

Educational Policy Committee (EPC)  
February 24, 2010

Present: Professors Amy Godert, CJ Koepp, Ted Lossowski, and Susan Tabrizi; Dean Leslie Miller-Bernal; and Associate Dean Cindy Speaker

The meeting began at 9:05 a.m.

1. Minutes from the February 17, 2010 Meeting

Approved as corrected.

2. Discussion of the Committee's Open Meeting

Dean Miller-Bernal shared the e-mail she received from Professor Purdy who was unable to attend the meeting yesterday. She'll forward the e-mail to the members of the committee as well.

Issues discussed included:

- While the thesis experience prepares students well for graduate school, especially in terms of writing, a shorter length may actually be better for students. Do we make the experience of a Wells education too intensive?
- There appears to be concern among the faculty regarding:
  - the requirements based on credit hours or years in residence in the experiential learning and PE proposals, respectively.
  - the amount of oversight necessary to implement the proposals
  - how the proposals would actually be implemented
  - faculty workload
- There did not appear to be concerns regarding the goals and objectives of each of the proposal.

Dean Miller-Bernal expressed her position that she does not see how the committee can get together a complete general education proposal for approval by April given the concerns faculty expressed and the other work occurring on campus at this time that will impact a general education program (e.g., Curriculum Committee's review of the majors). For any general education proposal that we bring forward, it is necessary to make time and space for faculty to do the work of it. Discussion here included the number of independent studies some faculty do. Concerns were expressed regarding rushing the proposal will have it backfire with the faculty and we'll be left with a mess.

A question was raised as to whether it would be possible to bring forward the experiential learning proposal without the rest of the proposed curriculum. While members of EPC had previously agreed not to bring the curriculum forward to the faculty in a piecemeal approach, the role of experiential learning within the strategic planning process may warrant consideration of certain changes now. The committee discussed the pros and cons in doing so. What aspects of the current proposal could be brought to the faculty that would be seen as a general improvement? There is value in regularizing/equalizing the student experience. Changes could be implemented in bits starting with learning goals and objectives, a rubric, and the multiple types of experiences that would count. After these we could then address the

tie to the major, the number required, and how to count the experiences via credits or number (recognizing that counting by credit privileges certain students such as those who go abroad).

If changes are done piecemeal, it will be important not to backtrack. Concerns were expressed that if we are seen as continuously making changes it will be inferred that we don't know what we're doing (a PR nightmare).

Concerns were expressed regarding the difficulties for some transfer students in completing the current experiential learning requirements. The committee discussed whether this should be addressed now given the issue of fairness. The committee discussed how transfer student admissions could be modified such that credit for prior learning of experiences that should count for experiential learning are designated at that time rather than having to go through a petition process and consideration by ASA.

By taking things to the faculty now, as separate pieces, we could see what the sense of the faculty is. People would be assured to read the motions and the material, unlike for the open meeting, and the committee would know the sense of the full faculty and not just those who are vocal.

Amy commented that the members of her subcommittee are in favor of expanding the opportunities that count for experiential learning in part because of their agreement to increase the number of required experiences.

Also to consider here are the changes to the Career Development Services Office proposed by the EMT subcommittee to improve its functioning and service to students. A comment was made that there needs to be someone of whom to ask questions (i.e., does a certain experience count?).

Question was raised as to what the implications of the degree completion initiative of the strategic plan are for an experiential learning requirement. Given that at this time it is not certain that the College will be developing such a program, how a student would complete experiential learning requirements while at another campus should not influence the committee's progress on experiential learning.

### 3. Next Steps

Before the next meeting, everyone on the committee is asked to review the Experiential Learning subcommittee report again with the lens of what could be brought to the faculty. In particular, consider the stages in which implementation could be done and the issues and questions that could arise.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Associate Dean Speaker