrediating body has also been notified that we were moving forward. Moving back would be problematic. Funding will be present to support the core going forward. There is no intention to reduce faculty numbers. Class sizes will be maintained. Promotion and tenure will not be affected by the new core.

Rob Questions: Value of outcome based core will make clear how curriculum addresses questions of what a student gains from a baccalaureate degree. How insitutions will be funded for financial aid maintain accreditation. SU needs to be able to demonstrate and prove these outcomes.

Katherine Question: Get a sense we need more time. Is that possible? Do we have any wiggle room for more dialogue?

Isiaah: There has been a 1.5 year process that has occurred. Support has been granted. To not move forward, disregards the voices of those who have spoken. Other models were considered and discussed and vetted, brought forward now for the linearity of the process. Sets a precedent around governance structure and would be dismissive if not moved forward. If sent back each college would need to reconceive the core. Professional expertise will always be considered when selecting faculty.

I. Full Assembly Discussion

Votes on Motions

To Approve/Disapprove #1 Core Curriculum Learning Objectives (from section 2 of UCRC report)

To Approve/Disapprove #2 Core Curriculum Model (from section 3 of UCRC report)

John motion, Rob second.

Discussion: Push vote to next Monday? Or next Academic Assembly mtg? Next step is to present to board, which meets next Tuesday. Discussed ensued around lack of time left in meeting. 12 out of 18 would be available. Have meeting 1:30 to 2:30 next Monday (April 18).

(Jac Question): Vote via email: is possible but must be motioned and moved.

Kangas: Who is going to implement the plan? UCRC would work with implementation team headed by director of core curriculum. Populate classes, transition in students, meet with feeder schools. Being asked to approve something without seeing funding.

Isiaah: Specific funding issues do not come to AcA. Fiscal year 2012 budget have secured items such as Web site, faculty, etc for core curriculum.

Meeting ended at 3:40pm.