CURRICULUM COMMITTEE  
September 4, 2014  
Approved

Members Present: Dr. Joseph Agnich, Dr. Ron Buchanan, Dr. Ellen Fancher-Ruiz, Ms. Barbara Gershman, Ms. Frankie Harris-Lyne, Ms. Barbara Hopkins, Mr. Frederick Markham, Dr. Mandy Milot, Dr. Burton Peretti, Mr. Edward Perry, Dr. Roger Ramsammy, Ms. Lisa Riggleman-Gross, Dr. Sharon Robertson, Ms. Maria Rynn, Dr. Mel Schiavelli, Mr. Kevin Simons, Ms. Judy Snyder, Ms. Kristine Winner, Mr. Scott Wood and Dr. Izanne Zorin.

Members Absent: Dr. Sam Hill, Ms. Ann-Marie John

Guests: Ms. Julia Brown, Mr. Andrew Cornell, Mr. Glenn Flodstrom, Ms. Karen Gordon, Mr. Zachary Jackson, Dr. Theana Kastens and Dr. Catherine O’Brien.

Welcome and Introductions  
Dr. Schiavelli thanked everyone for their willingness to serve. Members introduced themselves.

Background on the Curriculum Committee  
Purpose and Membership of the Committee  
Dr. Robertson stated that the function of the Curriculum Committee is to study the instructional programs of the College, consider proposals for the development of new programs and their assignments to campuses, consider proposals for course changes, and make recommendations for improvement of curricula to the President. She highlighted two overarching principles: looking at the big picture and thinking in minute detail about the curriculum. The Curriculum Committee is newly expanded with two additional academic deans, and two additional teaching faculty. SACSCOC policy requires evidence that the faculty has responsibility for the curriculum; thus, the majority of the voting members of the Curriculum Committee must be teaching faculty.

Log of 2012-13 and 2012-13 Actions  
Dr. Robertson distributed the action log that provided new members with examples of the wide range of committee actions and the current status of recent actions.

Overview of Curriculum Procedures Manual and Proposal Process  
Dr. Robertson distributed the Curriculum Procedures Manual and reviewed the types of items contained within it. These include procedures for the development, approval, modification, evaluation, and discontinuance of programs and courses at NOVA; mechanisms for providing advanced standing opportunities for students; procedures for the development of articulation and guaranteed admission agreements; and procedures for advisory committees. The procedures are designed to implement programs that reflect not only the highest academic standards, but also the college’s commitment to enhance educational opportunities through cooperative relationships with community, regional, and state businesses and industries, as well as secondary and four-year institutions.
The Committee has one active subcommittee, the Credit for Prior Learning (formerly called Advanced Standing) Committee. Its recommendations must be approved by the Curriculum Committee and then the Administrative Council. The Committee also considers proposals of the General Education Council with the same approval process.

Dr. Robertson asked members to feel free to suggest improvements to the manual.

Curriculum Philosophy
Dr. Schiavelli emphasized that the mandate of the Committee is to provide leadership for the curriculum. He asked members to view our curriculum from the student’s perspective. He presented a number of college-wide areas of focus for the coming year that will impact the Curriculum Committee: student success policy recommendations; increasing faculty engagement in student success efforts; expansion of STEM instruction; celebration of 50 years of service; the new VCCS Strategic Plan; and credential completion strategies.

Dr. Schiavelli distributed a list of credential completion goals and asked Committee members to think about strategies that increase the number of credentials awarded, increase the number earned “on time,” decrease excess credits, provide intrusive advising to keep students on track to graduate, award credential to students who may have already met requirements, shorten time to credential completion through dual enrollment and prior learning assessment, and provide tools to help students navigate NOVA’s curricular maze.

NOVA awards 121 career credentials and 22 transfer credentials. Approximately 29,000 students are placed in A.S. programs, 5,100 in A.A. programs, 3,800 in A.A.S. programs and 400 in A.A.A. programs. Still other students are placed in certificate or career studies certificate programs.

Dr. Schiavelli distributed a diagram that provided clear evidence of the complex multi-step application, orientation and enrollment process a prospective student must wade through before attending the first day of class at NOVA. He stated that the Curriculum Committee has the responsibility of helping to simplify the lives of our students and to think about how to simplify the procedures for prospective students. When we think about approving new programs and courses, he asked Committee members to think about those fundamental goals.

Dr. Robertson highlighted the importance of knowing what the senior institutions want when we design transfer programs. The committee should not act as a rubber stamp; members should therefore express their opinions and not approve proposals they do not think are in our students’ best interests. She also stated that, when possible, academic deans should attend Curriculum Committee meetings when a proposal is presented from their division or by a discipline for which they have coordinating responsibility.
Action Items

Minutes of the May 1, 2014 Meeting
The Curriculum Committee approved the May 1, 2014 minutes.

