CEPP Minutes

1/25/19

Scribe: Bina Gogineni

Attendees: Marta Brunner, Pat Hilleren, Feryaz Ocakli, Riley Filister, Steve Ives, Bina Gogineni

1. December 7, 2018 minutes approved.
2. Bridge committee update: Committee has finalized a working document to guide faculty in creating/considering the eligibility of Bridge courses. The main change in the document is that it now names the key components of Bridge courses: content, theory, reflection & practice/application. In the course of discussion, CEPP members considered some sundry items: how a stand-alone course that is seeking a practical add-on might gain one; whether course caps might put undue pressures on majors in departments whose courses tend to bear the onus of Bridge courses; how a course could work in terms of special assignments and professorial commitment of (and compensation for) contact hours for only those of the students who are seeking Bridge credit; whether there exist models at Skidmore currently (applied civic engagement, for example) that might serve as practical models for such scenarios; whether it would be possible to form clusters of Bridge courses that could share add-on components. The process for approving courses remains to be determined. Some possibilities include a director, whether temporary or not, a subcommittee for review, or a two-step process by which Chairs first review courses and then send them onward to Bridge Director or subcommittee. There was a strong sense among members that a temporary/transitional director would be a good idea, as such a person could be tasked with sorting out some of the details broached above, particularly those involved with anomalous situations. CEPP members then considered the tenure of a directorship: would it make sense to have a director for as long as the initial cohort of students goes through the GE curriculum, concluding the term of service with an assessment of that cohort?; would it be sensible to then determine at that point whether a permanent directorship is necessary or desirable? We then contemplated credentials that might conduce to the role of temporary director.
3. Discussion of the goals of the committee this term: qSET form review, further inquiry into issues associated with interdisciplinary minors, and review of the policy on certificate programs (i.e., Should Skidmore offer certification programs for certain skills? If so, then how would Skidmore adjudicate which skills would be eligible for certification?)
4. CEPP co-Chairs’ update on progress re: qSET form review. Ideally, the Office for Institutional Research will provide its data analysis to CEPP a week before the Committee of the Whole discussion of it, tentatively scheduled for March 1st. This choice of date is determined by the visit from USC’s Ginger Clark. CEPP members discussed what we as a wider collective are hoping to get out of her visit. Though quantitative analysis of the qSET forms can be—and will have been—done in-house, the external expert can guide the community as to how the forms ought to be used. As such, Ginger Clark will meet with ATC and PC. CEPP members then discussed whether she ought to meet with Chairs and Program Directors or the faculty as a whole. There was a strong shared sense that the latter was preferable so that the entire faculty is on the same page. This is particularly important for faculty members who are in their first 5 years and thus have not yet been exposed to the development of the qSET form being currently assessed and the discussions around them at that moment of origin. Dr. Clark can set the context/framework for our faculty discussions of the issues associated with the qSET forms. In other words: We can ask her what the questions are that we as a community should be asking ourselves. CEPP then considered the value/utility of Dr. Clark meeting with particular cohort groups with different concerns. The committee also considered the value and possibility of a follow-up visit from Dr. Clark.
5. CEPP Co-Chairs raised a concern brought to them by ATC regarding the turnaround time for the quantitative and qualitative evaluation forms between fall and spring semester. Currently, the feedback from fall evaluation forms is not prompt enough to enable faculty to revise their pedagogy and plans for the spring term; this can be particularly consequential for repeated courses. Would it be possible to revise the policy on errors in the quantitative forms so as to expedite turn-around time for the forms? Would it be possible for faculty members to receive their qualitative evaluations simultaneously with the Chairs’ receipt of them? CEPP plans to speak to the Office of Institutional Research about these deadline issues. CEPP members also brainstormed more creative possibilities by which faculty could receive feedback more quickly (e.g., faculty handing out the forms earlier than they currently do, or students inputting their feedback digitally for faster processing, etc.). In the course of the discussion between CEPP co-Chairs and ATC members, certain ambiguities were identified regarding the qSET form. For example, it was made explicit when the form was introduced that it would go to ATC/PC (then CAPT) for personnel decisions, but that requirement is not explicit in the faculty handbook or the ATC guidelines. These incongruities must be ironed out. ATC also underscored the fact that CEPP cannot make any personnel recommendations, including how the forms are used by ATC and PC. That determination falls within ATC’s/PC’s purview. CEPP, however, can send those committees the data it is currently collecting, and ATC/PC will consider them. CEPP will be co-ordinating with ATC/PC going forward.
6. Plan to check in at the next meeting with the DOF/VPAA and DOS re: where things stand with the holiday schedule for next year, in the wake of the Board meeting in which CEPP’s recommendation for a personal day for all was proposed as a long-term solution.