

CEPP Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2025 @10:10-11:10am
Library 213

In attendance: Adrian Bautista, Amy Frappier, Heather Hurst, Lisa Jackson-Schebetta, Nick Junkerman, Natalie Koegler, Trevor Lai, Dorothy Mosby, Robert ParkeHarrison, Kelly Sheppard, Auden Thomas, Jamin Totino

Scribe: Lisa Jackson-Schebetta

Announcements:

Next week: check in/review of calendar, timeline, and agenda for rest of semester: pending, ongoing, and anticipated business.

Minutes:

CEPP Chair thanked Auden Thomas for all her labor on the summer online course review audit and report.

Auden shared her perspective on how online summer courses have impacted work load as well as impressions of student learning/experience. Auden affirms administrative workload is not affected by format; sense is that faculty and students like having options; concerns include how we evaluate and steward online instruction quality of experience in the longer term. Another consideration is national regulatory context, and annual certification of Skidmore's ability to instruct students across state lines. We are not an outlier among our peer institutions in terms of offering online summer courses.

The priority is flexibility and options for students and faculty. It is not a money earning decision. Online summer courses do not generate significant additional revenue. Enrollment varies in terms of size of classes. Auden notes that summer of 2021 enrollment was high as students sought to catch-up on courses from COVID. Our summer enrollments is primarily local students, and employee dependents.

Pre-College programs are facing headwinds: costs, as well as changes to marketing to minors. This is an external revenue generating program. Summer programs, overall, must stay in the black.

Online summer enrollment's impact on auxiliary revenues (housing, etc) are separate from Auden's purview. Res Life handles housing, etc.

Auden aims to start with 50 courses for a summer, and settle in mid 40s. Enrollment is a threshold of 4 for any course. Cancellations happen when enrollment is below threshold 14 days before start of term. Online offerings have yielded additional faculty interest; this can be helpful for Auden's balance of enrollment and offerings in any given summer.

CEPP chair recounted a previous CEPP conversation that noted how important summer enrollment—and flexible options-- is for a subset of our students for academic success: make-up courses, requirements, GPA improvement. Only Skidmore courses contribute to Skidmore GPA; summer courses from elsewhere transfer credits, but do not affect Skidmore GPA. Online summer courses, report shows, support accessibility for students, esp those who may have to take reduced course load during the year.

Auden is a small player in external market of summer offerings; our target population is Skidmore students for summer. Skidmore students see this as their college and they will naturally look to the college for summer offerings. If they cannot obtain what they need from Skidmore in the summer, they will go elsewhere, and they do.

CEPP Chair notes we can move forward with online summer offerings, and continue to look at these factors (enrollment, housing, etc). We can work together to monitor how it is serving needs.

Auden checks all summer offerings with Chair and defers to Chair in terms of faculty, courses, and crediting. Every faculty is directed by Auden to check with Chair before submitting. It may be beneficial for departments to have clear policies, accessible to students, as to what courses count for the major if online, and/or if offered from another institution.

PELL eligible students are under-represented in summer courses, and especially in in-person courses. Students overall rate convenience and affordability as high in their considerations for online courses in student evals.

In terms of academic support for summer students, peer tutors cannot be employed over summer, as they become summer employees. Writing Center during session 2 is covered by summer programs budget.

CEPP member notes that summer online courses are providing access to students that would not otherwise have access. Online summer offerings address student needs.

In terms of faculty, CEPP member notes that there may remain pending considerations: such as course evaluations. How much variability are we comfortable with between summer online courses and regular semester in person courses? CEPP member notes this is a separate issue to take up, and not intended to discourage online summer offerings. Auden confirms it is a separate contract for faculty, and evals are not a part of P&T, nor shared beyond individual faculty member. Summer is optional, for faculty and students. Online courses are distinct modality, but with Skidmore faculty, they are Skidmore courses. Still, evals, for example, could be looked at. Perhaps, just as pressing: Is there additional training that could support faculty teaching online when they primarily teach in the classroom? Mandated training? Monitoring evals? *Are we providing an option, or are we invoking a different pedagogical model?*

Grades, as well, are a point to consider for longer term review.

CEPP will review and propose next steps, in committee and with Auden.