ENG 257 Mythology Revisions
Dr. Catherine O’Brien (dean, LO) introduced Ms. Theana Kastens (ENG, WO) who presented a request by the English faculty who teach ENG 257 Mythology to revise the course title to “Mythological Literature.” This is to facilitate transfer of the course as a literature course; the VCCS has another course, HUM 256, titled Mythology which teaches the subject from a different perspective. The course description was modified to indicate that the course covers a variety of mythological works of literature, including an examination of the allegorical and metaphorical themes within each work, and discusses the use of figurative language, symbology and mythical allusions.

In developing the revised course content summary, the English faculty consulted with colleagues at other VCCS colleges. Faculty from BRCC, ESCC, GCC, JSRCC, MECC, RCC, TCC, TNCC and VWCC support the changes to the course title and description. One college, DCC, did not support the changes, but colleges responding after DCC specifically disputed the concerns raised.

The Curriculum Committee approved the proposal to change the title of ENG 257 to “Mythological Literature” and to update the course description.

ART 134 Three Dimensional Design Revisions
With Dr. O’Brien’s support, Mr. Zachary Jackson (ART, WO) and Ms. Lucy Weber (ART, LO) presented the ART faculty’s proposal to make ART 134 Three-Dimensional Design variable credit at the VCCS level. Currently a 3-credit course, our art faculty would like to offer it as a 4-credit course so that it aligns it with other studio art courses and will bring Studio Art offerings into better alignment with 4-year B.F.A programs in the state which all offer an equivalent class. The extra hour of lecture will be used to increase student knowledge of new tools and equipment. Designed for students pursuing a studio art degree or personal enrichment, the course introduces students to new concepts and problems in developing three-dimensional studio art projects, and offers a natural progression of creative thinking and skill application to those students who have completed ART 121 Drawing I and/or ART 131 Fundamentals of Design. Deans with responsibility for art and faculty at other VCCS institutions support this proposal.

Committee members asked how this credit increase would affect total credits given the VCCS directive of reducing credits. Mr. Jackson stated this would remain as an elective but if and when an AFA degree is created this would be a required course.

Dr. Robertson recommended that Mr. Jackson work and his colleagues work with the Coordinator of Transfer Services Ms. Julia Brown on the AFA degree.
The Curriculum Committee approved making ART 134 Three-Dimensional Design variable credit for 3-4 credits at the VCCS level.

**Medical Laboratory Technology AAS Competitive Admission**
Mr. Andrew Cornell (dean, MEC), Ms. Harris-Lyne, and Mr. Glenn Flodstrom (MDL, MEC) represented the Medical Laboratory Technology (MDL) faculty. Supported by their clinical affiliates and curriculum advisory committee, the MLT faculty propose implementation of a competitive admission process effective for the Fall 2015 cohort. With a limited enrollment capacity of 20 students per year, it is hoped that implementing a competitive admission process will reduce or eliminate attrition. Over the past three years, the student attrition rate has averaged 36 percent. A student who leaves the Medical Laboratory Technology AAS program creates a void that cannot be filled until the program completes another admission cycle a year later. Improving the graduation rate will better enable the MEC to meet the increased demand for qualified MLTs in the service area.

Requiring the Reading, Math, and English Language Usage portion of the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) as part of the admission process will be an asset to student success. Committee members questioned the emphasis on the TEAS test feeling that it might be biased against some populations and suggested that placing more emphasis on grades.

The Curriculum Committee approved the initiation of a competitive admission process for the Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) AAS program effective for the Fall 2015 cohort. The vote was not unanimous; there were three abstentions and one nay vote. Dr. Ramsammy suggested that the provosts speak with MEC Provost Loochtan prior to voting on this proposal at the Administrative Council.

**Discontinue Technical Studies AAS**
In response to the most recent VCCS viability study, Dr. Robertson proposed the discontinuance of the Technical Studies AAS. There are no faculty assigned to the program, no active plans of study, and no graduates since there was one in 2008-09. No students have been placed in it since 2009-10.

Dr. Robertson explained that the VCCS established the AAS in Technical Studies degree in 1996. It was designed to provide a framework that would allow colleges to quickly develop short-term or pilot technical programs. Each new program is called a “plan of study” rather than a specialization. However, NOVA faculty have found it difficult to design technical curricula that meet local needs and adhere to the required VCCS protocols.

NOVA first offered the program in Fall 2002 with its Opticianry Plan of Study. Two other plans of study were tried at the request of large companies: Electrical Technology and Energy Technology. All three plans of study were discontinued due to almost nonexistent enrollment and zero graduates in most years. NOVA still has the Technical Studies AAS, so every three years when the VCCS examines program viability, an explanation is required to justify the program or to discontinue it.
Committee members felt this type of program might be well suited to the non-credit Workforce Development program rather than the credit side of the college.

The Curriculum Committee approved the proposal to discontinue the Technical Studies AAS effective Spring 2015.

**Monitoring**

English Specialization