Core Curriculum Committee
Report to the Faculty Senate
May 1, 2015 Meeting

The Core Curriculum Committee (CCC) had a very busy year, finalizing much of its work on the new Core Curriculum before the Middle States visitation. To this end, the CCC revised and submitted to the Faculty Senate for subsequent approval a revision of the Resolution on the Core Curriculum Committee. The CCC also prepared a document on the “Responsibilities and Roles of the Academic Vice President with regard to the Core Curricula” and developed a “Core Curriculum Assessment Manual.” Both of these documents were later approved by the Senate and the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

The CCC also revised and approved the application forms for all Field and attribute courses in addition to approving the goal and objectives for Information Literacy and the rubrics for all Fields, attributes, and Foundation courses (except the rubrics for writing and information literacy in FYS 101). Furthermore, teams, composed of members from the CCC and faculty teaching in the fields or in those attributes being assessed, completed an assessment of the Foundation courses: ENG 101, PHI 101, RST 101, the writing objectives for FYS 101. A preliminary assessment of Information Literacy in the Foundation courses was also done. Assessment of all of the knowledge and skill attributes occurred during this year, resulting in a decision by the CCC to re-evaluate courses with the Ethics and Diversity attributes because of problems discovered from the results of the initial assessments.

In addition, the CCC established an archive in the Faculty Portal for minutes of past meetings, rubrics, and assessment reports. The CCC took action on 42 Core course proposals. 16 different courses from 11 different departments were approved for various attributes. Two (2) courses received name change approval; 10 courses were decertified upon departmental requests. Five proposals were rejected and were not resubmitted for further consideration.

The CCC made two different presentations at faculty meetings to disseminate results of our assessment work and held a focus group in April 2015 to garner ideas on how to bring more unity and coherence to the core. The director sent out numerous emails directly to departments and faculty teaching core-attributed courses to inform them of the assessment results and possible changes for improvement. Mark Meyer, the Associate Director of the Core Curriculum, also spent a great amount of time creating a web site to collect and store artifacts for assessment.

During the coming academic year, the CCC expects to continue Core assessment according to the plan that it released in January 2015 and to continue its ongoing work of approving new courses for Core credit. In addition, we need to revise and update various goals and objectives for the attributes for which problems surfaced during the pilot assessment studies. An appeals process also needs to be articulated in preparation for re-certifying attribute and Field courses. In addition, the Middle States exit report indicates that we need to work on finding a unity and coherence in the Core and addressing questions of meaning or relevance for Core courses for students. We need, too, to have some faculty development workshops and campus-wide discussions about the meaning and assessment of Core goals and objectives. One of the issues about which there will probably be further discussion is scaffolding writing courses from FYS to ENG 101 to courses with the Advanced Writing Intensive attribute. The Core Curriculum Web pages also should be redone to make them more visually intuitive for those interested in learning about the Core Curriculum.

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24 April 2015