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Academic Policy Advisory Committee meeting minutes, March 4, 1997

Moorhead State University

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APAC Minutes
March 4, 1997

Members present: Danielson, Chair; Ahles, Bolton, Brown, Conteh, EnzFinkenick, Goddard, Hart, Klenk, Pietruszewski, Reed, Roy, Sanderson, Schmidt, Smedman.

Announcements: the 3/18/97 APAC meeting will be dedicated to the NCA Site Visit. Curriculum items will be acted on at the 4/1/97 meeting.

1. Music Department

Minor Change:

Change title of MUS 121: Festival Choir to Festival Mixed Choir

The committee had no objection to the change.

2. Mass Communications

Minor Changes:

Change course numbers:

Current	Proposed	Title & Credits
MC 240	308	Broadcast Journalism (3 cr.)
MC 250	302	History of Mass Communications (3 cr.)
MC 260	303	Advertising Principles (3 cr.)
MC 270	304	Public Relations Principles (3 cr.)
MC 280	301	Ads, News, PR Online (2 cr.)
MC 300	300	International Communication (3 cr.)
MC 305	309	Reporting (3 cr.)
MC 340	420	Multi-media communications (3 cr.)
MC 355	459	Ad Campaign research (2 cr.)
MC 360	306	Ad Copywriting (3 cr.)
MC 370	307	Public Relations Processes (3 cr.)
MC 450	401	Communications Law (3 cr.)
MC 550	501	Communications Law (3 cr.)
MC 570	571	Public Relations Campaign Execution (3 cr.)

C.T. Hanson was present to field questions and distributed a list of Mass Communications courses. The committee discussed the rationale of changing 200-level courses to 300-level courses and were concerned that other departments may follow suit by simply converting 200-level courses to 300-level to comply with the MnSCU 3.17 Policy mandate which was published in the 2/4/97 APAC minutes. Conteh suggested an APAC subcommittee be created to study this mandate.

The committee did not object to the changes requested by the Mass Communications department but requested that new course numbers be assigned to courses instead of reusing numbers. The course numbers listed in these minutes have been renumbered by the Registrar's office, thus reflect the correct numbers.

Conteh moved to establish an APAC subcommittee to address issues of content, conversion and curriculum demands of 200- and 300-level courses and above. Roy seconded to approve.

Enz Finken asked if there are guidelines in place for determining levels of courses. Conteh asked to add establishing such guidelines to the subcommittee charge.

Motion carried unanimously.

Subcommittee volunteers are George Sanderson, Convener; Kathleen Enz Finken and Andrew Conteh.

Danielson will discuss the subcommittee's direction with VP Midgarden

3. Anthropology Department

New Course:

ANTH 280: Forensic Anthropology (4 cr.)

Smedman moved. Hart seconded to approve.

The word "not" will be added to the sentence in item 9 on page 3 of the new course proposal form: "This course does not overlap or duplicate any courses at MSU."

Motion to approve carried unanimously.

4. Discussion of changing to a system of final grades with plus and minus grading.

Joel Charon, Mark Chekola, Ted Gracyk, Don Mattson, Steve Poitras, Donna Rosh, Don Samelson, George Sanderson and Marlane Sanderson requested this item be placed on an APAC agenda for discussion. Some of these faculty were able to be in attendance at the APAC meeting to field questions. A faculty survey was conducted by this group and Joel Charon distributed those survey results to APAC members: 157 faculty were in favor of plus/minus grades, 32 opposed and 12 did not care (5 of those 12 comments leaned toward being in favor of the change). The Committee's discussion included several points: was this an unbiased survey, would giving an A+ be possible and if so, how would this reflect on a student's GPA; would this method of grading be more fair to students because of the range of grades allowed, would it encourage or discourage grade inflation, will MnSCU policies affect implementing this system at MSU, how would GPA be affected, how would transfer students be affected, could the current grading system and this +/- grading system be used at the same time, how might student and faculty input be sought regarding this item, and should another faculty survey be completed. Faculty who had used the +/- method of grading at other universities spoke in favor of implementing the method at MSU.

Les Bakke stated that because of the current student record system, the earliest date the +/- grading method could be implemented is the Summer of 1998. It can not be implemented sooner because the +/- grades would not show on transcripts, causing problems with financial aid, suspensions and academic appeals.

Since this was a discussion item only, a proposal along with supporting documentation would have to be submitted to APAC at a hearing and then as an action item. Since the grading system can not be implemented until the Summer of 1998, the APAC committee and the faculty group which brought this item for discussion, felt there is adequate time to research the comments discussed at this meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Gloria Riopelle