UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
2015-16 Meeting #9, January 25, 2016

Present: Matthew Brehm, Dan Eveleth, Janine Darragh, Joe Law, Patricia Hart, Kerri Vierling, Mark Nielsen, Todd Thorsteinson, Rick Stodardt, Jeanne Stevenson, Don Crowley, Kenton Bird, Heather Chermak
Absent: Tim Prather, Brianna Larson, Austin Blacker, Ankah Guria
Others present: Grace Miller, Rebecca Frost, Dwaine Hubbard, Eva Strand, Annette Folwell, Diane Carter

Call to order: A quorum being present, the chair called the meeting to order at 3:40p.m. in the Pitman Cataldo room. The December 7th minutes were approved unanimously, with no correction.

Old Business

UCC-16-002 PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT WORK GROUP
Heather explained that Prior Learning refers to education acquired outside the University. Methods for assessing Prior Learning (PLA) and awarding credits (CPL) include: IB, CLEP, and AP credits, vertical credit, and military credits. Heather noted that students may also prepare portfolios that demonstrate Prior Learning acquired through work experience. The Prior Learning Assessment Work Group was tasked with developing a framework for future PLAs.

Dan asked for clarification regarding the memo’s purpose. Heather explained that the policy needs to be approved so that it can go on to Faculty Senate. Eventually, the Faculty and Staff Handbook will need to be updated to reflect the new framework. Rick asked if the University Curriculum Committee would see the handbook changes before they’re implemented. Heather affirmed. Dan asked if there were any “surprises” in the document and Heather responded that the new policy will hone the way the University deals with portfolios. Rick asked for clarification regarding the final sentence: “Credit for prior learning is limited to 25% of the minimum number of credits needed for a baccalaureate degree.” Heather explained that no more than 25% of credits a student earns in pursuit of a degree may be Prior Learning credits. She noted that the State Board of Education is considering separating exams from other forms of PLA. Don asked whether Prior Learning included dual credit and Heather clarified that dual credit refers to University courses.

Matthew noted that the following two sentences seemed to contradict each other: “Credit for prior learning will not be awarded for professional experiences alone” and “Documentation to provide evidence of technical competency can include but not be limited to…” Matthew said that he imagined architecture students submitting letters from their mentors as evidence. Heather explained that students need to demonstrate their competency in some way.

Rick asked whether certain disciplines wouldn’t accept the portfolio. Heather responded that the portfolio is generally focused on the technical side. Dan noted that students can’t receive credit for internship after the fact and “that’s kind of what this is.” Mark responded that Prior Learning Assessments don’t have to go through the petitions committee. Dan asked for clarification regarding the phrase “professional experience alone” and Dwaine explained that the PLA requires that students demonstrate their skill. Simply having performed the task is not sufficient to receive credit. Don and Patricia suggested that the committee add an additional phrase to clarify that the PLA requires evidence. Matthew and Don expressed favor for amending the sentence as follows: “Credit for prior learning will not be awarded for professional experiences [without supporting evidence.]” It was moved and seconded to approve the document, as corrected. The motion passed unanimously.

UCC-16-026 COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Kerri Vierling introduced the changes. She explained that department is reactivating courses and adding others. She explained further that certain faculty members have switched departments and the College of Natural Resources is requesting prefix changes so that courses will follow instructors to their new departments. Eva Strand explained that some students require FOR courses and other require REM courses. Dan suggested that the Committee approve all course changes through the curricular changes. It was moved and seconded to vote on items 1, 2, and 3 together. The motion passed unanimously.
Eva introduced the changes to the Forest Resources major. Mark Nielsen noted that the Climate Change minor will disappear once the College of Science proposals are processed. Dwaine noted that the minor would simply disappear from the Forest Resources major. Kenton asked for clarification regarding the removal of Engl 313 and 317 from the curriculum. Eva explained that faculty members felt that the courses were not fulfilling department needs. Kenton asked if this conclusion was supported by assessment data and Eva responded that it was probably anecdotal. Kenton suggested a dialogue between the faculty and the English department. Mark Nielsen noted that the College of Science will “pick up the slack by going the other way” and using the English courses, instead. He further explained that the College of Science wanted to utilize the English courses, but faculty members were worried about enrollment pressure. It was moved and seconded to approve item 4. The motion passed unanimously.

Kerri noted that the changes in Item 5 were primarily designed to help students satisfy government requirements for Range Conservation positions. The changes align the curriculum more closely with those requirements and will help students to hit benchmarks sooner. She explained that AVS 474 had a hidden prereq, which prohibited enrollment. AVS 109 replaces it.

