

Discovery Committee Minutes, October 10, 2012

Present: Barb White, Lisa MacFarlane, Brian Chu, Dan Beller-McKenna, Tom Safford, Jing Wang, Bill Ross, Michele Holt-Shannon, Rosemary Caron, Steve Pugh, Sean Moore, Kathie Forbes, Wayne Fagerberg (Absent: Ihab Farag, Alex Eichler)
Guest: Ed Mueller, Writing Program

Next meeting: Wednesday, OCTOBER 24, 2012

Motion: Steve Pugh moved and Daniel Beller-McKenna seconded, approval of the Minutes of the meeting of September 26, 2012. **Vote:** 6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain. **Motion passed.**

The committee took the following action:

No courses were scheduled for review at this meeting.

The Committee discussed the following:

Discovery Syllabi – As follow up to the last DC meeting, Michele presented a draft version of the Discovery course approval letter that includes a sentence that asks faculty to note designations/attributes (e.g., WI, INQ, category) on Discovery course syllabi. All agreed to move forward with the addition of this language in course approval letters.

INQ Requirement for Transfer Students - Follow up and drafted policy: **Motion** to draft a policy including the following language - ASAC has asked that we lower the number of credits for transfer students regarding meeting the INQ requirement to 26 credits, limiting it to the first year transfer students only. This is not an unusual request, particularly considering that the INQ requirement was originally expected to be completed in the first year - and send it to Bill deVries, Faculty Senate Chair. **Vote:** 6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain.

F12 INQ Seats Report – The number of 444's versus Attribute courses offered is one point of interest; another is how many open seats there were at R+30; another is how many Honors seats remained open. We want the 444 to survive, however nobody is going to be asking departments to allocate funds to 444 development when they are consistently low enrolled, and/or not offered with regularity. The train left the station when the INQ Attribute was embraced, but we still need to show value for these courses and bring them up. We have a report that will be shared re efficacy, and how the 444 comes out as the superior form for how INQ is delivered and received. We do not want to lose these, and in fact, the bar for Attribute courses could be raised by what we find in these reports. At this time, most students are getting their INQ in their major. HHS is the only college that does not allow INQ in the major.

One of the reasons Honors 444s did not fill this fall, is about 50 fewer Honors students accepted this year than in the past. The other reason is that Honors has an arrangement that a minimum will be offered per college per semester in order to guarantee that Honors students get their 444 – they are not allowed to take their INQ in major, they have to take a 444 course. Also, the Honors 444's are capped at 20 which makes them look less full, so 16 is not a low enrollment course.

There is some logistical, practical work that needs to be done regarding which 444's are being offered overall. We may need to develop a sub-committee for INQ course offerings to work with ASAC in order to work through some of these and other issues we hear of, or are aware of.

Discovery Courses Online – Thinking about new models of courses, we looked at how we would handle a short-term course recently and agreed on provisions regarding the course. When thinking about e-courses, we perhaps need to think about where we are headed, policy development regarding these and short-term courses, and whether we are in agreement.

Ed Mueller, Director of the Writing Program, discussed compression issues with J-Term, and online best practices; the national body will be publishing a report soon; class size, syllabi, etc., are the same issues for WI as they are for Discovery (as we work parallel). When courses migrate into online or compression, there are blind spots. There is need to redesign the course, so this supports our need to re-review the course. Discovery and the Writing Program propose working together to develop a policy to take forward to the Faculty Senate. The goals and objectives for these courses also need to be articulated up front to help students determine whether to take the course or not. Rosemary Caron detailed her planning and training around teaching online. These were courses she has taught face-to-face for years that she re-designed to teach online. Having done the homework and planning months in advance, it went well. From the student perspective in the graduate programs, the discussions were very rich. The undergraduate experience was different – they reported time spent as higher, grades were lower, and the feedback was that they were under pressure in other areas of their lives and balancing online learning with life was more challenging. Overall, laying out course objectives, expectations, and estimated time that will be needed was/is very important.

This past summer, UNH received double the number of refund petitions for summer e-courses than it normally does for regular summer courses. The DC does have oversight for the core courses. What the DC can do is put into place policy that says anytime a core course is modified or offered in a different venue, it be re-evaluated. The WSBE MBA program has been working with AT to develop guidelines regarding what it takes to offer a good course online, including the organizational behavior/teamwork piece - what it means to conduct a rich online discussion forum, etc. It does not feel punitive to faculty, but rather feels helpful.

We are not at UNH being left behind, as some would have you believe, we are more cutting edge than people realize. But what we offer online has to be quality, and needs to meet some developed standards. Where UNH is going to e-UNH, is market-driven – we have to be on board to an extent. The DC needs to have its policy not be looking over the shoulder of faculty, but how we help them to learn how to offer the course online.

Discovery and the Writing Program will work on developing a policy on any course being modified for online/short-term being re-submitted for review, and will bring it back to this Committee and to the Faculty Senate.

Meeting adjourned 1:40pm