

Faculty Senate

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Baccalaureate Core Committee

Annual Report 2003-2004

To: Faculty Senate Executive Committee
 From: Ruth Vondracek, Chair
 2003 - 2004 Baccalaureate Core Committee
 RE: 2003 - 2004 Annual Report

The following were the major activities of the Baccalaureate Core Committee (BCC) over the past year.

1. The BCC reviewed twenty-two proposals from OSU faculty members requesting curricular action. The committee approved all twenty-two, some following revisions and discussions. Two of the twenty-two represented courses taught at OSU-Cascades. One proposal still in the system from academic year 2002-2003 was denied.
2. The committee continued its mandate to periodically review baccalaureate core courses: The BCC reviewed all Perspectives - Social Processes and Institutions courses that had been approved more than five years ago for continued baccalaureate core status in this area. Twenty-seven courses were reviewed. Nineteen requests for continuation were approved, some following discussion and revision. At the time of this report, approval is pending for further information and/or revisions for six courses. Two courses, PS 200 and PS 204, were removed from the Bac Core by mutual agreement of the offering department, the College of Liberal Arts and the BCC.

The Committee makes the following recommendations for future category reviews: Begin category reviews as early as Fall Term. If possible, automate the category review process. The current manual system is highly inefficient.

BCC will review the Difference, Power, and Discrimination category next academic year.

3. Discussions this year focused on formalizing the recommendations that all Bac Core course syllabi a) include learning outcomes, b) include demonstrable evidence that critical thinking skills are developed in the course, c) indicate that the course is a Bac Core course, and d) refer the appropriate Bac Core category criteria and how that is integrated in the course. The Bac Core will begin requiring that these elements be included on syllabi during academic year 2004-2005.
4. Throughout the year, the Committee deliberated over the weight given to the proposal narrative versus the course syllabi in determining whether courses should be approved. Both parts of the review documentation are important; the question is how much of the explanation should be given on the syllabi. This is particularly an issue during the category review process when multiple syllabi are associated with one course number. This issue was not resolved. The Committee believes that criteria be developed in the next academic year to ensure consistency in review.
5. The BCC held on-going discussions with Extended Campus staff concerning how to review Bac Core courses where the entire course or specific sections are changed to online delivery. The BCC wants to ensure that the spirit of the Bac Core is still being met in these courses and that learning outcomes reflect Bac Core category criteria. The Committee recommends that a) BCC courses or sections currently delivered online be reviewed during the appropriate category review, and b) that a change to online delivery be considered a 'change' in the course system and trigger a BCC review.
6. Other recommendations of the Committee include the development of a BCC web site that would provide information to faculty about preparing proposals, link to information on critical thinking and developing learning outcomes, as well as give students more information on the curriculum. Certain

course system improvements were discussed; for example, currently there is no 'action' that allows a Bac Core proposal to be denied; title of the course is not given, nor is it easy to discern the reason that review is requested. The Chair will work with systems on some of these issues this summer.

The 2003-2004 members of the Baccalaureate Core Committee were: Ed Jensen, Milo Koretsky, David McMurray, Joanne Sorte, Ruth Vondracek, and Patti Watkins. Ex-officio members included: Vicki Tolar Burton and Jun Xing.

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