**Curriculum Committee Annual Report**

**2017-2018 Part II (Spring 2018)**

The Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum membership for the spring semester of 2017-18 school year consisted of faculty members, Yonglin Jiang (East Asian Languages and Cultures, CC Chair), Linda-Susan Beard (English), May Cheng (Physics), Joel Schlosser (Political Science), and Anjali Thapar (Psychology; on leave), administrators, Mary Osirim, Judy Balthazar, Kirsten O’Beirne, and Jennifer Walters, student representative (first Desirae Gomez and then Precious Robinson), and secretary Joann O’Doherty.

During the spring semester of 2018, the Committee discussed the following issues.

**1. Working with CAP on the departmental position proposals**

The CC reviewed the departmental position proposals, discussed their contents and prepared questions by focusing their implications impact on undergraduate curricula, and then met with CAP to share our input and deliberate on the proposals’ strengths and places to improve.

**2. English Department’s proposal to reconsider the rule that non-native speakers of English can fulfill the FL requirement via coursework in English Lit**.

The committee discussed the English department’s petition that literature courses no longer count toward the foreign language requirement for international students whose primary language is other than English. The department suggests that students be allowed to complete the requirement instead through a combination of two courses in English Writing--Writing 120, Writing 190 and/or General Studies 244. The CC supports this plan and will bring the proposed revision to the Faculty in the fall of 2018 for approval. The committee also discussed the criteria for identifying students eligible to complete the foreign language requirement through English. We recommend that it be an option for students whose native language is not English, whose high school education was primarily not in English, and who test into Writing 120 or Writing 130.

**3. Faculty Rules**

The committee noted that the Faculty Rules are not systematically updated. As a result, they do not reflect some revisions to the curriculum that had been voted into place in the past decade or changes in practices brought about by modern technology or mandated by current regulations. The CC reviewed, updated, and drafted some revisions to the faculty rules, and will start to bring them to faculty meeting for deliberation and approval during the fall semester of 2018.

**4. “The New Essentialism: The Politics of Race and the Curriculum”**

The committee was made aware that students are suggesting via Facebook or other social media outlets that instructors should not teach about cultures other than their own--for example, that a white faculty member should not teach courses about race. One committee member reported that at least one instructor has left the college as a result.

Committee members felt it was important to prevent this “new essentialism” from gaining footing. At the same time, we need to understand what is prompting it. One committee member suggested that it results from student frustration with the number of professors of color on campus. The Committee suggested that we need to engage in communications between students and faculty/administrators. The CC decided to look into the matter in the fall semester again.

**5. German Department Request for Curricular Changes**

The Curriculum Committee approved the German Department proposed changes to its major and minor requirements, bringing them in line with the requirements for the major and minor at Haverford:

The German Major still requires ten credits. However,

* Intermediate German courses (German 101 and German 102) will now count toward German Major and Minor. Students who place out of these courses will substitute coursework at the appropriate level.
* Three of the ten courses required for, but only three of them, instead of four, can be non-German credits in subjects related to German Studies, which is the case at Haverford.

The German Minor still requires six credits courses, but only one of them, instead of three, can be non-German credits in subjects related to German Studies, which is the case at Haverford.

**6. “Walking Rule” in Commencement**

The College Catalog, p. 39, states our current commencement policy as follows:

Eligibility to Participate in Commencement Ceremony: A student must have completed all degree requirements to be awarded the A.B. Donning full academic regalia (robe, mortarboard and hood) and being called to the stage at Commencement signify that a student has completed all degree requirements. These honors are therefore reserved, without exception, for only those students who have completed all degree requirements. Members of the graduating class who have not yet completed all degree requirements are invited to participate in Senior Week activities with their classmates (or postpone until the year that they graduate), to don the robe to participate in Convocation, and to attend Commencement as audience members. They are further invited to return to participate fully in Commencement in a future year once their degree requirements are complete.

Now that we award the degree in August and December, the CC was asked to consider changing the policy to allow students who are expected to graduate in August and December—and perhaps other students as well--to participate in Commencement prior to earning their degrees.

The committee considered several approaches but did not come to consensus:

1. Retain the current policy
2. Allow students on track to graduate in August to participate in Commencement the preceding May (for students within 2 units of the required 32 or who earned incompletes in the final semester).
3. Allow students on track to graduate in August or December to participate in Commencement the preceding May (for students within 4 or 5 units of the required 32).
4. Allow any student who, as of March, was on track to finish in May, but had last minute emergency and remain up to 2 units short of graduating.

The CC brought the suggestions to the April Faculty Meeting for comments, where the Committee received various comments ranging from strong opposition to change to strong support for even wider student participation. The CC will return to this issue in the fall of 2018.

**7. AB/MSS Program Proposal**

The AB/MSS working group applied for the Curriculum Committee’s approval to change from pilot to a program based on three cohorts of pilot students. The pilot had been approved for sociology and psychology majors. Six students have participated to date, 5 majoring in sociology, 1 majoring in psychology. Students who participate in the program must meet all undergraduate graduation requirements—the major, the distribution requirements, the residency requirement, and the total of 32 units. Up to three undergraduate courses have counted towards MSS, and as many as eight graduate course have counted towards the AB.

The CC approved the general framework of the proposal with the condition that up to four undergraduate courses count toward Masters of Social Work and no more than seven graduate courses count toward undergraduate degree. CC strongly suggested that we limit as much as possible the number of liberal arts courses replaced by credits from Social Work. In so doing, CC hoped to incorporate as much liberal arts education as possible.

**8. Independent Study 410**

The CC piloted a new course, Independent Study 410 in the spring of 2018, designed to award students credit for their work on faculty research projects. Two faculty members, Anjali Thapar (Psychology) and Yonglin Jiang (East Asian Languages and Cultures) participated. Each of them had 6 student participants. Towards the end of the semester, Anjali and Yonglin reported their plans and experience to CC. Both the CC and participating faculty agreed that this was a valuable venue (particularly for the fields of humanities and social sciences) to educate students on research issues, and proposed making it a college-wide course in the Fall of 2018.

The CC brought the plan to the Chairs’ meeting on May 9, and received different feedback, including both strong opposition and strong support. The CC decided to extend the pilot period for one more semester in the fall of 2018 before making it a college-wide course, and welcomed more faculty participants. By the end of the school year, more faculty expressed their interest in participating in the fall.

**9. Computer Science’s Proposal**

The closure of the Minor Program at Haverford Computer Science Department has led to a flood of Haverford students declaring CS minors at Bryn Mawr. Concerned about their already increasing enrollment numbers, the BMC Computer Science Department asked to institute a policy requiring that students interested in a Computer Science minor declare it by the end of their sophomore year. The Department hoped that the new procedure would allow them to better forecast the needed courses and their associated capacities.

The CC thought that "a sophomore-year declaration" would not solve the problem and might cause problems in other ways, and thus asked the CS Department to find a different solution.

**10. Future Issues**

The CC suggested that in next year or near future, the Committee continue to discuss the following issues:

1. our policies regarding participation Commencement
2. improving the first-year (first-semester) experience (including recording the first semester Cr/NC)
3. review of INDT 410
4. Finalizing our review of the Modes of Inquiry
5. the criteria for cum laude, magna, summa
6. Relationship between CC and CAP
7. Diversity Requirement
8. “The New Essentialism: The Politics of Race and the Curriculum”
9. Middle States Accreditation