The University of Connecticut

UNIVERSITY INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Meeting Date: Thursday, December 4, 2014
Time: 2:00pm
Place: ROWE 420

Voting Members and Alternates in attendance: Hedley Freake (Chair), Tom Long (SoN), Gary Kazmer (CAHNR), Larry Gramling (SoB), Eric Donkor (SoE), Chuanrong Zhang (CLAS), Olga Vinagradova (SoPh), Laura Burton (Neag), David Stern (SoFA)

Ex Officio Members in attendance: Kristopher Perry, David Ouimette, Monica van Beusekom, Eric Schultz, Maria Martinez, Daniel Doerr

Administrators and Guests: Karen Piantek (Admin)

Regrets: Marianne Buck, Jennifer Telford

Meeting called to order at 2:00pm.

1. Welcome

2. Approval of minutes from the September 18, 2014 meeting
The minutes of the September 18, 2014 meeting were accepted as submitted.

3. New Business

3.1. Special Topics Proposal: UNIV 1995 – East Meets West in Southern China

- E. Donkor took over chairmanship of the meeting briefly while H. Freake put forth the course he was proposing and answered questions.
- H. Freake noted that the course was offered last May for 10 students and that it has not changed in this request.
- E. Schultz asked about assessments and involvement of Chinese students from Global House.
- H. Freake noted that it was anticipated that Global House (GH) students would be the primary target for the course, but most students last year were not in GH. Only two were from GH. Regarding assessments, he explained that the students journaled regularly, were required to write a 2-page paper on each city they visited, and completed a final project based on their particular interests.
- E. Donkor asked if the trip was funded in any way. The answer was that, no, students pay for themselves. Nevertheless, a very diverse group of students went this past summer.
- C. Zhang asked about English barriers, and H. Freake indicated that this difficulty was intentional to promote learning. That being said, H. Freake explained that on the first trip there were actually two Chinese students who went who helped the group to communicate.
- One member questioned why it was being submitted as a UNIV. This was done because the course is through GH, not NUSC, so the only other alternative would really be INTD.
- D. Ouimette noted that there some faculty are putting a lot of time into planning trips that no one goes on, so those who do develop trips are really trying to be strategic about these kinds of

offerings. FYE is looking to get first-year students going on trips, and in the future they would like to attach a study abroad experience to every learning community.

- H. Freake asked if it was worth designing a designation in UNIV for UConn faculty-led study abroad courses like the one he is proposing so that a shell would exist and the Special Topics designation would not need to be used. He asked if the FYE program would be the best entity to take the lead on something like this.
- E. Schultz asked if there was consultation with the HIST and POLS departments, the topics of which seem to be the focus of the course. H. Freake noted that there are speakers and other faculty in China who are taking the lead on those topics.

Motion to approve by Larry Gramling and seconded by Tom Long. The course was approved unanimously.

H. Freake resumed control of the meeting.

3.2. Summary of Education Abroad accreditations

- H. Freake and K. Piantek presented the study abroad accreditations from the past semester. The main point of interest was an abundance of psychology-themed courses that were redirected to UNIV after having been declined by PYSC.
- Members asked about the reasons why courses are rejected. While there are guidelines that suggest students seek accreditation before they go abroad, failing to follow these guidelines is only rarely the reason that courses may be declined by departments. More often the reason is that departments either have strict standards for what they will accept, or the department may not have a course number at the proper level for the course in question.
- H. Freake noted that he did talk to Dick Langlois about the inconsistency of department accreditations, and Langlois indicated that he would follow up with certain departments.

3.3. Proposal to Implement a Re-evaluation Plan for Previously Accredited Courses

- H. Freake asked the committee to consider if there is a place for this process regarding UNIV/INTD designations. INTD courses goes through schools and colleges, so the focus would be on UNIVs.
- It was noted that there are two different kinds of courses in UNIV: shells and specified courses. It was suggested that perhaps the committee should ask for a report from different divisions on their courses. Rather than evaluate courses themselves, the UICC would look at how the curriculum is being used.
- T. Long asked if the UICC would utilize a random sampling approach like the GEOC. H. Freake noted that the UNIVs are a much smaller body of courses, so it is not unreasonable to request a full report of courses from departments each year.
- L. Gramling noted that the School of Business does something similar for the articulation agreement with the community colleges. He suggested asking for the syllabi for courses to compare what was originally approved. It was agreed that this was an option for specified courses, but not for the course shells.
- Members discussed what kind of report/info they should be requesting and questioned if units should be asked to come discuss their courses.

- E. Donkor expressed concern about adding additional responsibilities to already overloaded faculty. He noted that the form should be short and that syllabi should only be requested for specified courses.
- The committee discussed how often this process should be undertaken. L. Gramling suggested not more frequently than 3-5 years for specified courses. Other members felt that five seemed a little too long. It was agreed that every three years was ideal.
- H. Freake noted that he and K. Piantek will draft a form for the next meeting for specified courses.
- The committee discussed how often a report on course shells would be requested from the FYE program and the Honors/IMJR programs. D. Ouimette felt that an annual report was not unreasonable.
- It was decided that a submission deadline of the reports for mid-Spring to coincide with the UICC annual report to Senate would be preferable. H. Freake and K. Piantek will meet to draft a plan for what information should be in the reports.

4. Other Business

4.1. Doodle poll to be sent shortly for Spring 2015 meeting scheduling

- H. Freake asked the committee about meeting frequency for the Spring. He suggested scheduling three meetings that could be canceled as needed if there was no urgent business. This was acceptable to the committee.

Adjourned at 2:55pm

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Piantek
IISP Program Assistant