

Curriculum Committee Retreat

February 17, 2016

Welcome and introductions:

In attendance: Jeremy Estrella, Stacey Holland, Anne Haberkern, John Sparks, Pam Kessinger, Dorothy Badri, Pam Miller-Tatro, Ed Lindsey, Tim McLaughlin, Amy Clubb, Alexie McNerthney, Hanna Love, Ann Cary, Craig Kolins,

Guests:

Jeffer Daykin, Brian Hull, Sarah Bentley – representing International Studies and the Integrated Studies SAC.

Agenda items:

- *Gen Ed Dual Designation*
 - *Policy?*
 - *Internationalization Request*

Currently our policy is that courses can only fulfill one designation on the general education list.

The Internationalization cohort created INTL 201 Introduction to International Studies, under the Integrated Studies SAC, a SAC comprised of Faculty from several different disciplines, which each bring their own approach and experience to the course. The course is taught both from an Arts & Letters and a Social Sciences perspective. When the course was originally approved, it had requested Arts & Letters general education designation; however the cohort sees this course as fulfilling dual designations, by meeting the criteria of both Arts & Letters and Social Sciences. The INTL cohort would like this course to be cross-listed under both designations for Gen Ed, which would require a change in the current policy.

The International cohort addressed the Committee's question of whether the course addresses both designations regardless of the instructor's background and experience. The cohort believes this course will always be taught with both perspectives; the substance of the course requires you to do so. The Committee also discussed a variety of options (i.e. making two separate courses) and talked briefly on the interdisciplinary trends that they're seeing around education. Another concern was that the fundamental nature of the course is driven by student need and not by the instruction given. If the policy is changed and the course has a dual designation, the course will apply as either Arts & Letters or Social Sciences based on the individual student's course patterns at the time they take the course; this designation can change over time as the student's course patterns progress (i.e. the course might initially fulfill Arts & Letters for a given student, and in a subsequent term move to fulfilling Social Sciences for that student, depending on other courses he or she takes). However, the course will never fulfill both designations at the same time for an individual student.

Salient Points Discussed:

SAC articulated why they feel that this course authentically speaks to both designations. The committee can see how a course can speak to 2 Gen Ed designations and had some questions.

The question came up of can a 4 credit course adequately address both designations or is one area more heavily represented than the other? The INT SAC expressed that the way the class is presented there is an intertwining of the two areas (Arts & Letters/Social Science).

The point was brought up that the college is in the beginning of a large discussion on General Education and this is deeply rooted in General Education, which is still very uncertain. Should this be discussed after the dust settles over Gen Ed?

It was explained that there were a lot of uncertainties about this and the consequences and/or benefits to students.

Another point that was raised asked that regardless of who teaches the dual designated course would it be guaranteed that both areas were adequately addressed?

After much discussion, Jeremy proposed several options for the Committee to consider:

Committee recommends a motion to the DOIs to consider a change in policy so that one course can apply for two general education designations.

Committee chooses not to recommend a change in policy.

Committee chooses to table this discussion and talk about in conjunction with the current general education conversation.

Motion: Recommend a change to the general education policy that would allow a course to fulfill two designations.

Vote: Yes- 8, No- 0, More discussion- 0

- *Independent Study "sets"*
 - *Language -*
 - *Possible Policy of one coming through CC all others in set need to come through (similar to honors and parent courses)*

The Committee discussed whether they want to see all courses within a set, even if only one course is being revised within the set or if the Committee would like to put a designator in Courseleaf to alert SACs to take a look at their other sets, and leave that as a responsibility of the SAC. After some discussion the Committee decided it does not want to review all the courses within a "set" each time one of the courses was revised.

Motion: Committee recommends the curriculum office come up with the advisory wording for a new checkbox in Courseleaf that prompts SAC to consider if course is part of a “set” and if so, to ensure changes are appropriately synced across the entire “set”.

- *Variable Credit*
 - *contract/contact hours in outcomes (where to put statement)*

Adding an additional outcome to variable credit, independent study, and COOP courses would imply that the difference is in contact/credit hours and the student contract. This would allow for two different courses in the same prefix to have the same outcomes (although SAC may also CHOOSE to have additional differential outcomes for each course, they may also choose to have single standardized outcome for all).

Motion: Move to recommend the following outcome be added to all variable credit, independent study, and COOP courses: “Meet learning outcomes specific to this project, as mutually agreed upon by the student and instructor in advance through a written learning contract, and as appropriate to the credit awarded for this course.”

Further discussion: A committee member expressed hesitancy to put the burden on Faculty and FDCs to keep on file student contracts. It was explained that the policy already exists that a contract is required prior to setting up and a student registering for an independent study course or COOP, but it is not reflected in the outcomes currently. This additional outcome will not change the current policy.

Vote: 7 yes, 1 abstention

- *Gen Ed/Cultural Literacy*
 - *Narratives linked to outcomes?*

The form currently doesn't require SACs to link the course outcomes directly to the elements of the Philosophy Statement. It simply states that the SAC should “elect at least 4 of the elements of the Philosophy Statement, lettered A-G, below and **describe how this course addresses those 4 elements in depth**”. However in recent years the committee has been asking the SACs to explicitly address an outcome that links to each of the elements of the Philosophy Statement. If the committee wants to see this, we should make it a policy change (and change the form accordingly).

The Committee discussed adding the additional requirement of tying the outcomes to the philosophy statement and the general education designation criteria, and liked having the additional connection within the explanation, but after some discussion realized that it would be really difficult for a course outcome to speak directly to the questions being asked, but the course itself could definitely do that. If a SAC uses an outcome to answer the question they need to have a narrative that explains how the outcomes speaks to it, if they don't specifically link an outcome then they need to have a narrative that explains out the course addresses the question.

Motion: Committee has decided that it would like to maintain a requirement that SACs provide a robust narrative description of how their course addresses the 4 selected elements of the Gen Ed Philosophy statement, but confirmed that SACs are NOT required to cite course outcomes in that narrative, or link a specific course outcome to each element of the Philosophy Statement addressed by the course.

Vote: 8 yes

- *Revisit "Year of Inquiry" on Assessment of Outcomes*
 - *Initially discussed at October 2014 retreat*

The Committee did the year of inquiry, with a gentle reminder to SACs that they should be thinking about how they assess their outcomes. Jeremy asked the Committee if they should continue to ask SACs how they assess their outcomes or does the Committee want to randomly ask SACs about their assessment. The Committee feels they are already doing this work when SACs present outcomes they have questions about and feel assessment is more at the forefront of many conversations now.

The committee wants to continue to ask SACs about assessment as questions arise.

- *Items on Agenda Protocol (If a course comes through solo with little to no significant revisions/discussion can it be moved up on the agenda?).*

Motion: Committee supports this decision as long as SACs are notified to show up early. Jeremy said he would contact them prior to the meeting.

Jeremy's update on General Education:

The General Education group (EAC/LAC Integration Task Force) started looking at models of General Education at other colleges. These models will help to guide discussions about what General Education should look like at PCC.

Postponed to March Curriculum Committee Agenda.

- *Revisit "out there" requirement of outcomes/we've been flip flopping*
- *Revisions/Updates to Style Guide*
 - *"Recommended: Prerequisite" language etc.*
 - *Any other revisions?*