
Joseph Auner, Chair

As in the past, the main work of the committee has been to evaluate courses from students, faculty, and the curriculum committee. These have been handled by Susan Ernst (Distribution), Laura Baffoni-Licata (Culture Areas), Elizabeth Foster (World Civilization).

We are grateful that George Scarlett has agreed to chair the committee for one year. Joe Auner (who will rotating off the committee at the end of the summer) will be working with him to ensure a smooth transition. Karen Overbey has kindly agreed to serve as the new World Civ rep for 2012-2013 starting in June, while Elizabeth Foster is on leave. Elizabeth will be conferring with her about the transition. Susan Ernst has agreed to be the Distribution Credit rep for the summer and fall semester. The committee should plan for the transition to a new rep for the spring during the fall semester.

The committee continues to explore ways to clarify our policies and procedures. Susan Ernst developed a new form for faculty to use in submitting courses for approval for distribution areas that is available through the curriculum committee and from the secretary of the faculty. The committee will be exploring adapting this form for World Civ and Culture petitions. Members of the committee agreed that it would be useful to create a Trunk page to provide a place to preserve minutes, documentation of procedures, guidelines for our decision making, etc.

One important policy area we have been discussing relates to the Culture Distribution.

We discussed the evaluation of culture area in terms 1) of our rule that the course needs to have more than 50% coverage of a culture area to count, and 2) the reality that, as Carmen Lowe has reported: "There are other several courses in the curriculum and posted online that "count" toward two and three overlapping culture areas, but students can only "count" a course toward one culture. This is the case for what could be termed fused or hybrid cultures such as Afro-Cuban and Sephardic Judaism. In fact one course "counts" toward three cultural areas, one on the history of Palestine, which could "count" toward Middle Eastern, Judaic, and Classical culture options."

In evaluating course proposals and petitions the committee will be open to cases where it does make sense that a course could cover material that would be more than 50% in two or more culture areas. It is likely that there will need to be further discussions over the coming years about how a “culture” is defined as well as how we evaluate diasporic vs. country of origin.

ARB has been asked by EPC and the Curriculum Committee to be involved in discussions concerning how the teaching of statistics is handled at Tufts and whether there should be a restructuring of the current courses and/or the creation of new ones to satisfy the demand for more advanced statistics on campus. The question has also been raised if students should be able to get credit for taking two or more statistics courses with very similar syllabi.
While the committee has not had a single representative who is charged “to remind it of the University’s commitment to equal opportunity and pose questions to the committee as to the form that commitment takes given the charge to the committee," all members are involved in the evaluation of course proposals and the establishment of policies from that perspective. The new chair will discuss with the committee the best way to respond to this policy of having a single member specifically charged with this responsibility.