

**Faculty of Arts & Sciences**  
**Tuesday, September 24, 2013, 3:30 – 5:00 pm**  
**Tidewater A, Sadler Center**

*Dean Kate Conley called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.*

*Attendance at the start of the meeting: 38.*

**John Gilmour leads continued discussion of COLL 200**

- Sarah Stafford (Economics): introduces amendment to formalize how credits for the COLL 200 requirements are distributed and to prevent students fulfilling this requirement with a “cluster” of one-credit classes, thereby assuring that students engage in a coherent COLL 200 experience. Her proposal that students be required to take at least one three-credit course in each Domain is meant to allow for the greatest possible choice and flexibility.
- Tom Payne (Music): querying whether this language obviates the possibility of taking three four-credit courses to fulfill COLL 200, offers friendly amendment to impose further formality: that students be required to take “at least one course in each domain of no less than *three credits*.”

Professor Payne’s friendly amendment carries.

- Barbette Spaeth (Classical Studies): moves that “In the NQR domain, COLL 200 courses are grounded in the natural sciences” be removed. The sentence seems to privilege one discipline over others. Numerous compromises were made to create the Domains. This sentence mandates that COLL 200 be fulfilled by a course in the Natural Sciences, to the exclusion of other disciplines in the Domain – Mathematics and Computer Sciences. Other disciplines would naturally like their own issues foregrounded, e.g., history: nothing in the proposed curriculum foregrounds anything that occurred beyond the present era. Compromises must be made (and honored), and students should be given the opportunity to choose what they would like to do within each Domain.
- Mark Sher (Physics): speaks in defense of retaining the NQR language since Domains are based on process rather than content. Under the proposed curriculum, without this language, it would be possible for a student to get a bachelor’s degree from W&M without ever having taken a course that had anything to do with the Natural Sciences. The curriculum would be in grave danger if we allowed this (incurring opposition from a coterie of faculty as well as alumni). He recounted his campaign to protect the Natural Sciences under the COLL 200 rubric. Having no desire to wall off the Natural Sciences from the rest of A&S, Professor Sher proposes two courses that would be grounded in the Natural Sciences but whose trajectory would be much

broader: 1) Philosophy of Modern Physics: when making a measurement of a certain property of a subatomic particle, that property does not even exist before it is measured – this has implications for the perception of reality, the effects of chaos on free will and determinism, uncertainty principle, all with huge philosophical implications (a good example of a course that would be team-taught with a philosopher and a physicist); and 2) Disease, Drugs, and the Pharmaceutical Industry: the biology of human disease, human immune system, biochemistry of how drugs affect the body, the chemistry of how drugs are produced, economics of the pharmaceutical Industry, Public Policy. Such courses would be grounded in the Natural Sciences, but half of the course would straddle some other subject. As discussion about Domains heated up, it was realized that some courses had no place within any Domain (mathematics, computer science, and those aspects of philosophy that don't involve humans), eliciting a revised, expanded Domain description. It was soon realized that, according to the wording of the new version, students could take courses dealing just with the process of the Natural Sciences but not anything involving Natural Science (e.g., the Mathematics of Sociology). Professor Sher would prefer to remove the NQR sentence and revert to the original Domain description, but this is no longer an option.

- Mark Tierney (Government and International Relations): speaks in support of Professor Stafford's entirely reasonable amendment and expresses agreement with Professor Spaeth. Striking the NQR sentence allows more flexibility and choice than our current system (and fewer requirements) as well greater opportunities for faculty and students to synthesize topics in an unprecedented interdisciplinary way. Over the course of the last eighteen months, various factions felt in their hearts the seminal importance of their own disciplines (to Prof's Sher's concern that students **should** take Natural Sciences, Professor Tierney does not necessarily disagree). He expressed objections to the singling out of one discipline as somehow special. Professor Sher's concern is an accurate one (it would be possible to graduate with no Natural Science). Under the current system, however, it is possible for a student to graduate without taking a single class in the Social Sciences (that GER can be satisfied with History, Philosophy). And we then continued to engage in this discussion (mathematics proficiency, performing arts proficiency, the philosophy amendment of last spring) – none of this is evil and bad, it is a matter of "pork". In principle, striking the language (and not privileging one discipline) is best for the students, faculty, and curriculum. But "if other groups are getting their pork, then I'll start fighting for mine." And this is not a good way to advance the curriculum discussion.
- Silvia Tandeciarz (Modern Languages and Literatures): calls the question to close discussion on Professor Spaeth's amendment.

debate on Professor Spaeth's amendment is closed.

