1 December 2010 Minutes of the College Undergraduate (UG) Curriculum Committee

Members Present: Terry Adler, Justine Adkisson, Kevin McNelis, Greg Roth, Dennis Clason, and Kathy Brook

Guests: Sherry Mills and Judith Weisinger

Absent: Bruce Huhmann

Meeting Called to Order at 1300.

Judith Weisinger presented results from the Spring 2010 assessment of College of Business (CoB) Goal 2: Students can demonstrate knowledge of diversity. (See BBA Learning Goals.) Data collected suggest that student learning was less than acceptable in two out of three objectives. Out of 83 students in the spring semester in Mgt 309, the following results were noted for each objective of Goal 2:

1. With regard to being able to identify stereotypes, 85% were able to meet or exceed expectations.
2. With regard to being able to discern between helpful and detrimental stereotypes, only 73% were able to meet or exceed expectations.
3. With regard to being able to identify individual characteristics that affect social perception and strategies that counter negative influence on social perception, only 66% were able to meet or exceed expectations.

Judy provided a summary of the Management Department’s efforts to improve the assessment process by standardizing the textbook for Mgt 309 and limiting the diversity component to one video for instruction. Judy stated that the drop-off in all three objectives was due to a more realistic assessment of student learning given the above changes in Mgt 309. She also stated that she expects scores to increase in the Fall 2010 and following semesters given that the diversity component of Mgt 309 is now much more consistent as it is taught in all sections of Mgt 309. We wish to thank all Mgt 309 instructors for their work in improving the assessment process.

Next meeting is scheduled for early Spring 2011 semester. One of the top agenda items will be the review of Goal 4: Students can solve problems and think critically with emphasis on the critical thinking component of student learning (Goal 4b). Sherry Mills presented three options that have been proposed by Department Heads to improve critical thinking. All three options involve tying critical thinking to writing. These options are:

1. Add a second writing course for all CoB students.
2. Create and administer a critical thinking/writing test in the CoB. Those who do not pass the test by some acceptable standard then have to take a remedial writing class.
3. Use both existing English 111 and English 203 courses as a filter to determine who can critically think/write. Those who get at least a “B” grade in BOTH courses do not have to take a remedial writing course like English 218.

A motion by Greg Roth was made to accept Option 3 and this was seconded by Dennis Clason. Discussion followed that the remedial course would have to be identified in agreement with the English Department. As the critical thinking component is tied heavily to the skill of writing (as discussed in our Fall 2010 Convocation), we decided to pilot the existing critical thinking rubric for Goal 4b in each CoB department in the Spring 2011. We believe that critical thinking is really a process that improves over time and that the best measurement of student learning in Goal 4b would be within individual majors not necessarily the undergraduate core curriculum. Thus, this committee will ask each department head to select one class in their department at the 300 level and above to use the critical thinking rubric for assessment purposes in Spring 2011.

The motion was amended to include pilot testing the critical thinking rubric which should give us a better understanding of student learning and provide a more accurate assessment of Goal 4b. We also are going to ask for historical data that tracks students in English 111 and English 203 who got a grade lower
than a “B” in either or both of these classes. We want to know if these students struggled in performance in either GPA or time to graduation. The relevant information is as follows:

    Motion passed 4 yes and 0 no.

Meeting Adjourned at 1352.

Submitted by: Terry Adler, Chair