

Community College *of* Philadelphia

MEETING MINUTES
Institution-Wide Committee
Monday, January 28, 2013
2:30 p.m.
Isadore A. Shrager Boardroom
Community College of Philadelphia
1700 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Pascal Scoles.

II. Attendance

Delegates

Faculty: Ed Baker, Tanya Brown, Bridget McFadden, Pascal Scoles

Administration: Judith Gay, Tom Hawk, Samuel Hirsch, Sharon Thompson

Students: Akela Mitchell, Charles Phy, Sr.

Alternates

Faculty: John Braxton

Administration: Mary Anne Celenza

Students: Alaine McDaniels, Louise Whitaker

Guests Present

Brenton Webber, Cynthia Giddle

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of December 17, 2012 were approved.

IV. Old Business

None

V. New Business

- (a) Proposal for Revision to Policies and Procedures Number 8 (Submitted by the Academic Affairs Committee)

Sharon Thompson explained that the proposal is to eliminate references to CAP A and to CAP A students in the policy because that program is no longer in existence.

Action Item: Recommend accepting the proposal to eliminate references to CAP A and CAP A students in Policies and Procedures Number 8 (Hirsch/Mitchell).

Motion approved unanimously.

- (b) Proposal for a Developmental Mathematics Department (Academic Affairs Standing Committee on Curriculum)

There was a discussion about whether the Proposal for a Developmental Mathematics Department should be an action item on the agenda. There was no agreement between Judy Gay and representatives of the Federation related to contract interpretation and past practices; however, Judy Gay agreed that since the Federation indicated there was no intention to grieve the process, that she was fine with having the proposal as a discussion item. An unresolved question was how the IWC could send a representative to the Student Outcomes Committee of the Board to address the issue if there was no vote.

There was also a discussion about whether the Co-Chairs could modify the agenda without the agreement of the IWC members. There was no agreement but a vote was held.

Action Item: Treat the Proposal for a Developmental Mathematics Department as a discussion item. Vote: Yes = 6, No = 2, Abstentions = 4

Pascal Scoles started the discussion by asking if the College needs more expertise in developmental math. Brenton Webber responded that there is no such thing as “developmental math.” He said it is more of a student issue, an issue with college readiness. He argued that the same expertise is needed in that area (developmental) plus faculty need the breadth of knowledge to teach beyond developmental and most people in developmental do not see that far.

Pascal Scoles then stated that developmental English seems to get students to a different level but there is frustration regarding math. Brenton Webber responded that Math 016 and Math 017 are trying to cover materials that takes about 10 years to learn and is compressed into a short period of time. He said this is not just a problem for the Math Department but for the entire College. Other issues he said are the placement exam and the curricular pathways. He said those topics are not discussed at an institutional level.

A member of the IWC asked what the difference in sections would be if the department was split. Brenton Webber responded that there are about 30 full time faculty and 240-300 sections would be involved in the split; 240 sections would be in the new developmental department and 60 would be in the remaining math department.

Brenton Webber said another concern is that there is an allied health program that thinks moving Math 118 to a developmental math department would affect their accreditation. Mary Anne Celenza responded that she had investigated that concern and a split would not cause the department to lose their accreditation.

Brenton Webber was asked how the College could get traction on improvements in developmental math. Brenton Webber mentioned: change the placement test; split Math 118 (into courses to serve different populations of students); overhaul Math 016 and math 017; create a crash course in which students could complete Math 016 and 017 in one semester.

One student discussed her current experience in Math 017. She described it as a major challenge but said it is up to students to persist and concentrate.

A member of IWC asked what the College has been trying for the last five years? What are the roadblocks? Brenton Webber stated that there was a Math 016-Math 017 Fall 2009 proposal. Judy Gay stated that the proposal was funded by the College but was discontinued because of the student outcomes.

Brenton Webber stated that the department developed a common final. Judy Gay stated that there have been a number of issues with implementation of the common final and the outcomes since the implementation of the common final are worse. She discussed that the original proposal from the department was to keep students from passing the course if they did not pass the final exam. Judy Gay explained why she did not agree to that approach. Currently the common final is supposed to account for 25% of the grade.

Brenton Webber said the 3 credit format for the courses is also a roadblock.

There was a discussion about students not knowing that Math 118 does not transfer to some schools as a college level math course.

There was a comment that the input of students is lacking from both the proposal and the response to the proposal. A student stated that she does not see the benefit or the harm in the proposal.

Cynthia Giddle stated that the English Department supports the position of the Math Department that splitting the department is not a solution.

Brenton Webber reiterated that the placement process is not effective. He added that math is only a “small piece of the puzzle” and that the College will get the same results after a split. He asked, “Does change necessitate a two department format?”

Other topics mentioned were:

- Advantages associated with the structural change in allied health a number of years ago (Brenton Webber stated that math is different from allied health)
- Whether the math department has been reluctant to try innovations. The contention of the math department is that they did send innovations forward and they believe innovations being tried by other institutions have serious flaws.
- Withdrawal rates from developmental math have been stable and year to year retention is going up.
- There is no suggestion about resources. Currently the Learning Lab only allows one math appointment per week. Capability of tutors was also mentioned.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned