

College Curriculum Committee  
Final Report  
By Jeff Horn, Chair  
May 13, 2013

## **Background**

The College Curriculum Committee (CCC) emerged as a result of Provost Clyde's goal of institutionalizing faculty primacy in curricular matters. After extended discussions in the Educational Affairs Commission (EAC) in fall 2011-spring 2012, ten members were elected by the faculty of the five schools (2 each) in March 2012 and one member was named by the Council for Faculty Affairs (CFA). By-laws were written by the newly-elected members with Jeff Horn serving as chair, and passed on 25 April 2012 and then approved by EAC on 7 May allowing the CCC to take up its functions in August 2012.

## **Membership in 2012-13**

Arts: Ricardo Dellobuono and Jeff Horn; Business: Hany Guirguis and Janet Rovenpoor; Education: Tedd Keating and Sr. Remigia Kushner; Engineering: Bahman Litkouhi and Graham Walker; Science: Michael Judge and John Wasacz; and at-large: Richard Goldstone.

## **Efforts and Accomplishments**

At the first meeting, Horn was reelected as chair and Richard Goldstone elected as secretary. The focus of the two fall meetings was on developing submission protocols and procedures and on creating a list of issues to be investigated by the group. It was decided that minute-taking would rotate among the members.

A subcommittee composed of Horn, Mike Judge and Tedd Keating was elected to draft submission protocols. The suggestion of Dean Merriman to work backward from New York State's requirements was welcomed gladly as a starting point. The subcommittee's protocols were thoroughly discussed and approved at the November meeting. The submission guidelines were announced to the faculty and placed on the Community Moodle website.

Provost Clyde asked the CCC to conduct regular curricular reviews as part of the cycle of outside evaluation of departments and programs. This idea was discussed at three meetings and the following conclusions reached: The CCC believes that this would be too massive an undertaking and would bog down the Committee's actions. In addition, the members felt that such oversight was outside its charge and might be better performed by either the Outcomes Assessment Committee or the curriculum committees of the five schools.

In fall 2012, an issue of oversight authority arose between CCC and EAC regarding the inclusion of or conversion to distance learning in courses and programs, and the issues involved in moving to hybrid campus/distance learning models. The CCC argued strongly that some entity outside a department in question should provide review and oversight. An *ad hoc* committee composed of two members from EAC, 2 from CCC and 2 from CFA met to discuss the issue. The *ad hoc* committee decided that school curriculum committees must approve any significant transition to hybrid learning. Another issue of contention that emerged in the EAC concerned the CCC's request for the Provost's Spreadsheet. It was proposed that the CCC not

receive this information. The compromise was the CCC could (and should!) see this information but would only make recommendations about financial matters rather than requirements that must be changed before approval.

Beginning in January 2013, the CCC began to evaluate submissions. Two new programs in Education were evaluated and recommended to the Provost: a M.S. in Marriage and Family Counseling submitted by Corine Fitzpatrick and a B.Tech in Radiologic Technology overseen by Larry Hough and Joanne Habenicht. Judge, as chair of the Biology Department, also put forward a proposal to make major changes in the B.A. and B.S. degrees. The chair first read over the proposals upon submission and suggested corrections to ensure compliance with the protocols. The revised proposals were distributed to the full committee and then discussed at the next meeting. In the case of the new programs, approval was granted by the CCC conditional upon fixing a number of minor issues. The chair oversaw the speedy implementation of these minor changes and then full approval was communicated to the Provost. The discussion of these submissions, based on the newly-created protocols, proved both expeditious and useful to those submitting the proposals.

At the April 2013 meeting of EAC, Dean Merriman announced that an additional step in approving new programs had been instituted by the administration. The person(s) submitting the program and their dean would meet with the Provost and the Vice-President for Finance. The CCC sees the utility of this meeting, and appreciates Merriman's announcement, but wishes that the Provost had seen fit to inform the CCC himself, and in writing, of this additional step.

In addition, although the CCC's by-laws require the Provost to respond in writing to submissions approved by that body, the CCC has yet to receive any response to its actions from the administration, even those submitted more than three months ago. Particularly with the addition of the new step in approval, the two-week deadline might be too brief an interval, but the CCC is concerned that this final element of transparency and accountability has been ignored by the administration. ***Upon submission of an approved change, we urge the Provost to provide a schedule for when the final decision will be made. Then we believe that he must inform us of the decision.*** Without such actions, it is hard to credit the statement in the by-laws that the CCC is "the summit of curricular decision-making at Manhattan College."

The EAC asked the CCC to supervise an update to the undergraduate course inventory. Schools and departments were asked to remove courses that have not been taught for a long time (i.e., not in the past five years). When looking at the course inventory, a student should have a reasonable expectation that a course will be offered during their time at the College. Courses taken off the books can easily be revived (without the approval of a curriculum committee) should there be a need for them in the future. The representatives of each school consulted with the chairs and drew up a list by school. This list will be communicated to each dean for their comments in May 2013. It is hoped that the school lists can be forwarded to the Registrar during the summer of 2013.

The School of Continuing and Professional Studies was the subject of considerable attention in spring 2013. Director Cheryl Harrison attended two meetings and Provost Clyde also visited to discuss CCC concerns. Harrison provided a significant number of documents and the Provost's office contributed others or got them from the Archives. We were dismayed that

certain documents such as the original application to register the program were unavailable. Provost Clyde repeatedly emphasized that the present situation is not of Director Harrison's making. That said, and appreciating the scale and scope of desperately-needed reform, the CCC pressed for action steps at its April meeting to improve the SCPS curriculum and to bring it more closely into line with the other five schools. The steps agreed to by Director Harrison and Provost Clyde are: 1) completion of core course syllabi; 2) reapplication to the State Education Department by the end of the fall 2013 semester; 3) each class to receive at least one visit during the fall semester; 4) courses to be reviewed and approved by faculty with expertise in the topic; 5) the curriculum committee of the SCPS to function as those in other schools by sending minutes to CCC. In addition, the CCC believes that additional resources are needed by SCPS along with greater oversight of teaching and learning. We insist that record-keeping and record-sharing be improved significantly. The CCC looks forward to ongoing conversations with Director Harrison to assist SCPS in its reform efforts.

Going forward, the CCC plans to explore the common elements of the curriculum across the five schools (27 credits) and the ARCHES program as well as the continuation of its dialogue with the SCPS. We are also aware of two minors passed by Arts (Ethics and Film Studies) and a revision to the Pre-Health curriculum that will come to CCC in September. In May, EAC also began to discuss a recommendation to CCC that it revise its by-laws to allow minors that do not cross schools to be approved by the originating school's curriculum committee as long as the proposal includes a certification that the minor does not overlap existing programs. Dean of Arts Emmerson, who suggested the measure, said that Arts was developing a form to create minors and that once it was finished it would be brought to EAC in the fall and the recommendation could then receive full consideration. Having the chair sit on EAC *ex-officio* seems to have been an effective means of ensuring thorough information-sharing between these two bodies.

In 2013-14, the CCC will meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 3:20-5 p.m. Jeff Horn will call the first meeting in September before stepping down as chair.