CALS Curriculum Committee Meeting
March 18, 2011
Submitted by James Fant


Guest: Jerry Culen

Call to Order: The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Curriculum Committee met on March 18, 2011 in Rm. 101 of the Aquatic Products Lab. Dr. Wendell Porter called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

Previous agenda items and supporting material can be found on the CALS Curriculum Committee homepage under archived information: http://www.cals.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/curriculum_committee.shtml

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Dr. Stedman to approve the minutes for the February 18, 2011 meeting of the CALS CC. The motion was approved.

All items approved by the committee will be forwarded to either the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC), Graduate Council (GC) or the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) once any changes requested are made and the submission is complete.

Syllabus Statements – http://www.cals.ufl.edu/faculty_staff/curriculum_committee.shtml

Graduate New Course Proposals

1. SWS 5XXX – Reusable Learning Objects
   A motion was made by Dr. Schneider to recycle this item to the department. The motion was approved. On the UCC1 form the contact hour section should be changed from headcount to base. The committee requests justification for allowing the course to be repeated. The course description is too brief to communicate the course content. The committee requests signoffs from other departments and colleges (e.g., Agricultural Education and Communication and the College of Education) to ensure that there is no overlap in course content with existing courses. The syllabus needs to include an attendance and make-up policy and the times the course is offered are not clear. There should also be a reading list included. The numbers on the grading scale should not overlap. Dr. Porter will make appointment with the submitter to discuss the following committee concerns: The rationale and place in curriculum provided on the UCC1 does not address either area appropriately. The committee wonders how this item is specific to Soil and Water Science and if it would be better submitted with an ALS prefix.
Undergraduate New Course Proposals

2. FYC 3XXX – Early Child Development
   A motion was made by Dr. Humphrey to approve this submission with the inclusion of signoff letters from other departments ensuring there is no content overlap. The motion was approved.

3. FYC 4XXX – Youth and Family Relations
   A motion was made by Dr. Humphrey to approve this submission with the inclusion of signoff letters from other departments ensuring there is no content overlap. Also, the level on the UCC1 form needs to be updated from 3 to 4. The motion was approved. Reference to the course being used for the Certificate of Family Life Education will be added to the rationale.

4. FYC 4XXX – Volunteer Systems for Nonprofits
   A motion was made by Dr. Humphrey to approve this submission with the inclusion of a signoff letter from FRE and other minor edits. The motion was approved. The level on the UCC1 form needs to be changed from 3 to 4. All references to the graduate level course need to be removed from the syllabus. Make it clear that exam make-up times will be determined by the instructor.

5. FYC 4XXX – Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
   A motion was made by Dr. Gutter to approve this submission with edits requested. The motion was approved. The prerequisite section of the UCC1 needs to be changed to junior or senior standing. Provide an outline of class participation expectations and list the scoring elements for the NGO case study and group project.

Discussion Topics

6. Proposal for CALS questions on online course evaluations
   The university is in the process of moving student evaluations of all for-credit courses to an online system. The online course evaluation will include a standard set of 15 questions to be rated on a 5-point scale and 5 free response questions. Colleges have the option to add up to 30 more questions to the instrument; these questions must use the 5-point rating scale (Poor to Excellent). A faculty task force that had previously reviewed the current course evaluation form used by CALS met to develop a proposal for CALS-specific additional questions. That proposal was presented to the committee by Dr. Turner. The discussion that followed included concerns about the online process in general, particularly in terms of response rates and biases introduced by expected low response rates and the impact of this change on the information about teaching faculty provide for tenure and promotion. A question was raised about the use of items 11-15 in any reported scores. Additional concerns were raised about the instrument and the constraints given to colleges for customizing additional questions and the delivery mechanism of the evaluations to the students. Concerns about the wording of the proposed questions were expressed by members of the committee and included information gathered from departmental
faculty. The committee asked the task force to reconsider the wording of the proposed questions to better match the rating scale, consider the additional of two questions regarding online content. Dr. Turner will relay comments received from departments to the committee along with these requests. Dr. Turner will also compile more information for the committee on the course evaluation process along with available data on the impact of differences in methods of course evaluations on return rate, comparability of evaluations, and biases introduced.

7. Approval of graduate student learning outcomes
   Graduate student learning outcomes (SLO) from Microbiology and Cell Science and Agricultural Education and Communication were presented for review. Discussion of these submissions led the committee to conclude that more information was needed regarding acceptable metrics. The committee requested additional examples of SLO that were acceptable to the university. The committee took no action on the submitted items.

Conclusion
The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.