

EPCC Minutes
February 12, 2008

In Attendance: Steve Griffith, John Bolen, Mark Juffernbruch, Deb Czarneski, Justin Nostrala, Mike Hadden, Mark Gammon, Kedron Bardwell, Walter Pearson, Steve Rose, Murphy Waggoner

Minutes of January 22, 2008 EPCC meeting approved.

1. Course proposal for Physics 101 Introduction to Astronomy, CS 2A.

Short random discussion. Steve Rose motioned to approve the proposal. Seconded by Mark Juffernbruch. Approved unanimously.

2. Discussion of recommendations from the Learning Programs Working Group.

Mark Gammon had a procedural question, asking what is happening with these LPWG recommendations. It is explained that if the recommendations are approved by EPCC they would be taken to the faculty at the faculty meeting.

Juffernbruch raises issue on page 15 of the recommendations. Mark questioned what it meant to approve these recommendations without the details worked out.

Steve Rose said he understood the notion of approving the recommendations knowing that the details would be worked out later, but stated that he would like the detail of the transfer issue defined. Murphy explained, Bolen agreed, that courses transferring in would need to be assessed on an individual basis.

Griffith stated that an issue with LPWG is deciding when to nail down the details of the recommendations. Instead of defining all of the details only to have the recommendation rejected, LPWG decided it would be better to get the general reaction of the faculty to a recommendation, and then work out details of those accepted. LPWG felt it was appropriate to put forth the recommendations with the notion in mind that working out the details may cause some of the proposal to be withdrawn.

Juffernbruch brings discussion to page 3, mentioning the question, "Will students be able to take more than four course per semester? What happens if a student falls behind?" Juffernbruch asks if this is one of those issues that would need to be refined. Steve Griffith explained that some things will need to be defined as we go along.

Deb Czarneski questions (based on p. 4) the true nature of flexibility to be gained from switching to the Unit system. Juffernbruch talked about the cultural shift or a thinking of things in a new way. Steve Rose mentioned depth of education. Griffith explained that when talking about credit your caught up in a whole discussion of American education and the way we count things, and if you try to make sense of it, you can't. Griffith continued, This is about reducing a course load not reducing the workload for faculty.

Griffith also addressed determining how often a class will meet: As an instructor you will decide how often your course will meet each week as it counts for one unit. The de-linking of credit and seat time really is that. And other highly regarded institutions are already doing this.

Waggoner asked, "What I would like to know is how is it perceived there by students?"

Deb Czarneski asked, Why did we move away from the unit system in the past? Griffith responded, No one knows? Bolen stated the only thing he's heard is that in the 70s they made the shift because many schools were switching to credits and it was perceived that if Simpson switched it would make it easier to deal with transfers, etc.

Qualitative vs. Quantitative issues discussed.

Griffith stated that the thing we should keep circling back to is the reason we're doing this, which is to improve the experience for students. For each individual, for each individual course the experience will be different. The overall experience will be profound.

Juffernbruch mentions the role accreditation will play if this shift happens.

Juffernbruch brought up e-mail from Virginia in which she mentions two sticky issues brought up in Fine Arts Division meeting: partial credit for applied lessons and the switch to graduation to before May Term.

There is some discussion about who determines the academic calendar.

Dean Griffith explained that the administration actually determines the calendar.

Waggoner added, On the other hand the faculty determines the length of the May Term and the regular semester.

Discussion continued about what it meant to approve principles of the LPWG Recommendation before defining details. Also addressed was the issue of who implements what at Simpson.

Implementation will be discussed next time. Also Gwen will be asked to attend the next meeting to address the issue of transfers.

Meeting ended 1:55.

Next EPCC Meeting: Tuesday, February 26.

*Respectfully submitted,
Justin Nostrala*