- George Rublein (Mathematics): as a point of order, requests that the faculty be reminded of the NQR description.
- Suzanne Hagedorn (English): reads the description.

Professor Spaeth's amendment (to strike the NQR sentence) carries.

- George Rublein (Mathematics): introduces amendment that COLL 200 courses in NQR be accompanied by instructor demonstrations or student laboratories, since students should not just be told about scientific predictions, they should also witness them.
- Mark Sher (Physics): speaks strongly against the amendment as micromanagement. What sorts of demonstrations would one propose for his course on Disease, Drugs, and the Pharmaceutical Industry? (laughter from the faculty)

Professor Rublein's amendment is defeated.

- discussion continues on COLL 200 as amended.
- Rowan Lockwood (Geology, Faculty Director of Academic Advising): requests clarification regarding EPC expectations. What percentage of a course content will fit into its home Domain, what percent will "look outward"? *JG: if the curriculum is adopted, every course will be designated within one or another of the three Domains, and individual instructors will nominate Domain designations for their courses. It is envisioned that the EPC will have cursory examination to ensure that the Domain designation is legitimate (e.g., "not laughable"). DS: When these courses were envisioned as four credits, it was thought that 75% of the content (or so) would be grounded in a home Domain, 20-25% would "look outward".*
- Gene Tracy (Physics): suggests that we are confusing the COLL rubrics with Domains.
- Sarah Stafford (Economics): can a COLL 200 course fit into multiple Domains, assuming that it passes the rudimentary laugh test?
- Gul Ozyegin (Sociology): these decisions are to be made at the departmental/program level.
- Josh Erlich (Physics): suggests that we postpone this discussion to a point when it is even more relevant.

Discussion moves to the EPC amendment that COLL 200 courses be restricted to a single Domain.

- *JG: According to a proposed EPC amendment, each COLL 200 course is to be centered in **one** Domain. COLL 200s are envisioned as distribution courses to guarantee exposure to different kinds of work and study. If a COLL 200 were to belong to multiple Domains, such a course might not give the required breadth.*
- Barbette Spaeth (Classical Studies): point of clarification, whereas other courses can belong to multiple Domains, only COLL 200 courses cannot? *JG: yes, that is correct.*
- Diane Shakes (Biology): supports limiting COLL 200 courses to one Domain. Under the three-credit model, it becomes especially difficult to offer the required breadth if a course is not anchored within a single Domain
- Rowan Lockwood (Geology, Faculty Director of Academic Advising): speaking from the logistics of advising (how will she train faculty advisors in this curriculum, and how will she explain this to parents and students in a straightforward and simple way?), admits to losing track of what COLL 200 is supposed to be. She was originally sold on the Curriculum Review Committee's metaphor of three overlapping circles, where each circle was a Domain, and each overlap was a COLL 200. Is COLL 200

meant to ensure interdisciplinarity or breadth or both? JG: *both. COLL 200 is meant to give a concentrated experience in one Domain while showing relationships between research and study of the home Domain and other fields.* This is a lot for three courses to do. *Most of the course will be in one Domain (75%/25%). From an advising perspective, it will be easier to explain with the amendment than not. Explaining a course in two strata is probably harder than a course centered in one.* Many of our current GERs do cover multiple requirements, and we will need to think about the fact that we are trying to encourage interdisciplinarity, and I am getting confused regarding whether the COLL 200 description discourages it.

- Leisa Meyer (History and American Studies): each Domain is not a discipline, and being concentrated in one Domain does not preclude interdisciplinarity. Interdisciplinarity can occur within Domains as easily as between them.
- Sarah Stafford (Economics): reiterating Professor Lockwood's observations: the course is supposed to enhance deep knowledge of a specific topic. For example, "Sustainability of Water Cycle" equally straddles an Economic model and the model of the Earth Systems (geology). COLL 200 is supposed to be about interdisciplinarity, and the only requirement is that the courses emphasize the methodologies central to their Domains, e.g., for Sustainability – the methods of economics and geology. To force this to be in one Domain may make it easier in one regard but more difficult elsewhere. From a pedagogical standpoint, why does the ratio have to be 75/25? Why not 50/50? As long as it is not 95/5, any topic that bridges Domains satisfies the spirit of COLL 200.
- Bob Archibald (Economics): if a course fits two Domains, does it then reduce the COLL 200 requirement?
- Michael Lewis (Mathematics), Sarah Stafford, and John Gilmour: unlike in the current GER system where students can place out of requirements, here we have a credit hour requirement, so even if a course fell under multiple Domains, students would still have to take 12 hours of COLL 200. The 12 credit minimum prevents students from double counting.
- Josh Erlich (Physics): from an administrative level, it is easier for a course to satisfy a single requirement than an "either/or". The COLL 200 courses that truly straddle Domains would be the exception, and these would have to be discussed with the registrar and EPC. Banner is not designed to handle this sort of thing. He agrees that this should not be a driving factor, but it should be a consideration.
- JG: *the intent of COLL 200 is for students to get experience with each Domain.*
- Sarah Stafford (Economics): won't EPC have the ability to say "no" if a proposed COLL 200 seems to be "soft-peddling" the science, for example? Interdisciplinarity, if it works, if it is effective, almost becomes seamless. If one does it well, we shouldn't be able to divide it up.
- Barbette Spaeth (Classical Studies): describes her course on Magic and the Supernatural in the Ancient World which weaves together literary sources and how magic is represented in literature, material culture (how magic is actually practiced), and anthropological perspectives. She expresses concern that the COLL 200 rubric may be too restrictive, precluding integrative approaches.

