

**Natural Sciences and Mathematics Council
Meeting Minutes for October 4, 2011
Nik Podraza reporting**

Meeting Called to Order at 3:32 PM by Chair Joe Schmidt.

Roll Call by (Secretary) Nik Podraza

Present: Fan Dong, John Plenefisch, Anthony Quinn, Joseph Schmidt, John Bellizzi, Don Ronning, David Krantz, Jon Bossenbroek, J. D. Smith, Nik Podraza, Denis White, Friedhelm Schwarz, Gerard Thompson, Sibylle Weck-Schwarz, Don White

Absent: Hans Gottgens, Randy Ellingson, Sally Harmych

Minutes from September 6, 2011 meeting were unanimously approved (with one typographical correction).

Update on Faculty Senate Activities:

1. The Faculty Senate continued discussion about curriculum changes.
2. *Accreditation / Self Study:* Questions were raised on the self study and its criteria required for the upcoming visit for accreditation. Information on the self study and the ability to submit new information is available on the provost's website (end of October is the deadline for changes due to a recent extension). The Self study itself is in "good shape" and will be a credible report upon completion.
3. A committee on program review for viability and sustainability is ongoing. This appears to involve both academic and financial issues. Specifically, an ad hoc committee is focusing on the process for the seven-year cycle of program review. Each "Unit" would be done at the same time (B. S. / B. A., M. S., Ph. D. in same area reviewed at the same time). It was pointed out that decisions are currently made on programs based on no data, while the proposed new approach would use a more quantitative template for resource allocation. Some notes: Faculty hiring plans need to be taken into account. Outside review must occur for unbiased standpoint.
4. Comments relayed from the Provost: Limited (~\$25k) faculty travel funds are available. [Editorial note: These funds were distributed by the provost later in the week and appear to be fully assigned. The Dean announced at Chair's meeting that a similar college-level program will be announced via the college website very soon.] There will be very little faculty hiring across the campus this year. The Texas closings of Ph.D. programs in Physics where fewer than 25 Ph.D.'s were granted in five years were discussed. Issues pertaining to how department chairs can be dismissed were also brought up, in that the President of the University has overriding power on this issue. A comment was made that the Board of Trustees has only the authority to appoint senior administrators and control the fiduciary matters of the university according to current state of Ohio legislation.

5. The application of a two-year budget cycle was brought up. The consensus said it made sense, but it was not discussed in detail.
6. Policy proposals (displayed on the provost website) were discussed. Specifically, the policy regarding shifting faculty “time accounting” to the department and college from higher levels was discussed. It is believed that the legitimate intent of the workload policy is to lower the level of “time accounting” to the department and college levels for review and justification. The subject of “credit hour equivalency” for non-teaching faculty activity (research, service) would be determined by the respective department and college. Concerns exist that this shift in the policy would lead to “inflation” of the non-teaching equivalent credit hours, and that the criteria imposed by the departments and colleges would lose credibility. It was also noted that anyone can post comments on the displayed policy changes, and policies do change based on reasonable comments.

CNSM Curriculum Committee Updates:

1. *Chemistry Department Degree Changes:* The list of courses that account for the requirements to the minor in chemistry were revised and the description of the minor was altered. In summary the minor would require 22 credit hours with a GPA above 2.0. 18 credit hours would be satisfied by general inorganic and organic chemistry classes and their laboratories, and the remaining 4 credits would consist of two upper level elective courses. The name of the B. A. in Chemistry with a Concentration in Biochemistry degree was changed simply to the B. A. in Biochemistry. A vote was taken on these changes previously approved by the curriculum committee (the revision of the course list for the minor and the change in degree name), which was unanimously approved.
2. The curriculum committee met on September 27, 2011 to begin to reconcile the voted upon and approved curriculum changes with the rest of the CNSM catalogue. Two things came out of the discussion: (1) it is clear that we had not resolved who the curricular changes would apply to (2) it became apparent that the CNSM catalogue needs some more effort and time to adopt/modify any changes—recommended that program changes are finalized first, before catalogue changes. Fall 2012 catalogue text needs to be done by the beginning of that semester.
3. CNSM requirements: Request is that chair’s and their departmental curriculum committees address any conflict between new CNSM requirements and existing department programs. “Major” and “Related” credits must be differentiated. Question arose as to the difference between the B. A. and B. S. degrees with respect to student learning outcomes. Specifically, the substantial differences in what fundamental skills the students obtain from each course of study need to be clarified.
4. The topic of Thursday’s Chair’s meeting will be the general education requirement and the competency based education concept. A discussion ensued about how student competencies (not individual students) will be assessed and how it will affect the review of the curriculum. The goal of the competency based

education concept was clarified in that it is to judge the effectiveness of the curriculum.

5. Department curriculum committees need to generate their major related areas + extra credit hours requirements, and figure out how courses fit so that all majors meet the guidelines for B. S. and B. A. degrees. Anthony Quinn will be directly contacting department curriculum contact persons.
6. It was suggested that the curriculum committee look into the status of the limit of “technical electives” to 15 credits outside their “college” for undergraduates, as this criteria is in conflict with major requirements.
7. Guidelines were discussed for the incoming/current Fall 2011 and earlier classes in regard to current vs. old degree requirements. It was suggested that any undergraduate who will graduate before Fall 2012 should not have the option to switch to the new requirements. The consensus was that other students can only switch from the old to new catalogue once (no back-and-forth). The overall sentiment was that we want the students to use whichever catalogue benefits them.
8. It was suggested that other departments follow the Chemistry approach whereby all courses should count as college breadth courses, except those specifically excluded by the department.

New Business:

1. David Krantz was unanimously approved to act as CNSM representative to WAC.
2. Departmental proposals for general education courses (which should not be part of the college approved breadth list) need to be provided by October 15, 2011.
3. Innovative learning is offering tutorial sessions on Blackboard, as it is now the only online course content tool available.

Announcements:

1. J. D. Smith provided announcements on the grand reopening of the Ritter Planetarium on behalf of Mike Cushing.
2. “Meet the Deans” lunches will be organized for undergraduate and graduate students (separately).
3. Student members of the CNSM council should be appointed in the future. The council is soliciting nominations for student appointees to council.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:57 PM.