

Minutes
Task Force Committee
October 7, 2008

Members Present: A. Argast, K. Bordens, L. Corbin, P. Dragnev, L. Hess, R. Hile, M. Jordan, B. Kingsbury (Chair), D. Kline, A. Livichiz, I. Mallin, A. Shupe, N. Tuschling, G. Wang, M. Wolf and H. McDonald-Lara.

Meeting called to order at 12:00.

The bulk of this meeting was comprised of listening to Dean Lipman's thoughts regarding Arts and Sciences requirements and the philosophy behind those requirements. The dean provided a handout, which he subsequently worked through. The text from that handout is provided appended to these notes.

Following Dean Lipman's departure, the committee discussed approach, and came to the following consensus points:

- 1) Our approach will principally be to work through the document start to finish, while keeping alert to the fact that items we might add will not be present to correct in the existing document.
- 2) We will presume as a starting point that the requirements are fine as they stand, though additional philosophical underpinnings may be needed to explain them.
- 3) The credit requirements should remain the same. Deviations would be considered, but resisted to limit impacts to departmental majors.

We will endeavor to conclude our meetings on the hour.

Our next meeting will be Thursday October 16, 2008

Meeting adjourned at 1:10.

We start with the assumption that what we do now we do pretty well, so we should ask if we doing the correct stuff in the correct amounts.

A Goal: IPFW COAS graduates should know the breadth of human knowledge, what is the horizon of what we know, what types of things are inside that horizon.

A Goal: IPFW COAS graduates should know the great questions for the different disciplines inside the realm of human knowledge.

A Goal: IPFW COAS graduates should be prepared to be productive, competent citizens for our time in our community.

Aside: I haven't found a suitable book that discusses these goals in other areas to be companion to *Why Science*.

I request that:

You deliver a document that tells the tale with respect to the Baccalaureate Framework
that might mean specifying some courses
that should mean specifying some competencies - like reading and writing - that can only
be met through a suite of courses or an effort to teach them throughout the
curriculum

You deliver a document that shows how our graduates become competent citizens.
that means civics
that means enough math
that means better analytical and problem solving skills than we guarantee now
that means broad enough training that they can succeed in the work force or grad school
with careers that are likely to span several different types of jobs

You deliver a document that recognizes that the only broad education a person gets is at the undergraduate level..

You don't deliver a document that is simply a list of courses to be taken or areas for courses to be taken in.

I'd like to see a document that proposes three idealized curricula, one each for a humanities, social/behavioral science, and science majors (Not nearly all the way to bingo sheets). Obviously the details of the courses in the major belong to the department. The rest of it belongs to us.

Seven items to consider:

1. Requirements should be driven by goals derived from the COAS interpretation of the Baccalaureate Framework. We ought to be able to say why we have a particular requirement. Once we do that, we should ask three questions:

- Does the proposed requirement satisfy the goal?
- Can the goal be achieved in some other way?
- Should the goal be achieved in some other way?

Example #1: The goal is creation of an international perspective and knowledge of other cultures. This is as part of creating a sense of community and developing personal values. The requirement we impose is the foreign language requirement.

Answer 1. It seems that acquiring a knowledge of a foreign language to a minimal proficiency, together with some culture and literature inherent in the study of the language does indeed help meet the goal. Communities are defined in part by boundaries, and learning about different cultures helps individuals identify their own values and find similarities across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

Answer 2. Some language together with foreign travel and a greater infusion of culture might also do this. For example, POLS courses on other political systems, some history and many of the non-western tradition courses might contribute as well. So might significant foreign travel without the benefit of language. (This might require a change in goals, perhaps to include greater employability. Such changes are legitimate.)

Answer 3. We might argue that less dependence on the language and greater emphasis on the cultural aspects of the experience would serve students better. We might also argue that without some language training we cannot properly introduce the culture. We should also be able to make an argument for the inherent value of learning another language. But if so, that must be built into the goals and justified separately.

Example #2: COAS currently has a nine credit hour distribution requirement, spread across three areas. We need to articulate the purpose of that distribution requirement. Is nine enough to satisfy the goal? Does any old nine hours suitably distributed satisfy the goal?

2.. BA vs BS

3. I believe there are three types of accomplishments to be addressed at the baccalaureate level:
knowledge (facts)
attributes, competencies (writing, speaking, modes of thought)
experiences (completing a paper, labs)

These three different types of learning must be addressed.

4. There are some probably things we agree on that everyone should know:
a little statistics
something about computers
how our governments operate
(I have several more.)

There are probably some things we agree on that everyone should have done:
given a speech in public
done a significant piece of writing
studied a bit of Shakespeare

There are probably some things we agree that everyone should know how to do:
their taxes
problem solving

If so, we should make a case that what we design has a good chance of making sure our students learn do and can those things.

5. We don't make students write enough. We would do well to make sure there is writing in the major (as many already do).

6. SOMETHING NEW. I believe that we should have a suite of courses designed to jump start achieving objectives three through six of the Baccalaureate Framework. While every major has shown how it might achieve these four pillars of the BF not directly tied to the major, I don't believe we have designed anything specifically for that purpose.

Example of such a suite: COAS 101, 102, 103 spanning SCI., SOC/BEH, HUM are broad areas of human knowledge. A potential emphasis is, "Great minds and great ideas."

These would be like a freshman seminar, perhaps even limited to freshmen, spanning all the disciplines of the College, taught in large lectures by the very best senior people we have, and expanded on in small discussion sections. Some writing, but lots of reflection time, emphasis on the relationships across disciplines and the great ideas inside them. This is intended to be fascinating, thrilling, and horizon-broadening all at once.

7.. Do we need a capstone experience? . If so, what should it look like? They are, by definition, integrative, and ought to depend on the skills implied by Gen Ed Area VI as a prerequisite. But we could choose to not have one, have one that requires interdisciplinary teams, requires a paper or presentation, whatever. Again, if we demand this, we have to say why.

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Example of a Potential idealized curriculum for a science major:

Gen Ed as specified by IPFW

COAS 010, 102, 103

The major - but not everything, it's only a bachelors degree.

Some stuff in a related science (CHM for PHYS, PHYS for CHM, PHYS for GEOS, ...)

Math through linear algebra and differential equations, statistics

Some related engineering or an applied discipline, some course that is based on application of the major – this course might not yet exist

Foreign language and culture (both)

Writing, writing, writing

Public speaking, communications through new media

Shakespeare (okay, I'm biased, but everybody should study Shakespeare. Actually everybody should *do Shakespeare*, even if it's only reading it out loud)

Civics, to include the possibility of credit for part of this segment through community activity or service learning (not the credits, but the requirement)

A humanities segment to include philosophy of science (everybody should take philosophy), history of science (unless the major already compels one), areas that can be made attractive to a student majoring in the sciences

A Soc/Beh Sci segment to include areas that can be made attractive to a student majoring in the sciences, such as brain science, Bioanthropology, Sociology of science or the science of sociology

Capstone?

Room for fun