

**REDWOODS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Curriculum Committee**

Eureka: 7351 Tompkins Hill Road, SSA 202  
Del Norte: 883 W. Washington Boulevard, Office E7

**Meeting Date: January 27, 2017**

**Members Present:** Angelina Hill (Ex-Officio), George Potamianos, Jennifer Burlison, Michelle Haggerty, Sean Herrera-Thomas, Erik Kramer, Ruth Rhodes, Gary Sokolow.

**Members Absent:** Franz Rulofson

**1. Call to Order:** Curriculum Committee Chair, George Potamianos, called the meeting to order at 1:08 pm.

**2. Introductions & Public Comment:**

**3. Approval of the Minutes:** Gary Sokolow moved to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2016 meeting, seconded by Erik Kramer. There being no objections, the minutes were approved as written.

**4. Action Items**

**4.1 Course Revision: CIS-100 Basic Computer Skills – Mark Renner**

Gary Sokolow [M], Sean Herrera-Thomas [2<sup>nd</sup>]. Following discussion, the motion to approve was passed by the following roll call vote:

<i>Burlison</i>	<i>Haggerty</i>	<i>Herrera-Thomas</i>	<i>Kramer</i>	<i>Rhodes</i>	<i>Rulofson</i>	<i>Sokolow</i>
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y

Discussion:

**4.2 Program Revision: Kinesiology AA-T Degree – Bob Brown**

Gary Sokolow [M], Sean Herrera-Thomas [2<sup>nd</sup>]. Following discussion, the motion to approve was passed by the following roll call vote:

<i>Burlison</i>	<i>Haggerty</i>	<i>Herrera-Thomas</i>	<i>Kramer</i>	<i>Rhodes</i>	<i>Rulofson</i>	<i>Sokolow</i>
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y

Discussion:

**4.1 Form Revision: Curriculum Routing Flow Chart – Courtney Loder**

Gary Sokolow [M], Erik Kramer [2<sup>nd</sup>]. Following discussion, the motion to approve was passed by the following roll call vote:

<i>Burlison</i>	<i>Haggerty</i>	<i>Herrera-Thomas</i>	<i>Kramer</i>	<i>Rhodes</i>	<i>Rulofson</i>	<i>Sokolow</i>
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y

Discussion:

## **5. Discussion**

### **5.1 Campus-wide Assessment of Curriculum Policies and Practice**

The committee members in attendance were joined by other members of the campus community to discuss the effectiveness of our current policies and practices. The wide-ranging discussion touched on many different topics, grouped by subject headings below:

#### **Submission & Review Timing**

George Potamianos shared feedback from an email he received, that the current 24 hour window for faculty to revise their proposals based on committee feedback is quite short.

Courtney Loder shared from her perspective that many curriculum authors struggle to make that deadline, especially when the committee has questions or feedback about substantive issues. In her opinion, the campus would be better served with a longer review window that gives the committee more time to review to proposals, and gives proposal authors more time to respond.

Currently, agenda items must be submitted one week prior to the curriculum meeting. The group briefly brainstormed how a deadline two weeks prior to the meeting might work. There being no obvious obstacles discovered, it was decided that further consideration is warranted.

#### **Improved Curriculum Resources**

Sheila Hall commented that the quality and ease of navigating information resources related to curriculum has improved significantly with the transition to the new Curriculum website.

#### **Impact of Pre-requisite and Program Requirement Changes on Counseling & Advising**

Sheila Hall explained that it is crucial for Counseling and Advising (C & A) to be aware of upcoming changes to pre-requisites, co-requisites, and degree/certificate requirements in order to effectively advise students. There have been a handful of incidents in the last few years where C & A didn't know about a pre-requisite change until it appeared in WebAdvisor.

If there is a way for C & A to be involved in discussion about changes like this before they come to the Curriculum Committee, that would be helpful in preventing surprises and making sure students are accurately advised.

Courtney Loder asked if it might help to add language to the consultation section of the Course Outline of Record (COR) form, specifying that consultation with C & A is required if pre- or co-requisites are changing.

- George Potamianos objected to the use of 'consultation' in this wording, concerned that some faculty might interpret it as C & A having the authority to approve or reject their changes. He suggested using 'informed' or 'notified' as an alternative.
- Courtney Loder pointed out that C & A are being 'notified' of changes now vs. being involved in a conversation about them, and that seems to be the source of the current issue.
- Connie Woflsen argued that 'consult' is appropriate to use in this context, and that this process should be a collegial consultation. Doing so will head off problems and result in a better product overall.

- Sean Herrera-Thomas agreed with Connie, recognizing that there has been an historical divide between units on campus. He sees including consultation with C & A before making changes like this to be beneficial.

It was decided that Courtney Loder will add language to the COR form about consulting with C & A about changes to pre- or co-requisites.

### **Clarity around Effective Dates**

Sheila Hall shared that students are told by some faculty that curriculum has changed before the changes are fully approved and implemented. Is there a way to more clearly communicate the effective dates to curriculum authors and the campus in general?

