

**LPWG-Structure  
Meeting Notes  
October 11, 2007**

**Present:** Walter Pearson, Amy Doling, Mike Hadden, Justin Nostrala, Steve Shafer, Sharon Wilkinson, Del Shepard and Steve Griffith.

The meeting was called to order by Steve Griffith at 3:30 p.m.

The group briefly reviewed Griffith's notes of the last meeting

It was noted that the issue of fractional courses was still unresolved. It was agreed that fractional courses might be necessary with regard to certain activity and performance courses, but that allowing such courses should not be seen as a way of linking seat time to course credit.

It was noted that at the last meeting the group agreed that the normal number of courses taken by students should be four per semester. This would total 32 courses. A discussion ensued regarding the appropriateness of reducing the required courses by one or two to allow a student to drop a course or two during their eight semesters. This would mean a reduction in the total courses required to 30 or 31, plus the experiential terms that might be required. It was noted that many other institutions allow students to pick-up a dropped course with partial credit courses, and/or by taking additional experiential terms. It was agreed that the exact number of courses to be required will be determined after the issue of whether the College has an experiential term.

The group discussed the authority of the administration to set the academic calendar. It was agreed that the current practice of the having the administration determine the break days, holidays, start and end dates was appropriate, but a major change in calendar (shifting to a January Term, for example) would need the approval of the full faculty.

A question was raised about the usefulness of using the term experiential when describing May Term or January Term. Was it the intention of the group to require all courses to be taught in a one month term to be experiential? The difference between experiential and experimental was discussed and it was agreed that a one month term allows opportunities for student learning in large blocks of time and that it was generally agreed that courses taught in such a term are more likely to be successful if this fact was taken into consideration the design of the course.

It was agreed that if the College continues to offer a one month term that teaching in it should be optional. No faculty should be required to teach in a certain way. It was agreed that although faculty would be encouraged to recognize the unique opportunities for experiential learning in a one month term, it should not be required pedagogy. It was also agreed that for the sake of clarity the group would try not to use the phrase experiential

when describing the one month term but, describe the type of activity that is considered to be experiential (study travel, research, lab, performance and creative activity, internships, job shadowing, etc.)

#### Topic E: The Shape of the Calendar

After discussion, the group affirmed the belief of the summer working group that our students would continue to be well-served by having a month long term available for credit-bearing study travel, internships, job shadowing, research, performance, creative activity and other types of courses as determined by faculty. Such a term allows opportunity for student engagement in a way that is not available in the regular fall and spring semesters.

#### **Recommendation #5: The academic calendar should include a one month term.**

#### Topic F: May Term or January Term

After discussion, it was agreed that despite the advantages identified by the summer group with January Term (provides a continuity of learning throughout the year, opportunity to carry January learning into the spring semester, a significant break between semesters for those not teaching, etc.) a change to January Term would be too disruptive to the activity of the College at this time. It was recognized that this decision might be revisited at a later date, but for now the suggested advantages did not outweigh the disadvantages.

#### **Recommendation #6: The calendar should include a May Term**

#### Topic G: Break weeks, the number of May Term courses required, etc.

It was agreed that more information was needed before the group was prepared to make a recommendation with regard to the scheduling of breaks and the number of May Terms required. Griffith suggested that at the next meeting, the group meet by phone with the registrars from Wartburg and Coe, both schools having May Terms.

The meeting was concluded about 5 p.m.