Division 3 Evening Meeting Notes

April 29, 2015

Present: Pat Babington, Suman Balasubramanian, Tom Ball, Dave Berque, Steven Bogaerts, John Caraher, Tim Cope, Sharon Crary, Bridget Gourley, Jeff Hansen, Doug Harms, David Harvey, Mary Kertzman, Carrie Klaus, Alex Komives, Rich Martoglio, Jim Mills, Selma Poturovic, Pam Propsom, Jackie Roberts, Michael Roberts, Henning Schneider, Maria Schwartzman, Fred Soster, Scott Thede, Christina Wagner, Scott Wilkerson, Brian Wright

Announcements

--Volunteers to proctor the Senior Assessment on Study Day: Friday, May 8, 11:00-noon? You’ll get free pizza!

--Summer Science Teaching Workshop with Stephanie Chasteen, Associate Director of Science Education Initiative at CU-Boulder: Tuesday, May 26, 9:00-4:00 (breakfast and lunch included)

Discussion

We reviewed results from the brief SM gen ed survey, indicating that the current CAPP SM proposal has little support in Division 3 and the preference is for the Modified Proposal of two courses in the joint Science & Math grouping, at least one with a lab. Jackie and Pam sent the Modified Proposal to CAPP for consideration and received feedback indicating there was not enthusiasm for it, but neither was there intense opposition.

We received a CAPP Distribution Requirement FAQ sheet today, with some data regarding what areas students have “avoided” in the past, how many anticipated seats are available to meet CAPP’s proposed requirements, and answers to potential questions. We then discussed strengths and concerns regarding CAPP’s proposal.

Strengths

--Adds a lab requirement

--Closes perceived “loopholes” in current requirements (e.g., ensures students take both a Science and a Math course)

--Has a certain “tidiness” to it (i.e., Science is one thing, Math is a different sort of thing)

Concerns

--Potentially undermines current SM gen ed efforts, splitting apart Science and Math (perhaps CAPP members don’t realize how much math is utilized in Science courses, especially lab courses)

--Makes Q practically obsolete

--Proposes counting Univ 101 as meeting the Math and Logical Reasoning requirement

--Practical considerations. We question whether this could be staffed: are there enough labs? Enough courses in Math/Logic? And are the courses currently offered the best in terms of meeting our goal of general education (e.g., are gen ed students well-served by taking Calculus)? Some courses (e.g., new team-taught Paradigm Shifts, Human Origins) would not count.

Modified Proposal

--Open question regarding the Modified Proposal: would CS1 count as meeting the lab requirement?

--Where did the lab requirement come from? This didn’t seem like an essential part of our ongoing SM discussions. Seems like the CAPP proposal “forced our hand.” We weren’t really at the point where we were ready to make a formal proposal, but we had to react.

--We discussed how to approach the Faculty Meeting vote regarding CAPP’s proposal and the following points were brought up:

--Arguments should be student-focused.

--Division 3 doesn’t “own” the science/math gen ed requirement, but we do have expertise in this area.

--A lot of students aren’t Calc1 ready, so would CAPP’s proposal push students into the two-semester sequence (Math 135 & Math 136) and what would the implications be, or would Math 135 count as the one required course?

--Q Program is not broken and the CAPP proposal implies it is, without having previous discussion.

--Some were skeptical of how CAPP got it numbers and their accuracy. Some of the supposed lab course seats would be taken up by majors and students who need these courses for other majors, and there would not really be this many seats available for gen ed students.

--What if someone proposes removing the lab from the CAPP proposal?

--Important that we make sure we’re not speaking for the division as a whole, that there are some differing opinions (e.g., that *some* people want a lab).

--Ideas for how to approach this: should we support the Modified Proposal or just vote against the CAPP proposal?

--The Science and Math division can still continue discussions and make further proposals regardless of whatever requirement is passed. The concern is that the reform movement will lose momentum and the faculty won’t want to continue the gen ed discussion and further modifications/votes.

--We need to convey to the faculty at large that our division has been having thoughtful, deliberate discussions about learning goals for a year and a half. We would like the faculty to consider what’s best for our students, what the outcomes of a gen education should be. CAPP’s proposal does not strike us as addressing this.

--We don’t want to drive a wedge between faculty in different divisions.

--One opinion was just to send the whole thing back to CAPP and have each “division” propose what should be the outcome/requirement for their area.

--Another suggestion is that we propose just leaving the SM requirement alone, so that we can come back in a year or two when we’re ready with a more thoughtful, meaningful requirement. We have a pilot gen ed course online for the fall; request that the faculty give us time to test it out. Maybe walk the faculty through the process the division has taken, developing deliberate learning goals, being really thoughtful about what’s best for our students. We took a straw poll and the vast majority of people at the meeting tonight preferred to maintain the status quo for the time being, so that we could come forward in a year or two with a more deliberate, thoughtful proposal.

--Should we go by straw poll results (suggesting that the divisional gen ed preference is for two joint SM courses, at least one with lab) or with outcome of discussion tonight? We could say we want to eventually have a lab, but we’re in an evolutionary process and want to make sure we have the best SM laboratory and courses in place before we decide. Do we want to have a proposed timetable that we present to the faculty? We have a pending NSF grant that includes curriculum revision.

**The conclusion was that Jackie and/or Pam will make a motion at Monday’s Faculty Meeting to leave the current SM requirement alone. We will convey that we are not speaking for the entire division, but that a large group of people in SM have supported this. If accepted, this will give us time to revise the SM gen ed requirement and courses to do what we feel is best in terms of our students’ general education. We will write a brief summary of the steps the division has taken, ideally demonstrating to the faculty at large that we have been thoughtfully considering these issues and will come back with a proposal in a year or two.**