Academic Affairs Committee—February 11, 2020


I. Minutes from the previous meeting (January 14) were approved.

II. One course proposal was considered.

Civic Engagement 301 (Living in Community in Waterville: CE Seminar)

This proposal is for a new version of the civic engagement course that is required of all students living in the downtown residence hall. The new version proposes to link the credit and grades in the course to the students’ completion of the required hours of community service, to provide a stronger incentive for completion of such work. Members of the committee who have been either instructors or students in the current version of the CE course expressed concerns about uneveness in the course content and workload between sections in the current course, and did not feel that the new proposal sufficiently addresses those concerns.

The committee discussed the possibility of removing written coursework from the CE301 workload, and instead making the course requirements be just the once-weekly meeting (with reading assignments) and the two weekly hours of community service.

Russ will follow up with Denise Bruesewitz about the committee’s questions and concerns, and provide suggestions for the next round of a proposal. Important issues to consider will be:
1. What are the appropriate “assignments” and workload for such a course?
2. What are the most important themes to focus on in class discussions and readings?
3. How can we promote more consistency between the multiple sections and instructors?
4. Should the course have CR/NC or letter grading?
   Does CR/NC grading provide a sufficient incentive for full engagement?
   Would there be a clear basis for assigning letter grades?