
College of Letters and Science Curriculum Committee
Report to L&S Faculty Senate
Concerning Academic Year 2004 - 2005

Curriculum Committee Membership and Support

2004-2005

Jeanne Boydston (History)
John Coleman (Political Science)
Gery Essenmacher (Chemistry)
Lew Friedland (Journalism)
Paul Milewski (Mathematics)
Ben Rifkin (Slavic Languages and Literature)
Russ Shafer-Landau (Philosophy)
Edgar Spalding (Botany)
Jolanda Vanderwal Taylor (German, Chair)

Students:

Erin Henry
Angela Shin

Ex Officio:

Tony Garcia (Assistant Dean, L&S Student
Academic Affairs)
Elaine M. Klein (Assistant Dean, Academic
Planning, Program Review and
Assessment)
Mike Pflieger (Assistant Dean, L&S Student
Academic Affairs)
Geoffrey Thompson (Assistant Dean, L&S
Student Academic Affairs)
Nancy Westphal-Johnson (Associate Dean for
Undergraduate Education)

Support: Beth Hartzheim (L&S Administration)

Proposals to Add, Change or Delete Courses

As noted in our last report (submitted in Fall 2004), revisions in the L&S course proposal approval process had been made to bring the College into alignment with procedures in effect at other schools and colleges across campus. In this process, proposals are first approved at the department/program level prior to submission to the L&S Curriculum Committee. When approved by that body, proposals are then forwarded to the Divisional Executive Committee. Since June 1, 2002, the L&S Curriculum Committee has considered more than 1,895 proposals to add, change and delete courses that appear in the catalog and timetable subject listings operated by L&S departments and programs. One-third of those proposals relate to specific curricular projects (such as the revision of the timetables operated by the Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia in 02-03; and the creation of the new Study Abroad timetable, managed by the Office of International Academic Programs, in 03-04). Since the completion of those large projects, the number of proposals reviewed by L&S Administration staff and the Curriculum Committee seems to have stabilized at a more manageable level. In 2004-2005, the committee reviewed 278 proposals to add, change, or delete courses. This is the smallest number of proposals considered by the committee since we revised our process (by comparison, for the 2005-2006 year-to-date, the committee has considered 287 proposals). In addition to the proposals submitted by L&S departments and programs, the committee considered five proposals to accept non-L&S courses for L&S degree credit; all were approved.

The end of the 2004-2005 academic year brought a significant transition for the L&S Curriculum Committee. In June 2005, the University Academic Planning Council approved the transfer of responsibility for the Ethnic Studies course array to the University General Education Committee. The need for this change was founded in history: the Ethnic Studies Requirement originated in L&S in 1989, and responsibility for overseeing the course array had long been the responsibility of L&S. Thanks to this change, all courses that fulfill a UGEC designated requirement (Com A, Com B, QR -A, QR -B, and ESR) must be reviewed by that campus-wide committee or its designated liaison - a welcome consolidation of these important components of undergraduate education.

Proposals to Change Requirements for Academic Programs

The Curriculum Committee continues to employ the guidelines it established for departments considering changing the requirements for academic programs. These guidelines were developed primarily to help consider issues related to communication between departments and with University Publications about such changes, to offer consultation about effectively implementing changes, and to apprise L&S Administration about any potential impact on departmental and college resources. In situations where L&S undergraduate majors intersect with programs offered in the School of Education, departments are encouraged to inform their contacts in that school of the proposed changes.

The current version of the guidelines are available online in the L&S Handbook (<http://www.ls.wisc.edu/handbook/ChapterOne/chapter1-3ccpol.htm>).

In 2004-2005, the following departments and programs sought and received permission to change their academic programs. Requested changes included technical corrections; the addition of Honors tracks to existing degree programs; reconfigurations of courses required for admission to or to complete degree programs; and updates to program goals and requirements for meeting them. Changes to the programs listed below were approved in time to meet publication deadlines for the 2005-2007 Undergraduate Catalog.

Afro-American Studies	Computer Sciences
Art History	English
Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Certificate Program	German
Communication Arts (Honors)	Mathematics
Communicative Disorders	Political Science
	Theatre and Drama

Other Curricular Issues

In 2004-2005, most of the Committee's energies were focused on presenting its proposal to revise the L&S baccalaureate degree requirements to various groups, soliciting feedback, and responding to concerns raised in those discussions. Those efforts are discussed at greater length below. Despite the intense focus on this work, the committee nonetheless considered several other curricular questions:

