

Minutes of the Curriculum Committee
Subcommittee on Course Evaluation

The committee convened in CO 347 on February 2, 1999 at 2:10 p.m.

Members present: Kanuck, Gonsler, Ryan, Wenzel (Chair)
Guests: VP Keizs, Deans Fuller and Ritze, and Prof. Honda

1. Minutes of 12/15/98 approved as presented.
2. Chair reviewed schedule of future meetings:
 - 2/9 3 p.m. SH Conf. Room, with Prof. Glier of the Math Dept.
 - 2/23 2 p.m. in CO 347, with Dr. Irby of Ed., RDL, and ESL
 - 3/9 CO 347, with Dr. Witlieb of the English Department.
3. Chair indicated that our questions for departments had been shared with VP Keizs and asked for her reaction. She provided the following overview:

The departments teaching RDL, ESL, ENG and MTH have all been contacted and are, to varying degrees, at work on the question of whether and how BCC's remedial offerings might be made more effective and, if possible, condensed. The VP believes that our students' progress through remediation should be, to the extent possible, expedited so they can enter credit-bearing work with needed skills sooner.

She commended the committee for its work in assisting in this task, and she urged the committee to also look at other remedial offerings, including CMS, CHM and PHY.

Concerning ENG:

The English Department has two basic courses (ENG 01 and 02) and some variations (such as 09). There is some work afoot within the department to standardize practices. Nevertheless, she has concerns because of the lack of standardized syllabi and texts. Although the department is setting up a uniform exit exam for each course, it may need to engage in professional development, training staff to teach the courses in a way that matched the uniform standard for exit.

Concerning ESL:

It is clear that there is a serious mismatch between English and ESL, and the prime task is how to get them together. ESL has a sequence of compensatory courses (ESL 01, 02) which culminates in ESL 11, a credit course. Students who pass ESL 11, however, generally enter ENG 01. This leads one to question

whether ESL 11 is credit-worthy. In addition, steps the department has proposed to date are a disappointment, because they do not show promise of solving the problem stated above. The department proposes to rearrange courses, and adding a new, higher level, credit course that they hope will be equivalent to ENG 11. There are concerns that it will not bridge the existing gulf between ESL and ENG courses, and if it does not then it will not be credit worthy. She is unaware whether the ESL department has looked for a model outside BCC. The Office of Academic Affairs is willing to assist in bringing in help, if needed.

Concerning RDL

To date the Office of Academic Affairs has had no extended discussion with the department concerning RDL courses, in part because of preoccupation with ESL. The VP asks whether the two-semester RDL sequence of instruction be condensed, or the material conveyed in fewer hours. There are also questions concerning RDL 11. Should it be examined to see if, in fact, it is credit-worthy?

Concerning MTH:

Until one month ago there was no sign that the Mathematics Department would undertake a review of the MTH remedial sequence. Now there is talk of reforming MTH 01 and MTH 03, but still no sign of concrete action. The Office of Academic Affairs asks whether the MTH sequence of remedial instruction can be condensed, and students made ready for college-credit work in fewer semesters. In addition, can the information of the Mathematics sequence be made "more user-friendly?" As of now VP Keizs has no sense that either curricular or pedagogical reforms are under discussion in the department. She hopes preparation for a Title III proposal may help stimulate such discussion.

General reflections:

The Office of Academic Affairs is looking for ways to condense the remedial sequence in every area. To that end, VP Keizs posed the following questions:
*Is there a place in the curriculum where an integration of writing, reading and ESL skills can occur? To bring this about will require collaboration of the two departments.
*Is there a place for a parallel sequence of ENG and ESL, with ENG 11 and 12 taught on the ESL side?

Questions were put to VP Keizs:

*What is brewing in CUNY concerning remediation in community colleges?
Ans: There is no mandate from Chancellor or Board concerning remediation in Community Colleges YET. The CAP proposal, however, seems to call for a two semester (one year) limit for remedial instruction. In addition, the mayor has proposed a remedial "voucher."