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Baccalaureate Core Committee

Annual Report 1998-99

FINAL REPORT OF THE BACCALAUREATE CORE COMMITTEE, ACADEMIC YEAR 1998-99

In the academic year 1998-99, the Baccalaureate Core Committee roster was:

Anita Grunder (Geosciences) as chair

Michael Scanlan (Philosophy)

John Lee (Math)

Christine Snow (Exercise & Sport Science)

Shannon Smith (History)

Robert Jarvis (Wildlife Ecology)

Hsiou-Lien Chen (Apparels, Interiors, Housing and Merchandising)

The committee was ably assisted by Vicki Collins, director of the Writing Intensive Curriculum, and by Joan Gross, director of the Difference Power and Discrimination Program. Dr. Chen retired from the committee in the spring term and was not replaced because the end of the year was so close.

The main tasks of the committee were reviews of courses proposed for the Baccalaureate Core, an evaluation of the Baccalaureate Core, and suggestions for changes and formalization of policies and procedures. A copy of all the minutes of the meetings of the committee reside in the archives. The Baccalaureate Core evaluation and proposed policies and procedures were submitted to the faculty senate executive committee in two documents in June of 1999 and are partially repeated here.

COURSE PROPOSALS:

About fifty proposals were considered. The number approved in each category are listed as follows. CC indicates they are community college listings.

Writing

Writing III - 1CC

WIC - 6

Biological Science - 1

Perspectives

Physical Science - 0

Western Culture - 1

Cultural Diversity - 1+7CC

Literature and Arts - 3CC

Social Proc. and Institutions - 0

Diff. Power and Discrimin. - 4+2CC

Synthesis

Contemporary Global Issues - 4

Science Tech. and Society - 3

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PROCEDURES AND RULES

The following is taken from a memo submitted to the faculty senate on June 15, 1999

I. The BCC proposes the attached changes to the Standing Rules. In short, the changes include: (a) the DPD and WIC directors as ex-officio (nonvoting) members of the committee; (b) simplification of rule A4 to be in accordance with actual procedures; and (c) elimination of rule A5 because the diverse composition of the committee makes this "watch-dog" clause redundant.

II. We have reviewed the criteria for DPD courses in the curricular procedures handbook, and in concert with Joan Gross, propose the following:

Difference Power and Discrimination courses shall be:

1. Be at least 3 credits.
2. Emphasize elements of critical thinking.
3. Provide the historical background so students can critically examine contemporary issues of difference, power, and discrimination across socio-political systems in the United States.
4. Concentrate on two or more types of discrimination (such as discrimination according to ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, appearance, belief, etc.).
5. Study the origins, operation, and consequences of discrimination, including structural and institutional discrimination.

Systems of power have been sustained in the United States in part through ignorance of the complex ways in which class, gender, race and other forms of institutionalized bias overlap and reinforce each other. A more informed understanding of the often subtle yet powerful structure of these biases and of their implications is essential in a multicultural society. DPD classes typically encourage students to examine their beliefs concerning difference, power, and discrimination through a variety of pedagogical techniques, especially those that promote student interaction.

III. The committee further recommends that the policies and procedures of the Baccalaureate Core Committee be added to the curricular procedures handbook to clarify how rules are implemented. They are on the next page. Having such guidelines will facilitate smooth transitions from year to year as the committee membership changes. Also, it will make it easier for faculty to understand how the committee functions. Guideline number 5 is put forward explicitly, because there will be added pressure for the committee to approve upper division (particularly 300-level) courses for Perspectives in light of the financial reward built in by the new funding model.

Baccalaureate Core Committee

Policies and procedures

1. The lifespan of a proposal submitted to the Baccore Committee is 6 months from time of first consideration of the proposal by the committee. If committee requests for additional information are not answered in 6 months, the proposal is considered dead.
2. The baccalaureate core status of accepted courses is effective immediately. The status and term of acceptance are posted on the appropriate website.
3. If resubmittals of existing baccore courses include substantive changes, such as changes in content, prerequisites, or level, then a full proposal must be submitted for review. In this way the content of the core is kept up-to-date.
4. The baccalaureate core status of courses lapses after five years. To maintain baccalaureate core status, courses must be reviewed by the committee for compliance with baccalaureate core guidelines. The object is to ensure continuous evaluation and updating of the content of the core.
5. Perspectives courses are to be lower division. Exceptions require compelling support.

The object is to maintain the accessibility to lower division students and to retain the general education character of the perspectives requirement.

6. In order to keep the credit hours in the baccalaureate core contained, the committee encourages 3-credit courses for the perspectives requirements. 4-credit courses require compelling documentation in order to be approved.

7. Courses submitted for WIC or DPD should be routed to the appropriate program director or review board for comment and recommendation before being submitted to the Baccalaureate Core Committee.

Implementation

Most of these procedures are already in effect, viz., numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and the WIC part of 7. The greatest change is the addition of number 4. The committee suggests adding a roll-over time to the courses so that the core will be constantly evaluated. Many courses are taught by people who did not develop them. Also, baccalaureate core criteria have changed in time. For these reasons, the five-year turnover rule is proposed as a self-regulating system. It will cause some problems in the first few years as implementation is phased in. Many courses predate the system of having the term of BCC status posted, and not all can be reviewed at once. The committee of 1999-2000 will have to formulate a workable reviewing procedure. We suggest that the department and instructor receive notification of upcoming review in the spring term of the third year of the course. Resubmittals can then be prepared in the summer and fall terms and reviewed in the winter and spring and included in the catalog posting in year 5, so that the transition is smooth into the new cycle. Responsibility for securing approval must reside with the instructor of the course, not with the committee.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BACCALAUREATE CORE EVALUATION

The following was submitted to the faculty senate executive committee on June 15, 1999.

Results of evaluations to date indicate substantial satisfaction with the Baccalaureate Core. Student satisfaction was expressed for the goals of the Baccalaureate Core and the achievement of those goals (1994-95 survey). Students are able to meet their requirements in a timely way and find that their courses meet the criteria set by the Baccalaureate Core (1998-99 survey). Faculty and advisors are largely satisfied with the content and implementation of the core, with controversy centered on the Difference Power and Discrimination and the Fitness requirements (1999 survey).

The Baccalaureate Core Committee recommends the following.

(1) Implement an ongoing review procedure of courses in the core.

An outline is included in a separate memo where the policies and procedures of the Baccalaureate Core Committee are summarized.

(2) Establish a DPD Task Force charged with evaluation of the Difference Power and Discrimination requirement.

Points that need to be addressed by the task force include:

- a) A clear statement of the goals and justification of DPD
- b) What should be the status of DPD, Perspectives Requirement? Should it be upper and lower division? A separate category?
- c) Is the requirement named appropriately?
- d) Faculty education regarding the goals of DPD
- e) The level, rigour and number of existing courses
- f) Brief faculty workshop for course development
- g) The necessity of a program director in the short term and in the long term

(3) The Baccalaureate Core Committee should evaluate the Fitness requirement

Points that need to be addressed include:

- a) Is the requirement necessary and desirable
- b) Is HHP231 the only way the requirement can be met or might there be alternatives?

Documentation regarding HHP231 has been provided to the committee by Anthony Wilcox.

(4) Evaluation of student satisfaction with core requirements through compilation of teaching evaluations of courses in each category, sampled at random.

(5) Evaluation of completion of the Baccalaureate Core requirements by random sampling of the transcripts of graduated seniors of the last 3 years (well after DPD requirement).

(6) Compare the OSU Baccalaureate Core to the general education requirements of peer institutions.

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