- **Service Learning Courses.** The L&S Curriculum Committee was called upon to consider several courses presented as service and community-based learning opportunities. To better understand these courses, the committee met with Mary Rouse and Randy Waller, both of the Morgridge Center. Our guests shared a number of documents that addressed the Curriculum Committee's concern that such courses create meaningful connections between academic and practical experience, through which students better understand the academic materials. The Committee agreed, in principle, that academic credit should be awarded for credit-bearing service learning courses on the basis of the academic content, not the service.
- **Distance-mediated Courses.** The Committee had occasion to review several proposals to create new courses to be offered online. In discussion of these courses, the Committee grappled with the question of how the traditional formula for contact hours/credits awarded equates to online

interactions. (The guidelines provided by the Divisional Executive Committee Office hold that the university awards "one credit for about: 15 hours of lecture, 15 to 30 hours of discussion, or 30 to 45 hours of laboratory.") The committee had several extended discussions of specific courses and the means by which they attempted to translate this standard into alternative modes of "contact" - via quizzes, participation in discussion boards, required contributions via e-mail, etc. No clear guidelines arose from these interactions; however, members determined that this topic warrants further study and should be taken up for consideration as soon as time permits.

- Revisions to the form used to declare, change, or delete an L&S major were approved. The form is available online, with instructions as to how it should be completed and processed. (See <http://www.ls.wisc.edu/handbook/ChapterSix/chVI-33.htm>).
- Dean Sandefur referred to the committee a question raised by an undergraduate alumnus regarding the printing of L&S majors on diplomas. (At UW-Madison, only the name of the degree earned by the student appears on the diploma; hence, most students earning L&S baccalaureate degrees receive diplomas stating "Bachelor of Arts" or "Bachelor of Science.") The committee ratified L&S' longstanding commitment to the idea that degrees conferred by the College of Letters and Science balance the depth of studies pursued in the major with breadth of study necessary and appropriate to liberal education: to name the major on the diploma would misrepresent that balance.
- Dean Sandefur referred to the committee a question raised by the Associated Students of Madison, which was seeking a commitment from the college regarding better advance communication with students about curriculum planning and, specifically, course offerings. The committee advised the dean that while departments should always honor their commitments to offer courses that serve program requirements, many factors (from staffing changes to family emergencies) affect their ability to offer specific courses in a given semester. Nonetheless, communication about planned offerings could be more transparent, and the dean was encouraged to ask department chairs and program directors to use any available means of communicating with students about planned offerings.
- The report of the Disabilities Curricular Accommodations Committee was presented to the Curriculum Committee. The Committee proposed a number of small, but meaningful, revisions to its procedures, one of which was to formally locate the DCAC as a subcommittee of the L&S Curriculum Committee. This report and recommendation were accepted.

Assessing the Baccalaureate Degree Requirements

As discussed in previous reports to the L&S Senate, the L&S Curriculum Committee has been engaged in a long-term project to evaluate and revise the undergraduate degree requirements. In Spring 2004, the L&S Curriculum Committee completed its assessment and discussions of the baccalaureate degree requirements; Summer 2004 saw the preparation of a final report summarizing our findings and cataloging proposed changes to the curriculum. That document was presented to the L&S Senate in Fall 2004 (L&S Faculty Document 264).

This presentation opened a period of review, consultation, and revision of this document. Committee representatives presented the proposal to several campus and college committees: the L&S Dean's Senior Staff, the L&S Faculty Senate, the L&S Department Chairs and Associate Chairs, the L&S

Advisors' Consortium, the L&S Academic Planning Council, the University Academic Planning Council, and the university-wide Council of Associate Deans. We estimate that the proposal was presented in-person to more than 200 people; in these presentations, discussion was lively, and our notes reflect active participation with substantive discussion on several topics. Furthermore, notices were sent to all members of the L&S faculty to inform them of the proposal's existence and to direct them to the Curriculum Committee website where they could review the full proposal and supporting documentation and submit comments.

The period for open comment ended on February 1, 2005 (although several comments were accepted after that date). Over the next two months, the committee discussed the comments extensively, and revised several passages and recommendations to address concerns raised. The document was presented for consideration to the L&S Faculty Senate (L&S Faculty Document 264a) on 20 April 2005, where it was approved with a recommendation to correct one small error and to rephrase one of the recommended requirement titles. Since the approval of that document, the committee has been working diligently with L&S Student Academic Affairs and has consulted other campus units (e.g., the Registrar's Office) to implement the revisions proposed, which will be in effect for students admitted in Fall 2007.

Summary of L&S Curriculum Committee Work Sept 2005 - February 2006

Although the approval of the proposal to revise the L&S Degree Requirements stands as the culmination of our report of activities in 2004-2005, the timing of this report offers us an opportunity to mention briefly the work we have done in 2005-2006 to implement those changes. To date, we have:

- Articulated criteria to determine Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) credit for non-L&S coursework
- Resolved issues raised by the registrar's office regarding implementation of 2007 L&S baccalaureate curriculum
- Resolved issues surrounding the residency requirement incorporated in 2007 L&S baccalaureate curriculum
- Set policy and criteria for efficiently converting existing "T" courses to LAS-credit courses

Submitted by

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