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CAP Committee

Monday, November 4, 2019

12:20-1:10 p.m. | Kennedy Union 310

Present: Jim Brill, Chuck Edmonson, Jon Fulkerson, Fred Jenkins (*ex officio*), Allen McGrew, Maria Newland, Michelle Pautz, Danielle Poe, Randy Sparks (*ex officio*), Bill Trollinger

Excused: Heidi Gauder, Sabrina Neeley (*ex officio*), Scott Segalewitz (*ex officio*), David Watkins, John White

Guest: Una Cadegan

I. Announcements

- A. Spring Meeting Schedule: Details were shared with the committee by email on October 31. The schedule is set up with weekly meetings for approximately two hours due to the heavier workload in the spring related to the 4-Year Review process.
- B. Plans for Upcoming Meetings
 1. November 21, December 2, and December 12: It is anticipated that all three meetings will include course reviews. Committee members were reminded to notify the CAP Office as early as possible if they are unable to attend a meeting.
 2. To be scheduled: Planning for 4-Year Review work next semester, including reviewing a draft of the subcommittee report form.

II. Catholic Intellectual Tradition and CAP

- A. Document: "UD and the history of Catholic higher education in the US: Why there is a Hiring for Mission 'retreat'"
- B. Background: The Common Academic Program was designed to incorporate key elements of the CIT, specifically in Advanced Religious Studies, Advanced Philosophical Studies and Advanced Historical Studies courses: "The fields of philosophy and religious studies, together with historical study are indispensable for students' education in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Students will take courses beyond the 100 level in these fields to further their understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for their own personal, professional and civic lives and also for the just transformation of the social world. By requiring every student to take six hours of courses in the areas of religious studies or philosophy and three hours in history beyond the 100 level, the University expects students to engage in liberal learning that connects theory and practice and to draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service." (CAP Senate Document: DOC-10-04, lines 533-541) Dr. Una Cadegan, Professor from the Department of History, was invited to have a conversation with the committee about the CIT in relation to CAP. The committee has had some challenges over the years with evaluating proposals for evidence that the CIT will be addressed in the course (beyond looking for the words "Catholic Intellectual Tradition) and having meaningful conversations with faculty when CIT might need some clarification in a CAP course proposal. The committee is looking for some practical guidance on these issues. An article that Dr. Cadegan authored was provided as context for the conversation. She has covered CIT as part of her research background in American Catholic history. She has been involved with CIT-related initiatives since she started at UD, including year-long seminars for faculty that were funded by NEH. She was also part of the task force that wrote *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection*.
- C. Remarks from Dr. Cadegan: She noted the challenges with developing a broad understanding of the CIT across campus. The lack of sustained conversations about it presents an obstacle for both proposers and the committee. There are many good resources about the CIT, but her view is that trying to distill information into a bullet point list would not ease the challenges and tensions. Dr. Cadegan mentioned the aspect of trying to define CIT and offered a short definition from Fr. Jack

McGrath, S.M. from the late 1980s: “History of reasoned engagement with the Gospels.” She also described a tradition as a process in which students are participants and are given skills to participate. How might a course address these aspects? As a Catholic university, UD has an obligation to convey the CIT, but also has the same obligation under academic freedom to convey any tradition and to do so in a way that is true to a faculty member’s own beliefs. Academics tend not have a level of training to talk about religious topics as they have for other topics, which presents additional challenges. Dr. Cadegan noted that there is enormous scope for CIT in reflecting on work in disciplines other than theology. There is potential for UD to play an important role in this area, as well as for CAP to help faculty see themselves as participants in such an initiative. She provided some observations about the ideal to cultivate in students a sense of wonder and respect for whatever discipline they are studying and overcoming an implicit danger to use the curriculum to keep young people in the Catholic Church. Opportunities with respect to CIT include looking for ways to remind faculty that when they are asked about how the course fits within the CIT, they are being asked to draw upon their own expertise. They are being asked as a teacher and scholar where their course fits within the larger goals of the curriculum. To that point, faculty are all in this together no matter their discipline and background. She recognized that the process of completing the course proposal form can be isolating and questioned if there is a way for departments to help faculty members articulate responses in the proposal in terms of what the department sees as the overall “fit.” Then an individual faculty member could draw upon the department’s contribution in their own specific proposal.

D. Discussion Highlights

1. When reviewing course proposals that are to address the CIT (i.e., Advanced Studies courses), the committee has faced situations where faculty members have articulated reasons for not addressing it explicitly in the course. The committee requested guidance for situations like these. Dr. Cadegan recommended erring on the side of inclusion if the committee is able to determine some connection to CIT in the course, such as habits of mind that we want to instill in students. While there is a need for measurable outcomes, having one on a syllabus doesn’t necessarily mean that students will encounter the CIT.
2. Another reason to err on the side of inclusion is recognition that the University has not attended to ongoing faculty development in this area. To fill the gap, the committee asked about the possibility of developing some resources. Dr. Cadegan mentioned a few possibilities, such as a document from Boston College, papers from a conference for Catholic business schools that would provide disciplinary examples, and volumes of essays from Collegium that would be from a variety of disciplines. She followed up after the meeting with the link to the [Boston College document](#). This document is included as part of the “[Guidelines for Addressing the Catholic Intellectual Tradition in Advanced Study CAP Course Proposals](#)” that the committee developed in 2015-16.
3. An underlying tension at UD is that CAP is trying to institutionalize the curriculum but there is also a need to recognize aspects of the university’s culture. It’s also important not to underestimate the distinctiveness of CAP.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Judy Owen, CAP Office