The meeting began at 8:00 a.m.

The Chair welcomed the members of the Committee.

Consent Agenda:

The following items remained on the Consent Agenda and Passed unanimously

College of Engineering
2. Department of Chemical Engineering
   a. ANC – CHE 3091 – Nanotechnology Lab 2
   b. ANC – CHE 4563 – Materials Characterization Lab

3. Department of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering
   b. CRC – MAE 3024 – Computer-Aided Engineering
   c. CRC – MAE 3090 – Design of Machine Elements
   d. CRC – MAE 4014 – Control Systems
   e. CRC – MAE 4024 – Mechanical Vibrations
   f. CRC – MAE 4171 – Principles of Heat Transfer
   g. CRC – MAE 4175 – Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
   h. CRC – MAE 4190 – Design Methodologies and Practice
   i. ANC – MAE 4820 – Internal Combustion Engine Fundamentals

College of Psychology and Liberal Arts
4. School of Arts and Communication
   a. ANC – WRI 0105 – Writing Sentences and Paragraphs
   b. ANC – WRI 1000 – First-Year Writing 1
   c. ANC – WRI 1001 – First-Year Writing 2
   d. CGR – Minor in History
   e. CGR – B.A. Humanities
   f. CGR – B.A. Humanities – Prelaw

Agenda Discussion Items

The following item was discussed and passed unanimously.

College of Aeronautics
1. Scholarly Inquiry (QEP) Review – AVS 3201 – Aviation Meteorology 2

Both this item and Item 5a were pulled from the Consent Agenda largely to provide the opportunity to comment that the Committee would like to see those who use the new Scholarly Inquiry Course Summary forms use the boxes related to the Plan, Conduct, and Report goals and outcomes appropriately. It was noted that each of these three outcomes (Plan, Conduct, and Report) need to be adequately addressed so that the Committee can properly assess the course for a (Q) designation, and that each box should only contain information pertinent to each area, leaving out extraneous verbiage. In this case, the College of Aeronautics included a rubric for assessing the “Report” outcome, which the Committee found very helpful.
A question did arise about whether it was appropriate to have four weeks of presentations in the course (according to the syllabus) considering that constituted approximately 25% of the overall course material. Dr. Utley (College of Aeronautics) was in attendance and explained that the presentations were the culmination of the projects conducted in the course, and in order to provide proper feedback to the students and allow the students ample opportunity to fully present their projects, only 2-3 presentations could be conducted in a given class. He noted that attendance is mandatory, and it was also pointed out that the students are benefiting by learning something from the presentations. Finally, it was noted that this is an existing course, and this is how the course had been taught for quite some time, and that the Committee is not re-evaluating the course for content unrelated to the (Q) designation.

After this item was approved, the Chair asked whether, in cases where the Committee was asked to approve the (Q) designation on existing courses, there should be any type of signature block on the new form. It was decided that, yes, there should be a signature block for both the Originator of the form and the UGCC Chair. The Chair agreed to work with the Registrar’s Office to update the form.

The following items were discussed and passed unanimously, as amended.

College of Engineering
2. Department of Chemical Engineering
   c. ANC – CHE 4567 – Nanotechnology
   d. ANC – CHE 4569 – Biomaterials Tissue Engineering

The requirement for a 2.75 or greater GPA on these courses was raised as a concern in that it is not the normal practice to put such a restriction on a course. Dr. Brenner (Dept. of Chemical Engineering) was present and explained that the restriction was partly due to the limited amount of equipment available for use in the course, but mostly because these courses will be cross-listed with existing graduate courses. He explained that the only real difference between the undergraduate and graduate versions will be that graduate students will complete a more comprehensive final project, but otherwise the lectures are designed at an introductory graduate level. For this reason, it was felt that these courses should be restricted to higher-performing undergraduate students. In response, it was noted that there are several other cross-listed courses that do not have such restrictions, and they seem to function fine. If there is a concern about how well a student might perform in these courses, that decision should be made when the student applies for the minor. Dr. Brenner explained that while true, this would not affect students who are not enrolled in the minor, but want to take the course in any event, and he believes that if an undergraduate student meets all the prerequisites of a course, they should be allowed to take it, which would mean, without this GPA restriction, lower-performing students could register for these courses, and given their content, he felt that would be a disservice to those students. A question was raised as to whether a grade restriction on a prerequisite could be imposed, but the Committee was reminded that the Committee disapproved of this practice just recently, stating that grades on prerequisite courses were not appropriate restrictions except on a department’s own students in their own majors. In the end, Dr. Brenner indicated he would be satisfied if the Committee felt “instructor approval” would be a more appropriate restriction than a GPA restriction. It was questioned whether that approval would be based on anything more than a student’s GPA, to which the Committee agreed it would likely be considering the totality of Dr. Brenner’s comments. Thus, the restriction was changed from a GPA of 2.75 or greater to “instructor approval.”
The following item was discussed and passed on a vote of 14-0-1.