- Brian Hulse (Music): observes that we seem to be mired in the framework of the overlapping circles. These specific ratios (75/25) are unnecessary when talking about interdisciplinarity which is inherently complex. He opposes relegating courses to single Domains.
- Rowan Lockwood (Geology, Faculty Director of Academic Advising): COLL 200 seems to do two things: interdisciplinarity and breadth. Could we not require three COLL 200s (one in each Domain) and then three COLL 250 or two that are interdisciplinary, thus having a breadth requirement and an interdisciplinary requirement?

the motion to restrict COLL 200 to a single Domain is defeated.

- Teresa Longo (Modern Languages and Literatures): reminds the faculty of the merits of the four credit model that was promoted by the focus groups, as allowing the faculty to assign a lot more work thus enabling both breadth and interdisciplinarity.

### **Discussion turns seamlessly to COLL 300.**

- *JG explains the modest EPC changes to the COLL 300 description, foregrounding the particular importance of interpersonal connections which are so important to the spirit of the requirement. Additionally, since the colloquium topic will change from semester to semester, EPC agrees that students be allowed to take the colloquium at any time allowing for greater flexibility and assuring that students can take the topic of greatest interest.*
- Steve Hanson (Vice Provost for International Affairs, Reeves Center, and Government): strongly supports the COLL 300 experience as an exciting opportunity for W&M to become a leader in this area. He also strongly supports the creativity of faculty who have crafted so many different ways of providing a global and cross-cultural experience. The Reeves Center is particularly interested in risk management. In study abroad programs, quite frankly, we are dealing with life and death issues: keeping students safe (e.g., just this summer a student was killed in Egypt while attempting to film a demonstration; recent events in Kenya, etc.). Study Abroad is often forced to make changes (externally forced) and these shut the doors of opportunity. The concerns are both jurisdictional (local policies/laws) and matters of life and death. The Reeves center is currently trying to corral the programs lacking “up-front” risk management (making progress) and ensure that there is oversight, regular site visits, orientations, assurance of provisions, mechanisms for evacuations in case of emergency, interactions with parents (including the difficult conversations when bad things have happened), interactions with the media (including tabloids). These issues escalate when management goes

in different directions. There are a million ways to deal with these situations, and we often don't talk about them up-front.

- Sarah Stafford (Economics): seeks clarification regarding minimum credits for COLL 300. *JG: COLL 300 is not a course, as such, and there are no minimum credits.*
- Silvia Tandeciarz (Modern Languages and Literatures): requests clarification for singling out the W&M DC program, which does not necessarily "lift [students] out of their familiar surroundings" since so many of our students come from NoVA. St Andrews seems automatically to fulfill the intent.
- Sarah Stafford (Economics): clarifies that the St Andrews dual enrollment program does not have the same GER requirements, so this discussion does not apply. However, study abroad at St Andrews would satisfy the requirement.
- Leisa Meyer (History and American Studies): what is Steve Hanson asking of the faculty?
- Steve Hanson (Vice Provost for International Affairs, Reeves Center, and Government): the Reeves Center is moving to oversee all study abroad programs (some do not currently fall under the aegis of the Reeves Center). If opportunities for study abroad escalate (e.g. faculty programs), on the one hand this would be wonderful, yet on the other the Reeves Center would be unable to assess the programs, risk management, safety factors. Adequate assessment is labor intensive, and we can assess only three or four programs each year. He worries that the proposal, at least in principle, could allow for Mao's "let a hundred flowers bloom" approach ["Letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend is the policy for promoting progress in the arts and the sciences and a flourishing socialist culture in our land." – perhaps intended to flush out and destroy dissidents]. If we allow this to happen, we won't be able to staff it, and this will have implications for our students.
- Tim Costelloe (Philosophy): speaking as a representative of the Studies Abroad Committee, there seems to be ambiguity here in the concept of the "cross-cultural" experience (people to people). Neither the colloquium nor the DC program (by which most students will satisfy the requirement) seem to offer such an experience. The committee are considering language that might help to clarify this ambiguity.
- Diane Shakes (Biology): in response to Professor Tandeciarz' concern defends the W&M program in DC as providing the intended experience, for students from the western part of the state, also for NoVA students, for example especially those interacting with embassies, this does constitute a different experience.
- Paula Pickering (Government): presents the ISAC (A&S International Advisory Committee) proposal to formalize the COLL 300 requirement as a faculty supervised learning experience (i.e., a three-credit course) and thus ensure the highest possible quality experience. What is a cross-cultural experience? Are the colloquia and other opportunities listed in the EPC document really providing a cross-cultural

