

August 1, 2003

To: Members of the Faculty
From: Jim Swartz, Chair of the Curriculum Committee
Re: 2002-03 Annual Report of the Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee's responsibilities are two-fold: routine supervision and approval of all specific course changes, and discussion of and recommendations on curricular policy guidelines. Student members were identified early, participated in activities of the committee, and are voting members of the committee. In almost all cases, the committee achieved a consensus.

The Curriculum Committee acted on a number of routine changes to courses including title changes, modifications of descriptions, additions or deletions of prerequisites, and approval of new courses. These changes are reflected in the 2003-04 Academic Catalog.

The committee discussed, sought advice from divisions and approved several clarifications and modifications regarding MAPs.

1. Each segment of a MAP project will have its own grade.
2. MIP 299s and MAP 499s are to be excluded in the 10-credit limit for the number of independent credits that can be earned in any one department toward satisfaction of graduation requirements.
3. A MAP project should always start with 4 credits and then could be followed with a 2 credit MAP but a MAP project should not start with a 2 credit MAP.
4. Regarding an exception to the rule that the only 2 credits MAPs permitted are follow-ups to 4 credits MAPs:

All MAPs, with the exception of follow-up MAPs, must be at least 4 credits. Follow-up MAPs may be 2 credits. On those occasions when the MAP director can show that two 2-credit segments of a MAP taken over two semesters best meet the research requirements of the project, she or he should speak with the Associate Dean regarding an exception. In such cases, the student would enroll in a 397 for the first 2 credits of work, and then would enroll in a 499 for the following 2 credits of work in the subsequent semester.
5. A two-part application process for summer MAPs with two deadlines. The first deadline for Part A/B will be the first Monday after spring pre-registration but if the faculty mentor approves, the deadline for part B can be moved to the second Monday after Memorial Day. This year the first deadline was May 5 and the second will be June 9, 2003.
6. In order to protect faculty workloads and the integrity of the quality of the experience, the committee approved the following regarding the limitation of the number of MAPs that any faculty member can direct and receive credit for during any given term or summer:
 - a. Faculty directors are limited to no more than six individual MAP students or eight students if they are organized into no more than three common (group) projects, during the summer or any term where the faculty member is teaching one or fewer courses.
 - b. Faculty directors are limited to no more than 2 MAPs during a regular academic term when the faculty member is teaching two or more regular courses.
 - c. Faculty directors are limited to no more than 3 MAPs during a regular academic term in which the faculty member is teaching two or more regular courses, and when the MAP students are pursuing a common project.

- d. A faculty member may not receive more than one course of teaching credit for MAPs in any semester or summer

The committee approved a revised procedure for departments and concentrations to make catalog changes in a more efficient manner without compromising the role of the faculty, the divisions, or the curriculum committee. That procedure is located at: <http://web.grinnell.edu/registrar/forms/CatalogInstructions.pdf>. In addition, the committee approved automatically de-listing from the catalog courses that have not been taught in the last 5 years. The working definition of de-listing is that the course is removed from the catalog until such time as the department chooses to offer it again, and at that time it would be listed in the catalog without requiring approval from either the division or the curriculum committee.

In early December the committee began a discussion of faculty compensation for independent study projects other than MAPs. The focus of the discussion surrounded 297's, 387's, and 397's, although it was noted that the faculty does engage in other independent study projects such as internships and plus-2's. There is a great deal of variety in what faculty and students do together for an independent project. For example, individual reading projects can vary not only by department but can also vary by faculty within the same department. It is hard to quantify the effort involved in any independent project. What factors would one use to quantify an independent in regard to giving faculty teaching credit? How does one determine the number of student credits to give to an independent? How many independents would be equivalent to a course? How can one translate the size and scope of a project into a specific number of student credits/teaching credits? For some faculty the preparation for an individual reading project is equivalent to the preparation for a class, but others reported that little preparation time was required. The committee agreed that both student time and faculty time are limited and that independent projects are important for both students and faculty. There is no question that the college values these types of projects because we are willing to offer them for credit.

In February, Gerald Adams and Mark Montgomery made a presentation before the faculty on how course release for MAPs and Independent Study may affect the number of regular courses taught. [The tables prepared for that presentation are attached to this report](#). After the faculty presentation the following questions were generated to help guide our discussion for the remainder of the term.