College of Engineering
2. Department of Chemical Engineering
e. ANM - Minor in Nanoscience/Nanotechnology
There was a question whether approval of this minor without an attendant major would set a precedent of approving a minor that did not have a related major, but the Committee was reminded that the minor in Sustainability was approved before the major. However, it was noted that this practice seems odd—that several new courses were being developed, a business plan, etc. for just a minor. It was rhetorically asked why a nanotechnology major shouldn’t be created instead.

There was also a question about having a restriction on the minor of a GPA of 3.0 or greater. Dr. Brenner again explained his reasons for desiring higher-performing students within the minor, including equipment availability and the level of course content. It was asked whether it is permitted to put such a restriction on a minor, to which, in response, it was pointed out that there is a line in the Catalog indicating that colleges may place additional restrictions on minors. The objection was withdrawn.

The following item was discussed and rejected on a vote of 1-14-0.
3. Department of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering
A concern was raised that the Dept. of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering (MAE) was removing all restrictions on this 2000-level course. It was explained that the MAE faculty, in reviewing its courses’ prerequisites, decided that the material in neither MAE 1024 (Introduction to Mechanical Engineering) nor MAE 1202 (Aerospace Practicum) was necessary to teach MAE 2024, and that there were no other courses leading into MAE 2024 that would make for an appropriate prerequisite. It was also explained that the course was generally major-restricted during the registration period until the beginning of the semester, at which time the restriction was lifted on any remaining seats. It was asked whether any freshman from anywhere on campus could take this course, for which the response was “technically yes,” but in practice this has never happened because of the major restriction. It was asked whether this course could be renumbered to a 1000-level, or if “Sophomore Standing” could be placed as a restriction. In response, it was explained that the MAE faculty discussed these options, but chose not to pursue them. The Committee was reminded that it had been taking a stricter approach to courses that were 2000-level or greater that had no restrictions. It was suggested that this item be returned to the Department for further consideration.

The following item was discussed and tabled unanimously.

College of Science
5. Department of Education and Interdisciplinary Studies
a. Scholarly Inquiry (QEP) Review - EDS 4311 - Research Methods
The concern was raised that the text in the Plan, Conduct, and Report goals and outcomes boxes lacked sufficient detail to explain how the course addresses these areas. Much of the text was repeated in each of the boxes, and much of it was not pertinent to the outcome being addressed. The Committee was referred to additional attached material, but that seemed to only be the course syllabus which did not sufficiently describe how the outcomes were being addressed. Dr. Baum (Department of Chemistry), being a former QEPIC member, indicated that had this come before him in that committee, it probably would have been approved, but that would have been after (and assuming) much more scrutiny by Dr. Baloga (Assoc. VP for Institutional Effectiveness) and Dr. Marcinkowski (Dept. of Education and Interdisciplinary
Studies, QEPIC). It was suggested that the Committee provide samples of “good submissions”, and Dr. Baum agreed to look back through previous QEPIC offerings to find a few with the idea that they would be accessible on the UGCC website. The Committee also agreed that it wants to see rubrics addressing the assessment of the Plan, Conduct, and Review outcomes. Again, Dr. Baum agreed to search for examples.

Finally, there was a concern that the wording on the back of the new Scholarly Inquiry Course Summary form needed some editing. Members agreed to review the wording and bring suggestions for changes to the next UGCC meeting.

Discussion:

Dr. Baum explained that the original intent of minors was to have programs that broadened a student’s experience beyond their major, but that would be accessible to all students on campus. However, it seems that lately there have been minors that are being approved that are really suited only to students in a few majors on campus, and that this was being done by not including some prerequisite courses in the 18-21 credit hour count that constitutes the minor program. He suggested that it might be more appropriate for such minors to be options or concentrations within a major. In response, it was pointed out that reverting to the original intent that all prerequisite courses be included in the 18-21 credit hour count would preclude some departments, particularly several in the College of Engineering, from developing minors should the departments and college choose to do so. This is because, unlike some of the departments in the College of Science or College of Psychology and Liberal Arts, departments in the College of Engineering do not have several 1000-level courses that could be used as the foundation for a minor. Instead, most engineering courses have calculus and physics prerequisites which, if included in the 18-21 credit hour count, would preclude the inclusion of a sufficient number of engineering courses to reasonably constitute a minor. Furthermore, making these programs options or concentrations instead of minors would further limit the access of students to these program unless they chose to enroll in a dual major.

While it was agreed that further discussion on the UGCC’s policy regarding minors is warranted, a more immediate concern is the wording in the Catalog. At present, the Catalog indicates that the only courses that will not be counted in the 18-21 credit hour count are COM 1101, COM 1102, HUM 2051, and HUM 2052. This is not consistent with some of the existing minors. It was suggested that the Committee work with Liz Fox (Director of Catalog) to update the Catalog wording.

Our next meeting is Friday, January 31 at 8:00 a.m. in the Physical Sciences conference room. Agenda items are due Friday, January 24.

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Archambault -- Chair