

Discovery Committee Minutes, September 8, 2010

Present: Lisa MacFarlane, Monica Chiu, Wayne Fagerberg, Bill Ross, Stephen Pugh, Heather Barber, David Hiley, David Richman, Barb White (Absent: Art Greenberg, Kathie Forbes)

Next meeting: Wednesday, September 15, 2010

The committee took the following action:

Motion: David Richman moved, Heather Barber seconded, to approve the minutes of the meeting of August 24, 2010. Vote: 4 yes, 0 no, 2 abstain.

The following course was not confirmed for Discovery in the category/attribute listed:

HHS - FS 586 – Families at Risk – SS – **Vote: 2 yes, 3 no, 1 abstain. Course did not pass for the SS category.
INQ – **Vote:** 0 yes, 6 no, 0 abstain. Course did not pass for INQ.**

The Committee discussed the following:

The Discovery Fellows – Michele Holt-Shannon and David Hiley reported on the role of the Discovery Fellows and the progress they are making. The students meet once a week with Jim Varn, David, and Michele and are developing a “tool kit” for participating in deliberative dialogue on difficult topics. The Discovery Fellows are four students who are very bright, committed and serious. They are getting 2 credits of independent study – 2 students in philosophy, 2 students in political science. Members of the DC suggested that it may be a good idea to have them sit on the UD committee for future UD topic selection. Lisa MacFarlane suggested that the NH Humanities Council has 6-12 week civic reflections meetings that the Discovery Fellows may be right for. (For example, one civic reflections group meets with law enforcement, one with legislators, etc. Another meets with business leaders.) We should also share this idea with UNHM. The first Discovery Fellows dialogue event is October 5th.

The possibility of having a position statement on academic variance of the WC category – After much discussion, the majority of DC members felt that a stated policy was too prescriptive, invited applications for academic variance, and that each petition needs to be reviewed on a case by case basis. The committee noted that academic variance is not something that it wishes to encourage and that historically most petitions have been denied.

Discovery Department liaisons – is this role outdated? Lisa MacFarlane suggested that the DC hold this discussion until after fully exploring the Discovery Program’s role in curriculum change across the university. The DC may find that department liaisons serve an important role in DP future activities.

Writing Committee participation – Thus far, there have not been any volunteers. However, since Kathie Forbes sits on both committees, members of the DC wish to ask her if she would be willing to be the Discovery representative to the WI Committee. **Addendum 9/9/10: Kathie Forbes has agreed to participate in this role.**

Lisa MacFarlane informed the committee of new initiatives coming from the Dean’s and Provost’s offices that will support curricular reform within departments and programs across the university. RFP’s (request for proposals) will be released in the near future to support innovative reforms some of which will be related to Discovery. Lisa gave a number of examples of the sorts of activities these RFP’s would support, ranging from physical space renovations to curricular redesign, development and support of capstone experiences and 444 courses, and interdisciplinary programming. RFP’s would be linked to the UNH Strategic Plan. The DC decided to continue this conversation, plus discussion of ideas on how to advise the VPAA’s office on spending Discovery strategic planning funds, at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 1:35pm.