

# MINUTES

CALS Curriculum Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, February 14, 2012, 12:00 p.m.  
250 Agricultural Hall

Present: Bednarek (Chair), Bland, Fadl, Mitchell, Oosterwyk, Paustian, Pearson, Pelegri, Pfatteicher, Stubbings

Absent: Barak, Gisler, Hayslett, Jackson, Whillock

## NEW BUSINESS

### CAPSTONE MEMO

A draft of the CALS Curriculum Committee Capstone Memo was provided to the committee and discussed. The purpose of this discussion was to get feedback from the curriculum committee members, and major-specific content will be discussed in subsequent meetings. The major-specific content will probably include a paragraph or two stating what the curriculum committee agreed on regarding the department's capstone requirement. Departments have not yet been notified of any curriculum committee comments on their capstone requirements. There was confusion over capstones that still needed to be reviewed (Genetics and LSC): Pelegri clarified that he had reviewed the Genetics capstone last year, and Paustian clarified that he reviewed half of the LSC capstone requirement, and the course was very good.

### Comments on Capstone Memo:

Paustian noted that in #5 in the second memo, we should add that the curriculum committee took a broad view to this requirement: The committee looked for courses to include at least some of the list of 'societal, economic, ethical, scientific, and professional issues.' Also, Mitchell suggested that we add dates that each individual department was reviewed to the major-specific content. We should also put a disclaimer on the departmental page stating that this review may not reflect the current capstone, because the review was conducted during the previous academic year.

There was also discussion on departments that did not have sufficient capstones. Pfatteicher noted that AAE was not the only department that the curriculum committee deemed to have an insufficient capstone; for example, it also had some concerns with the Biology capstone. Regarding the Biology capstone, Paustian mentioned an issue that he has been running into with this capstone: Students increasingly cannot find a 699, and Biology should have some other alternatives for these students. The Biology discussion broadened to a discussion of the Biology major external review, and the discussion that the home of the Biology major needs to be clarified. It was mentioned that there were plans to merge the Zoology and Botany departments into a 'Biology' department, and the committee discussed whether CALS should fight for keeping the Biology major in CALS.

There was also discussion about the CALS undeclared option that may be available to students as soon as this summer. CALS has an undeclared classification (ALS 000) that is on the books but has not been used for a long time, and we currently require all students to declare a major. When CALS got MIU money for two new advisors, we were asked to explore the possibility of an undecided policy, and in the Deans' meeting on Monday, Sarah Pfatteicher was encouraged to explore if we can put this in place for summer 2012 SOAR. There was a question about what this ALS 000 category would look like. Students would have the option to declare ALS 000, and students' advisors would be one of the two MIU advisors. We could include a restriction by either limiting the amount of credits or the amount of semesters a student has completed (e.g. 24 credits, 3 semesters) to still be able to declare the undeclared option. This is because we probably do not have the capacity to accommodate older students who want to change their major or plan, although this might be something to think about for the future. People thought a semester limitation would be better than a credit limitation, because some students may come in with AP credits.

The committee discussed the possibility of a CALS undeclared option, and the discussion was supportive. The undecided option would relieve pressure in the biology major, because there are currently many students in the biology major who are undecided within the biological sciences. We would be doing students a better service by giving them an option to go into an open category and then having them move into another CALS major. Also, it was suggested that all undeclared majors must take Inter-Ag 155.

Finally, there was a discussion on possibly creating two paths within the ALS 000 classification for Biological Science and Social Science interests. However, the committee discussed where the environmental majors would fit and whether they would fit in the Biological Sciences category. A possible plan is to have the Registrar open ALS 000 in the short term, and the category could become more focused to involve different interest areas in the long term. The committee discussed naming the undeclared major, and there was a consensus on calling it 'Undeclared Agricultural and Life Sciences' to encompass all majors. It was mentioned that at some point, it would be good for the curriculum committee to do something (e.g. make a motion, sign on to a memo) for an opinion on the undeclared option.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Submitted by Maria Stubbings