Dan noted a typo in Item 6: “follwing” instead of “following.” Dan also noted that the lowest number of credits for the Rangeland Ecology and Management Minor actually equaled 17 and not 18. He suggested that this be avoided through careful advising. Finally, Dan noted that “Two of the following courses (or a course not chosen above) (2-4 cr)” should actually say “... (4-7 cr)”. It was moved and seconded to approve these changes.

It was moved and seconded to approve the addition of NRS 450. The motion passed unanimously.

UCC-16-026a COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Eva and Kerri explained that the department chose to drop the undergraduate Fire Ecology, Management, and Technology certificate because no one was taking it. The graduate certificate is a feeder program into the Master’s of Natural Resources. Dan clarified that the new curriculum begins on page 3. Kenton asked for clarification regarding the requirement that students earn a grade of ‘B’ or higher in order to earn the certificate. Heather explained that the grade threshold is a graduate degree requirement. Rick asked which students the department anticipated would take earn this certificate and Eva responded that the certificate is offered entirely online, so distance students would be most likely to attempt it. It was moved and seconded to approve the new curriculum. The motion passed unanimously.

UCC-16-026b COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Kerri explained that there are many different ways to characterize land surfaces. The Remote Sensing of the Environment certificate is designed to take advantage of the people on campus who are familiar with geospatial analyses. Dan noted that students can earn the certificate without completing any GIS coursework. Eva explained that remote sensing is what feeds into GIS, not the other way around. It was moved and seconded to approve the creation of the certificate. The motion passed unanimously.

UCC-16-026c COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Kerri explained that these changes are the result of meetings with stakeholders and the accrediting organizations. She noted that the name change would bring the Forest Resources [Forestry] program in line with other institutions, as this naming convention is generally preferred within the industry. She explained that “resources” implies something different now than it once did. It was moved and seconded to approve the name change. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

UCC-16-034 UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL EDUCATION: REGULATION J
Kenton explained that the UCGE’s membership is basically a shadow of the University Curriculum Committee. He identified two types of changes in UCC-16-034: the first block deals with general education requirements that are within the State Board of Education’s framework for GEM matriculated courses. He explained that while the
faculty control the curriculum at the University of Idaho, the Committee is obligated to work within that framework. The second group of changes deals with the list of courses that fall within institutionally designated areas.

He explained that the current Catalog has just a single communication category, with subcategories for public speaking and English communication. The State Board categories are divided into written and oral communication. The changes presented in UCC-16-034 are meant to bring the University’s General Education offerings in line with Board policy.

Mark noted that the GE courses’ lack of stability had proven problematic for advising. Annette Folwell, in attendance to represent the Communication Studies faculty, noted that the general requirements aren’t changing; the competencies are. She explained further that every state-wide discipline group made changes to their competencies.

Dan asked how the writing courses listed on the proposal fulfilled the oral communication requirements. Kenton explained that departments presented rubrics and syllabi that convinced UCGE that the listed courses would fulfill requirements, as half of their content deals with oral communication. Joe Law noted that the course descriptions do not reflect the oral component. Annette noted that her English colleagues used “verbal” to mean “using words,” but the new competencies submitted to SBOE swap “verbal” for “spoken.” It was noted that GEM courses are discouraged from having prerequisites attached to them, but both writing courses listed do have prerequisites attached.

Kenton said that it is presumptive to assume that the SBOE will adopt new policies this year, as board policy is explicit regarding the nature of disciplinary groups; they are merely advisory. Control of the curriculum ultimately rests with the institution. Kenton noted that faculty suggested that the Committee wait for assessment data in order to determine whether the courses fulfill the learning outcomes. The English faculty asked Kenton to ask on their behalf that they be allowed to demonstrate the courses’ value before striking them from the proposal. Mark called the proposal an “artificial” attempt to fulfill the State Board requirements. Don asked why the University couldn’t leave the GE courses as they were and Heather replied that the changes were necessary in order to comply with Board policy. Mark asked whether anyone outside the State Board would inspect the catalog and Heather responded in the negative.

Dan noted that the board separating the communication competencies may signify that the University ought to, also. Kenton offered to relay questions to the State Board’s academic officer to discern the degree to which the University Catalog would be scrutinized. Dan noted that the UCGE vote was not unanimous and Kenton explained that UCGE faced the same issue regarding the communication division.

Don suggested that the Committee do nothing, and wait instead for someone from the State Board to demand the changes. Kerri suggested that changes to the titles and descriptions could better reflect the verbal elements. The Committee elected to table this proposal. Patricia noted that it would be helpful to understand the reason for the separation.

**UCC-16-034a UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON GENERAL EDUCATION**

It was moved and seconded to approve the new course. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM. UCC will meet again on February 1, 2016.

Grace Miller, UCC Secretary