experience? What is the nature of the environment? Does the DC program really provide a “different” experience? ISAC wants to emphasize the cross-cultural aspect, since there are many different environments (including different environments Williamsburg). Further, for those who cannot leave, it is incumbent to provide opportunities on campus that offer meaningful cross-cultural experiences, through lectures or workshops. ISAC feels strongly about providing a rigorous, meaningful experience, and proposes a three-credit-bearing course requirement as providing a deeper opportunity for engagement and assuring that the requirement is fulfilled under faculty supervision. Many courses in the current catalogue (e.g., several in Global Studies) already fulfill the COLL 300 spirit. ISAC also proposes that courses that emphasize cross-cultural engagement be recognized as satisfying the requirement.

there is a motion to substitute.

- Jack Martin (English): observes that the original language seemed to address both global and cross-cultural issues, this substitute emphasizes only the cross-cultural aspect, and he requests clarification. *PP: for example, some global issues (arms control) could be discussed in a variety of contexts but necessarily emphasize underlying cultural issues.*
- (\*): what is “culture”?
- Paula Pickering (Government): it falls to the EPC to develop minimum criteria for such courses.
- Bruce Campbell (Modern Languages and Literatures, and also European Studies): wants COLL 300 to emphasize “the other” and enable students to see the world through the eyes of that “other”. The best way to accomplish this is by spending a year in a culture where English is not the native language. Not all students will be able to do this, and other options must be available. Looking at global issues does not warrant a special requirement. This can be accomplished by watching the nightly news.
- Anne Rasmussen (Music): finds the emphasis on the colloquium restrictively text-based. Cross-cultural experiences can also be achieved through “doing”, e.g., by interacting/collaborating with visiting artists, intellectuals, or activists.
- Sarah Stafford (Economics): We need to decide the focus of COLL 300 (global or cross-cultural). But does the requirement have to be credit bearing? *JG: credit bearing enables risk-management. Could not there be a requirement that programs are “college approved”? Could not non-credit bearing internships abroad also satisfy COLL 300? [Silvia Tandeciarz: there is a college policy regarding internships and how they get credit (there must be an academic component).] If they must be credit bearing, we need to specify that. But experience should also count. Don’t international students automatically get credit for COLL 300?*

- Silvia Tandeciarz (Modern Languages and Literatures): Experience, however, does not necessarily turn into reflection and learning if not adequately guided. COLL 300 prioritizes internationalism as part of the strategic plan and educating our students for global citizenship. If we are going to weigh the merits of cross-cultural vs. global, we should consider our curriculum discussion within the context of the strategic plan. We must consider deeply what we are trying to accomplish with regard to this complex issue.
- Matthew Allar (Theater, Speech, and Dance): calls for a return to the culture of submitting proposals to the faculty in advance of the meetings, allowing us time to consider the issues and craft thoughtful responses. (*The Rublein and Pickering amendments, in fact, were sent out on fas-d on May 8 and 7, respectively*)
- Barbette Spaeth (Classical Studies): encourages faculty to submit proposals in advance, although – according to FAC bylaws – it is not out of order to introduce amendments at meetings. She also encourages sending out amendments early so interested faculty will attend the meeting to participate in the discussion.
- *JG: the fas-d listserve is the most efficient mechanism for promulgating amendments.*
- Gul Ozyegin (Sociology): requests EPC clarification regarding what is meant by “global” and “cross-cultural”. The current text is inconsistent.
- *JG: these are deep philosophical questions.*

*Dean Conley adjourned the meeting at 5:01 pm.*

The secretary again thanks Steve Otto for compiling the list of faculty who spoke on the Curriculum Review, and Trina Garrison and Jeff Herrick for the audio recording.

Respectfully Submitted,

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