

Task Force on Global Education
Curriculum Subcommittee
April 9th, 2008

Present: Blase Scarnati, Joe Anderson, Harvey Charles, Sara Sullivan, Cecelia Ojeda, George Koch, Sanjay Joshi, Cindy Anderson, Terry Blows, Mark Ford, Michael Vasquez, Louise Lockard, Ramona Mellot, Susan Johnstad, Francis Reimer, Sheila Nair

Absent: Michael Vincent

The group began its discussions with introductions.

Blase Scarnati – Music
Joe Anderson – Business
Sanjay Joshi – History
George Koch – Biology
Harvey Charles – Center for International Education
Sara Sullivan – Center for International Education
Cecelia Ojeda – Modern Languages
Mark Ford – Humanities
Susan Johnstad – Distance Learning
Terry Blows – Math
Francis Reimer – Women and Gender Studies
Cindy Anderson – Residence Life
Ramona Mellot – Graduate College
Michael Vasquez – Anthropology
Louise Lockard – Education
Sheila Nair – Political Science

After introductions Harvey Charles gave a presentation to the group. The curriculum subcommittee will ultimately give recommendations to the Task Force on Global Education, and the Task Force will then submit recommendations to the President and Provost. The process is very open. Anyone may join a subcommittee. The work of the subcommittee will last for the rest of the spring semester, through the summer, and possible throughout the next academic year.

Blase said that the strategy of the curriculum subcommittee brings together global education, multicultural education, and environmental sustainability. It is a powerful strategy because these threads are grounded in the values of NAU. The hope is to infuse these threads in an integrated intentional way. There is a lot of support from the top down. We have a chance to make an impact.

George Koch asked about the larger structure of the subcommittees. He also asked if there any other university models working toward the same goal. Blase mentioned that the task force is working with a handbook “A Handbook for Advancing Comprehensive Internationalization: What Institutions Can Do and What Students Should Learn”. He

also passed out information on the First Year Coordinating Council. This information provides detailed models and institutional themes. Harvey added that he can get the group copies of the handbook. To determine the larger structure of the task force subcommittees, please see the power point presentation located at <http://international.nau.edu/aboutCIE/taskforce/presentations.htm>.

Cecelia said that communication within the university can be somewhat limited and she thought that the group needed to know what is already going on within the university in terms of international efforts. Blase mentioned that the task force is currently conducting a campus wide audit on international efforts. So far we have gathered information such as courses offered (in relation to global or multicultural education and environmental sustainability), international partnerships, and other international efforts from over 20 departments on campus. This audit is an ongoing process and will help us identify both global initiatives in place and areas where there are gaps in global initiatives.

Miguel Vasquez said that many of the individuals participating on the committee are on other committees with related objectives. Mark Ford added that, due to scheduling, there is a very small window to get work done and that because of this window it is difficult to gather momentum. Everyone has a vested interest in global initiatives; however, it is hard to effectively get the work done. Blase said that the individuals on the committee are some of the busiest faculty that we have on campus and it speaks to the group's commitment that they have decided to participate on this committee. He also added that many of the individuals on the committee have scars from previous battles to attempt to amend the curriculum. The group will try to get as much done as possible this semester and, given that many faculty are on nine month contracts, if the group cannot meet as often in the summer then it will resume its work in the fall. We will do the best we can in terms of scheduling.

Cecelia added that it is difficult to start with mapping the curriculum. We need to work on smaller efforts and work toward more complex efforts. Blase said that we need to establish our outcomes before we begin our work. It is the best way to create an integrated vision. Perhaps we could identify outcomes by the end of the semester. However, while the group is committed to the vision, there are concerns because many members are stretched thin.

Terry said that he is a realist and has worked on changing past liberal studies requirements. With curriculum issues, much of the time things stay as they are. It takes a lot of time and effort for change. The time frame of completing the work of the subcommittee by the end of next semester may not be realistic. Joe said that if there is more hesitation than passion toward global education, then perhaps you are in the wrong room. Cecelia added that many members of the committee are cynical and find a way to not get things done. Blase said that we are not working to undo what efforts have already been made. We are hoping to build on those efforts. Terry said that change is slow, but Mark added that change is slow inside the university. Outside the university, change moves more quickly. He also said that the liberal studies curriculum has essentially not

changed in the last fifty years. If we are committed to this effort, we need to be bold and innovative.

Sanjay said that we need a concrete commitment to these ideas. Changing the curriculum is not an easy process. There is a lot of head butting that can occur. The global and diversity liberal studies requirement is already getting diluted from what was intended to be. We need to make sure that we don't lose what we already have. We need a solid political commitment to these ideas.

Francis said that she has worked with individuals that say that there is no room in curriculum for change. The diversity requirement is good, but we need to look at the bigger picture.

Blase emphasized that we would not dilute what has already been accomplished, we would add to the efforts. We need to get global education requirements not just in the liberal studies curriculum, but also across the majors. We also need to look at the co-curricular elements. He also added that to change things in an institution, we need to get key people with passion in place. These people will pull the institution along. This is our chance to break out of the box and think at a larger level.

Cecelia said that the task of the curriculum committee is to connect with the faculty and student development. We need to see results or we will get discouraged. Blase added that the curriculum committee can parallel the other committees.

George said that the university is full of inertia. Individually, we are revolutionaries, but together we can be conservative. How far are we from our goal? Perhaps we are closer than we think.

Harvey added that before coming to NAU he has worked previously at four other institutions. At no other institution has so many faculty members been committed to global issues. NAU has a vested interest in the three themes of the task force: global education, multicultural education, and environmental sustainability. Although this conversation may be new, the commitment is already there. We need to pull together in a strategic way. The campus wide audit already shows the broad range of international efforts across campus.

Blase mentioned that for next meetings we can meet around the themes of the task force. Anyone is free to attend.