

**Ohio Northern University  
Semester Transition Coordinating Committee**

Minutes April 30, 2008

Roll (absentees underlined): Bell, Laurie; Cole, Christine; Croskery, Patrick; DiPietro, Natalie; Govekar, Michele; Heinfeldt, Jeffery; Laird, Laurie; Lippert, Anne; Myers, Deirdre; Reza, Farhad; Robeson, Lisa; Smalley, Jonathan ; Theisen, William; Woodley, Nancy

VP Lippert called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

As groups outside of the Semester Transition Coordinating Committee are assigned tasks, the task and the group responsible will be posted to the Academic Affairs Semester Transition website.

Jon Smalley distributed proposed language for the second guideline for Section 1 of the standards (the charge to the Academic Affairs Committee regarding the creation of the calendar). The committee approved the following wording: "A semester should consist of [\*] nominal weeks of instruction and [\*] week(s) of examinations, exclusive of breaks. The number of instructional days will range from a minimum of [\*] days to a maximum of [\*] days" (\* = to be set by Academic Affairs). Lisa Robeson suggested that Academic Affairs look at peer institutions when planning the calendar, and it was agreed by the chair of Academic Affairs that they would do so.

Proposed language for Sections 2, 3, and 4 were distributed. The committee approved the following wording for Sections 2-4 of the standards:

**Section 2:** Courses will normally be of three credit hours. It is understood that there are instances where variation from this standard is necessary.

**Section 3:** Baccalaureate degree requirements will range from a minimum of 120 credit hours to a maximum of 128 credit hours.  
(NOTE – the College of Pharmacy Curriculum Committee is currently discussing degree requirements and will inform the Semester Transition Coordinating Committee when a final decision is reached.)

**Section 4:** A credit hour is to represent three hours of academic work per week, on average over the term.

A sub-committee comprised of Laurie Bell, Pat Croskery, Natalie DiPietro, and Jon Smalley (chair) was charged with reviewing Standards 5 and bringing recommendations to the next meeting on May 7, 2008.

The committee approved the following wording for Sections 6-7 of the standards:

**Section 6:** In general, with college review and approval, (1) all departments and programs should reduce the credit hours required of their curricula (e.g., majors, minors, options, and concentrations) by approximately one-third and (2) the time required to complete a degree should not be increased as a result of the change to semesters. For example, the timing of course offerings should be consistent with this standard.

**Section 7:** Exemptions from these standards may be granted following review and recommendation by the University Academic Affairs committee and shall be reported to the University Council and the University faculty. Final approval is with the President's Office.

The timeline sub-committee distributed an updated draft of the timeline. Tasks to be completed have been outlined and, although more dates have been assigned, not all dates have been determined yet. Each committee member is to review the timeline and consult with their respective college/department. Feedback on the proposed dates is to be provided to the sub-committee.

Bill Theisen and Nancy Woodley held a meeting with department chairs from the College of Arts & Sciences and presented their feedback on the calendar to the committee:

Department chairs from the College of Arts & Sciences met to discuss and offer a general recommendation on the following two items:

- 1) **Proposal: The length of the semester will be 15 weeks with a minimum of 70 days instruction, followed by a one week examination period.**

Results: Most chairs strongly supported the proposal assuming the minimum number of days was changed to 72. Several chairs stated, 'no preference '

Comments: There was a strong sentiment to change the minimum number of days to 72. The reasoning was that we are now meet for classes 30 weeks for the year (150 possible days) with only 4 days off for holidays giving 146 days of instruction.

- 2) **Proposal: A four week instructional period should be incorporated into the academic year.**

Results:

Departments Opposed – 4

Departments Divided – 2

Departments with No preference – 4

Departments In favor – 3 (2 only if in January, one only if in May)

Comments: Departments found it hard to make decisions without the following information:

- 1) What is the actual calendar? When will classes start, (August, or September) and end?
- 2) Are students required to take courses during the mini-term?
- 3) Will financial aid cover the mini-term?
- 4) Will faculty be required to teach during the mini-term?
- 5) How will faculty be compensated or faculty loads calculated?
- 6) Will there be a university of college wide focus for the mini-term?
- 7) Will the May mini-term be part of the summer session?

Dean Manzer said that a number of top institutions use a mini-term as one means to help define their university. The term could be used for courses, internships, travel

abroad, faculty student research etc. Concern for funding these endeavors was raised.

General questions about various programs such as the Holiday Spectacular and student teaching were raised. Chairs were encouraged to send departmental concerns to the Academic Affairs Committee. The A&S representative is John Lomax. The chair is Laurie Laird.

This information will also be sent to Laurie Laird for consideration by the Academic Affairs committee.

Jeff Heinfeldt reported that the College of Business, given the assumptions from the University of Minnesota on the structure of a mini-term, is split on the concept, but if adopted, would prefer it in May.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 am.

Minutes submitted by: Natalie DiPietro