DePaul University Academic Program Review

Cycle 6: Spring 2003--Spring 2004

Memorandum of Agreement -- November 2004

Religious Dimensions Domain

As a result of the sixth cycle of DePaul University's Academic Program Review Process (Cycle 6), the participants in the process enter into the following agreements. The participants understand that this document will be available to be made public once all the signatures are in place.

Common items for the Liberal Studies Program:

Domain goals and learning outcomes:

Each Advisory Committee will articulate its specific goals, consistent with the DePaul Learning Goals, and will then derive from them assessable expected student-learning outcomes which are to be included in all unit syllabi. This task is to be completed according to a schedule to be provided by the LSC and/or its chair so that the LSC can approve these goals and outcomes by June 2005.

Writing standards:

Each Advisory Committee will determine the acceptable amount and type of writing to be required in its courses, taking into consideration the variety of courses offered in that domain, and being sure that such assignments are sensitive to and consistent with the students’ prior and/or concurrent writing experience and preparation, including the first year writing course(s). This task is to be completed according to a schedule to be provided by the LSC and/or its chair so that the LSC can approve these standards by June 2005.

Quality control:

During the coming year, Liberal Studies Council will establish a sub-committee to consider ways to ensure the academic quality of LSP courses. While it remains the responsibility of Liberal Studies Council to set standards for rigor and challenge, this subcommittee will make recommendations to the LSC about mechanisms and processes to ensure those standards are maintained. As part of its recommendations, this committee will identify distinct roles for the advisory committees and contributing departments in carrying out their responsibilities in maintaining the quality of Liberal Studies courses. Once the Liberal Studies Council approves these recommendations, it will be the responsibility of the advisory committees to carry out the tasks assigned to them.

Actions agreed upon by the Religious Dimensions Domain for the coming academic year (2004 - 2005):

1. Recruitment from outside Religious Studies:
   a. The Advisory Committee for the Religious Dimensions Domain will seek to expand the offerings within their domain in order to bring new voices to the conversation, enrich the offerings of the domain in terms of methods and subject matter, and to promote the study of Religion outside of the Religious Studies department. It will define mechanisms for recruiting courses and individuals to teach within the Religious Dimensions Domain and will be more proactive in soliciting proposals and arranging for existing courses that meet...
2. Clarify Content of Cross-Listed Courses:
   a. The Business, Ethics and Society course, listed as REL228, MGT228, and PHI228, when taught as a Religious Dimensions course will be clearly brought into conformity with the overall learning goals and outcomes of the domain and will be clearly distinguished from courses that better fit under the Philosophical Inquiry domain.

3. Curriculum:
   a. The Religious Dimensions Advisory Committee will submit a proposal to the Liberal Studies Council to change the domain’s two category names. “Patterns and Problems” will become “Religious and Ethical Questions”. “Traditions in Context” will become “Religious Traditions.”
   b. The Advisory Committee will require faculty to identify on the syllabus which category requirement their course fulfills. The Advisory Committee will also require faculty to discuss the category and its relationship to the particular course with students during the first session of the course.
   c. The Advisory Committee will create or redesignate eight introductory 100 level courses that clearly introduce the domain to students without a Religious Studies background and that are primarily intended to satisfy Liberal Studies requirements.

4. Faculty Development:
   a. The Advisory Committee will submit a proposal to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences for support in instituting an organized training program for all adjunct faculty and new hires. This training would occur twice a year, requiring an afternoon session followed by dinner.
   b. As part of the organized training program the Advisory Committee will address the issue of consistency in grading standards through practice grading sessions. These sessions will be available to current full-time faculty as well as adjuncts and new hires.
   c. The Advisory Committee will discuss advising as part of the training program and also in Religious Studies Department faculty meetings.

5. Assessment:
   a. The Advisory Committee will distribute information from last year’s domain assessment to faculty in order to pursue the question of how the goals of the Traditions in Context category are met and increase faculty consciousness of how they approach this matter.

Signed:

Advisory Committee Chair: ________________________________

APRC Subcommittee: ____________________________________
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