Courtney Loder recognized that this has been a challenge in the past, and shared several avenues through which this information is now communicated:

- When feedback from Technical Review is posted to the Curriculum Forum, the likely effective term is included.
- The new COR form has moved approval and effective term information to the front page.
- There is a publicly available spreadsheet on the Curriculum Committee website (<http://internal.redwoods.edu/senate/Curriculum/approval-tracking>), showing all curriculum proposals in the approval pipeline, along with approval dates, expected start terms, etc.
- When curriculum proposals are approved at the Chancellor's Office, Courtney sends an email to the proposal author with the final details of the effective start term, etc. (Dean/Director, VPI, Curriculum Chair and Articulation Officers are all copied on these emails)

It was discussed that perhaps making an effort to review/confirm the expected start term during the curriculum meeting could also be helpful.

### **CR GE Area E Review**

Lisa Sayles raised a question about the role of the Curriculum Committee in evaluating/gatekeeping which courses are approved the different areas of our local GE pattern. Lisa referenced the discussion about a proposal at a recent meeting for a course to be approved for Area E (Multicultural Understanding). Lisa shared that she felt the course didn't make a strong enough case for Area E (the GE proposal in question was tabled with minimal discussion because it proposed for Area E only, when it is required for all Area E courses to also be approved in another area).

George Potamianos described the process for GE review: authors make an argument in the COR discussing how/why the course is relevant to the proposed GE Area(s) and their learning outcomes. The committee reviews this argument, discusses any questions or concerns with the faculty author via the curriculum review process, then votes.

Lisa clarified that she was specifically concerned about Area E, and the possibility that authors are using small assignments and/or insignificant course time to nod toward multicultural studies, rather than fully incorporating it into the course experience.

George Potamianos asked: Is our current process for reviewing CR GE working effectively, or do we need to develop process for Area E?

- Erik Kramer commented that he doesn't think we need a separate process, but that Area E is a different kind of category.
  - Sean Herrera-Thomas agreed with Erik that Area E has some unique qualities as a GE category; course learning outcomes should be primarily pertain to diversity/multicultural topics, and also happen to fit in a disciplinary home housed in another GE category.
  - Jennifer Burlison asked if applying Sean's criteria would create the same problem we're discussing now, but in reverse (i.e. a course that is so heavily about diversity/multiculturalism it's not really about the home discipline anymore)
    - Sean agreed that both the home discipline and diversity/multicultural themes should be reflected in the course learning outcomes.
- Gary Sokolow suggested that if there is concern about whether the Curriculum Committee is correctly applying the criteria for Area E, that clarification be requested from the Academic Senate re: the intent of the area.
  - Erik Kramer agreed that it would be helpful to get clear guidance from the Academic Senate re: what needs to be present in course content and outcomes to be eligible for Area E.
  - Gary suggested that some members of the Curriculum Committee work with the Academic Senate to develop the detailed guidelines we've been discussing.

George Potamianos asked Connie Wolfsen: How would the Academic Senate like us to evaluate the viability of courses for Area E? Connie asked him to send an email to put that discussion on the agenda. Connie is thrilled to hear conversations like this, talking about quality broadly. She hopes this becomes part of a larger campus-wide discussion.

### **Mechanism for inactivating DE Modalities**

Lisa Sayles pointed out that we need a better mechanism for inactivating Distance Education modalities for courses, because the current inactivation form wasn't designed for this purpose.

It was decided that Courtney Loder will edit the form to be more flexible for Distance Education and Dual Enrollment inactivations.

### **Training for Committee Members**

Jennifer Burlison commented that more thorough training for new committee members would be helpful. As the newest member of the committee, there was a steep learning curve with few resources explaining what she needed to do.

Sean Herrera-Thomas agreed that better training for members of all committees district-wide would be a good idea, but perhaps that is something that needs to happen through the Academic Senate.

After narrowing discussion to the Curriculum Committee and its processes specifically, it was decided that Sean Herrera-Thomas and Courtney Loder would develop a training module for new committee members.

Courtney Loder also suggested holding an annual meeting with the whole committee at the start of each academic year to review the basics of evaluating curriculum proposals and other committee procedures.

### **Process for Emergency Situations**

In response to the discussion about having a longer period for review and revision, Connie Wolfsen asked if there would be a codified process for handling "emergency" curriculum situations (e.g. a time sensitive accreditation issue discovered after the deadline, etc.)

It was decided that, being rare and particular, these situations should be handled at the discretion of the Curriculum Chair.

### **6. Announcements and Open Forum**

Courtney Loder reported on a recent memo from the Chancellor's Office (Memo AA17-01, 01/23/17), explaining next steps in the streamlining the state-level curriculum processes. Credit courses with substantial changes (with a few disciplinary exceptions) will be approved in a the same expedited manner as nonsubstantial changes to credit courses.

**7. Adjournment:** On motion by Gary Sokolow , seconded by Michelle Haggerty, the meeting was adjourned at 2:54 p.m.