1. What are the distinctive attributes of a MAP?
 - a. Do those attributes distinguish MAPs from other kinds of independent study?
 - b. Do MAPs and other forms of independent study perform different functions?
 - c. Do we value those functions?
2. What are the distinctive features of the other forms of independent study?
3. Do we want to expand the availability of opportunities for students to pursue advanced-level, intensive research?
4. Is the faculty director's role the same in both the MAP and other forms of independent study? If it is, then should we reconsider MAP compensation?
5. Do we want to continue to concentrate resources (teaching credit, research expenses, and travel to present MAP results) on the MAP?
 - a. If we do not, do we want to spread those resources across all forms of independent study?
 - b. Do we want to reallocate those resources in a completely different area?
6. Do we want to compensate all forms of independent study and increase the enrollments of our regular courses?
 - a. How much bigger will those courses be?

- b. In the case of faculty taking their teaching credit, which regular courses should they cut? General education courses (tutorial, Humanities, Statistics)? Concentration and other interdisciplinary courses? Advanced level work? Introductory courses?
 - c. How much bigger will courses be if only MAPs are compensated?
7. Do we want to compensate other forms of independent study? Do we want to compensate them at a different level than 1/6 of a course?
 8. Do we want to stop compensating MAP directors?
 - a. What effect would this have on independent advanced-level research?
 - b. What effect would there be if only summer MAPs are compensated?

Given the charge by the faculty to investigate compensation for faculty members guiding independent study, the Curriculum Committee spent time during every meeting over the last few months discussing the issue. By May, it was clear to the committee that it had not reached closure on the issue of compensation for directing independent study but from divisional discussions, faculty discussions, and committee discussions the curriculum committee came to some tentative conclusions:

1. When we discussed potential compensation for guiding independents, it was clear that some faculty members were intrigued by the idea but also very cautious about the ramifications of such compensation both financially and more importantly, to the curriculum. Note: one faculty member of the committee wanted to be quoted as follows: “After all our discussion and much thinking I have come to the resolute conclusion that we cannot afford to give equal compensation to the faculty for all forms of independent study and that therefore we should have no compensation for any, including MAPs. As a corollary of this, I think that compensation is inadvisable because it may work against the selectivity and quality control that traditionally marked the faculty members' agreement to direct independent study.”
2. The Curriculum Committee took three very important steps in its fact-finding mission. First, information from each division was shared in our meetings. Second, the Curriculum Committee had the Registrar compile data which showed how many independents were being taught. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the potential of granting course-leaves as compensation. Based on the number of independents being currently taught, it seemed clear that granting course-leaves would have a significant negative effect on the curriculum and class size. Third, the Associate Dean of the College who oversees the independents gave thoughts and data regarding the past enrollments. Discussion in this area continued to be centered on the importance of independents in shaping a liberal arts education from a curricular standpoint, and the variance of time given to the different types of independents.
3. While the argument to give compensation for guiding independents seems strong because they are generally done above and beyond the normal 3/2 teaching load, it was made clear that a faculty member can choose not to accept the request from a student to guide the independent. The college does put constraints on faculty time when it mandates the 3/2 teaching load as the norm, but in the ideal philosophy of liberal arts education, the college provides its faculty members autonomy when determining other tasks outside of the normal 3/2 load. Thus, the choice to guide an independent, or not to guide one, rests securely on the shoulders of the faculty member who will determine whether it is a good use of “faculty time.”
4. Even though “formal compensation” for guiding an independent is not being granted, it might be determined that other non-tangible forms of compensation are currently occurring. For instance, collaborative work with a student on an independent may in fact lead to a MAP, which provides compensation, in the future. Inclusion of the independent work does appear on the FAR and may be

considered when determining faculty salaries. When faculty members do serve students by guiding independents, it may be duly noted by department members and considered when decisions of re-contracting and promotion are being made.

5. Independent study work is an important element of our curriculum because it allows us to expand the curriculum beyond our normal course offerings on an occasional basis. It should be continued and supported.
6. We will continue to discuss these issues in 2003-04.

Thanks once again to excellent work by Internship Coordinator Steve Langerud, the Committee's internship review process continued to work well. During the academic year 31 students were approved for internships (15 for GIL, 9 for GIW, and 7 for academic semesters). There were 94 students approved for internships for summer 2003. Of this group 17 students completed the process for receiving academic credit involving 12 members of the faculty.

2002-03 Curriculum Committee members:

Jim Swartz	Jerry Lalonde	Mark Montgomery	Andy Hamilton
Diane Robertson	Gerald Adams	Courtney Sloger	Jake Omgvig
Noe Montez	Devan McGranahan.		

• [LINK TO TABLES](#) •