MINUTES  
University Curriculum Committee for Liberal Education (UCCLE)  
April 3, 2013 – 2:00–3:15 p.m.  
230 Student Services Building

Members Present: Althea Aschmann, Sheila Carter-Tod, Klaus Elgert, Richard Ferraro, Virginia Fowler, Sam Hicks, Kurt Hoffman, Ann Marie Knoblauch, Kate McConnell, Carolyn Meier, Marlene Preston, Debbie Smith, Valerie Thomas (semester substitute for Robert Oliver), Dan Thorp

Guests Present: Jill Sible, Bonnie Alberts

Members Absent: Renee Selberg-Eaton, Bronwyn Foley, Paul Heilker, Christine McCoy, Marie Paretti

1. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order by Kurt Hoffman, Chair, at 2:05 p.m.

2. **Approval of Agenda** – A motion was made to approve the Agenda. It was seconded and approved unanimously.

3. **Approval of Minutes of March 6, 2013** – The minutes of the March 6, 2013, UCCLE meeting were electronically approved on March 22, 2013.

4. **Recommendation for Second Reading – SPAN 2774: Minority Languages in the Spanish-Speaking Context** – Kurt asked Carolyn Meier to speak on behalf of the Proposal Subcommittee. Carolyn stated that the committee discussed the proposal via e-mail. Since there is no prerequisite to the course, it is taught in English, and meets all the goals of areas 3 and 7, there was not much for the subcommittee to discuss. Kurt asked for questions or comments from the UCCLE members present. A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously to approve SPAN 2774: Minority Languages in the Spanish-Speaking Context for Area 3. On another motion that was made, seconded, and approved unanimously, SPAN 2774: Minority Languages in the Spanish-Speaking Context was approved for Area 7.

5. **Discussion of the New CLE (IGE) Plan** – Jill Sible discussed the handout she prepared, “Update on Integrated General Education Plan” dated 4/3/13 which is feedback from the draft that was submitted initially to Dr. McNamee and Dr. Wubah. A revised proposal needs to be submitted to Dr. McNamee and Dr. Wubah on Monday, April 8, 2013. Jill requested feedback from the committee on this document and comments on any aspect of the IGE Plan. It is the administration’s intention to send a ‘draft’ to the general public sometime next week.

Kate McConnell, Assistant Director of the Office of Assessment & Evaluation, distributed a spreadsheet showing the alignment of Virginia Tech’s IGE (Integrated General Education) Outcomes with current “Best Practices” developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) as well as with myriad accountability requirements as stated in a) State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), b) Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA), and c) Southern Association of Colleges & Schools - Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC). A discussion followed concerning the comparison. Several suggested word changes from the Committee members were incorporated into the document. Dr. McConnell stated that she
would make the suggested changes and provide Dr. Sible with a revised version of the outcomes for inclusion in the proposal.

Jill suggested a list of the ‘pros and cons’ concerning Dr. McNamee’s preferred curriculum described on page 3 of the “Update…” His change to the original submission includes a complementary or interdisciplinary minor (18 cr), (plus courses to fill in the gaps), and does not include integrated studies.

There was extensive discussion on the Discourse requirements, with several committee members expressing concern over the inclusion of a “digital discourse” requirement. The concerns raised included:

1. The elimination of the Advanced Writing requirement from the original proposal by the UCCLE. Several members argued for its re-insertion in the IGE proposal, as the intention was to provide more extensive exposure to and practice with writing at a more advanced level; and

2. The specification of “digital” discourse. Committee members questioned the usage of the term digital, specifically that it may reflect wording that, in a few year’s time, might become outdated and limit our understanding — and our students’ understanding — of discourse. Committee members representing the English department also stated that digital discourse is covered as part of current writing curricula, so a course like this may be redundant. Finally, others questioned the focus on the technology or the platform for discourse versus focusing on the learning outcome of discourse itself. Dr. Sible stated that the focus on digital discourse was to help students navigate the complexity of online information and communication, including its ethical issues. Dr. McConnell stated that other outcomes — including one focused on information literacy skills and ethical reasoning — addressed these concerns. Finally, the suggestion was made that the “digital” piece of discourse could perhaps be best addressed through faculty development with such tools, and be integrated more seamlessly from a pedagogical perspective.

Dr. Sible agreed to re-insert the Advanced Writing requirement, and remove “digital” discourse as a separate requirement. She asked that committee members send her their opinions and suggestions so that she can incorporate them into her revision to be submitted to Dr. McNamee and Dr. Wubah on April 8, 2013.

6. **Adjournment** – A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 3:20 p.m. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by:
Bonnie Alberts