

Faculty-wide discussion of the 30-hour core requirement, January 24, 2011

Present: (an incomplete list): Metz, Rude, Knapp, Mosser, Lautenschlager, Anderson, Kinder, Graham, Kark, Powell, Heilker, Meitner, Murphy, George, Joe Eska, Charlene Eska, Gardner Pender, Colaianne, Sullivan, Skinner, Ruccolo, Hausman, Moore, Swenson, Dannenburg, Brumberger, Reisinger, Maycock, Wemhoener, O’Kane, Welch, Vollmer.

Metz offered some background on the SCHEV 30-common hour mandate:

- Next year’s checksheets must fully comply with the 30-common hour mandate. Checksheets will be due in early November.
- We will learn more about how to proceed from other departments’ experiences going through university-level review this year.
- The conversations we have this spring about the requirement will be advisory to next year’s Undergraduate Committee.

Discussion ranged broadly among these and other issues.

- Multiple majors. Is it possible/desirable to have multiple majors within English? Heilker felt that such a move would fragment the department. Joe remarked that the dean had told him that multiple majors in English would not be supported at the College level.
- The need for a carefully sequenced curriculum reflecting advancing skill levels (Hausman)
- The importance of content and core knowledge (Anderson, Swenson)
- The need to direct students toward essential content/knowledge/skills they might otherwise avoid, such as early literature (Mosser)
- The way resources issues impinge on all of these questions. For example, upper-division Shakespeare courses contain many non-majors who have not acquired the skills we expect of senior English majors (Anderson)
- An alternative model of the Literary Traditions category (posted on Scholar site) (Sullivan)
- The need to recognize diversity among our majors—both in what they do after they leave us and in the kinds of skills/knowledge important to them (Rude, Metz)
- The problems facing the options in building a substantive and coherent curriculum on top of a 30-hour core (without an excessive number of credit hours) (Meitner).

- The importance of ensuring that any revision of the curriculum builds in sufficient opportunities to work in a sequenced and coherent way with student writing skills (Welch).
- An alternative model of the 30-hour core (posted on the Scholar site) (Hausman)

The conversation will continue on Wednesday, January 26, at 12:15 in Shanks 370

Minutes by Bess Rowden and Nancy Metz