Members Present: Dr. Mel Schiavelli, Mr. David Epstein, Dr. Ellen Fancher-Ruiz, Ms. Barbara Gershman, Ms. Barbara Hopkins, Ms. Ann-Marie John, Dr. Julie Leidig, Mr. Edward Perry, Ms. Lisa Riggleman-Gross, Dr. Sharon Robertson, Ms. Maria Rynn, Dr. Barbara Saperstone, Mr. Kevin Simons, Ms. Judy Snyder, Ms. Kristine Winner, Mr. Scott Wood and Dr. Izanne Zorin.

Member Absent: Mr. Brian Foley

Guests: Mr. John Ahmad, Ms. Julia Brown, Mr. Andrew Cornell, Ms. Karen Gordon, and Dr. Jennifer Roberts.

College Recorder: Ms. Norie Flowers

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Robertson welcomed committee members and emphasized the importance of the committee, which is chaired by the Executive Vice President. Committee members and guests introduced themselves.

Purpose and Membership of the Committee

Dr. Robertson explained 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. Appropriate recommendations are made to the President.

The committee is appointed by the President annually for two-year staggered terms and includes a wide range of members. Half of the committee is composed of teaching faculty as SACSCOC states that the curriculum must be the responsibility of the faculty. Thus, teaching faculty form the majority of voting members; Dr. Robertson has no vote and the Executive Vice President only votes in cases of a tie. Roughly half of the faculty members represent transfer disciplines and half represent career-technical disciplines. Each campus and ELI are represented. Three provosts serve on the committee, which is helpful in gaining a broad perspective and because they can help present Curriculum Committee items to the Administrative Council. One academic dean serves on the committee. Libraries are represented for their understanding of literacy. Student Services are represented for their perspectives, particularly in connection with transfer issues. The Workforce Development representative helps the committee become aware of trends in the communities.

Attendance on the Curriculum Committee is essential and Dr. Robertson asked that if a given member is unable to attend that she be notified. If a given member misses several meetings, the member will be asked to depart the Committee and a replacement will be found.

Log of 2011-12 and 2012-13 Actions

Dr. Robertson explained that the log provides the ability to track actions and to summarize the range of items that were addressed in the previous two years. The log also shows what happens to items after they are approved by the Curriculum Committee.
Overview of Curriculum Procedures Manual and Proposal Process
Dr. Robertson distributed a hard copy of the Curriculum Committee Procedures Manual, approved both by the Curriculum Committee and the Administrative Council. The manual explains the course and curriculum development, revision, and discontinuance processes in detail, mechanisms for providing new advanced standing opportunities for students; procedures for the articulation and evaluation of credit programs; and procedures for advisory committees.

Dr. Robertson emphasized the importance of understanding the process NOVA uses to evaluate potential new opportunities for credit for prior learning (formerly called advanced standing). Proposals are approved by the faculty cluster, the Credit for Prior Learning Committee, the Curriculum Committee, and the Administrative Council. Above all, the overarching goal is to show solid evidence that they will fill a demonstrable student need in the region and the state.

Minutes of the May 5, 2013 Meeting
The Curriculum Committee approved the minutes of the May 5, 2013 meeting as modified to correct the name of Dr. Deshaun Davis.

ACC 211-212 Revisions
Mr. John Ahmad (ACC, AN), who chairs the Accounting Cluster, and Ms. Gershman provided extended background information on the requested course revision. On behalf of the VCCS Accounting Peer Group, NOVA’s Accounting Cluster proposes revisions to ACC 211-212 Principles of Accounting I-II. As part of the VCCS reengineering project, the Accounting Peer Group was asked to create statewide learning objectives to help ensure student success in ACC 211 Principles of Accounting I, which in turn necessitated changes to ACC 212. A VCCS committee with one representative from each VCCS college and two representatives from NOVA was formed to review both ACC 211 and 212. Mr. Ahmad and Ms. Gershman, who chaired the committee, represented NOVA. The committee worked from Fall 2012 through Summer 2013.

Ms. Gershman explained that shortly after the committee began its work, Virginia Tech (VT) announced that its faculty were not satisfied with VCCS’s ACC 212 and would no longer accept that course for equivalent credit. Instead, the entire sequence of ACC 211 and ACC 212 would be required in order to earn equivalent credit for the first course in their sequence and VCCS students would have to take VT’s second course. Christopher Newport University and Old Dominion University plan to make similar changes to their Accounting courses. The changes mirror changes to the accounting profession and reflect a nationwide trend in the material covered in an Accounting principles course sequence. It is likely that other universities will follow suit over time. Ms. Hopkins stated that she is participating in a nationwide group looking at the national trends, and that we need to make these changes to remain current.

Ms. Gershman explained that the VCCS committee rewrote the courses to correspond with VT’s course content, which is roughly 50% Financial accounting and 50% Managerial accounting. There is variation among the VCCS colleges as to the time devoted to Financial and Managerial accounting, with the majority devoting more time to Financial than Managerial accounting. The revised sequence provides greater breadth but less depth. Students who will be majoring in Accounting at a community college or a university will gain that detail when they take Intermediate accounting. For those students who are not Accounting majors, this additional coverage will add to their understanding of analyzing and monitoring costs—essential for the success of any organization. An informal inquiry was sent to the appropriate deans at the 4 year public schools in Virginia for their thoughts on whether the changes would remain to be acceptable as transfer courses. George Mason University (GMU) and several other colleges answered in the affirmative.
Ms. Gershman stated that the course revisions for ACC211 and ACC 212 were approved by the entire VCCS committee. The entire Peer Group was asked for feedback; few people responded and of the respondents, most supported the revisions. The course revisions also were shared with NOVA’s Accounting Advisory Committee.

Currently, ACC 211 and ACC 212 each may be offered in the VCCS for 3 or 4 credits, so the new course descriptions had to include the 3 or 4 credit hour option. NOVA will continue to offer the 3-credit version of ACC 211 and 212. As attractive as the increase to 4 credit hour classes may have been, the Accounting cluster decided that changing the credit hours would not be feasible for several reasons. Doing so would add to the cost of the degree for our students and would add to the number of credit hours necessary to graduate. In addition, GMU currently accepts our 6 credit hours as equivalent to their 3-credit ACCT 203 plus a 3-credit Accounting elective. Asking our students to take the sequence at NOVA for 8 credit hours that would only count as 3 credits toward a required accounting course and 5 credits toward accounting electives would be disheartening for our students as they would be limited in the other accounting classes they could complete at GMU.

The new ACC 211 will first be offered in Fall 2014 and ACC 212 in Spring 2015. A few members of the Accounting cluster are participating in pilot course development sponsored by VCCS. This ACC 211 pilot will be taught in Spring 2014.

Curriculum Committee members expressed concern about student success in the revised courses due to the additional content. Members commented that ENG 111 College Composition I has been shown as an important prerequisite and in addition that the accounting courses should not be the first courses students take. Equally important, SDV was felt to be helpful for coursework success. Notably, members widely agreed that student advising should include informing students about when they should take accounting courses. The faculty will attempt to collect student success data and, if the data indicate a need, will propose that at NOVA eligibility for ENG 111 and SDV become prerequisites for ACC 211.

A question was raised on the transferability with UVA. Presenters responded that if NOVA is teaching more versus less, this should not be a problem.

The Curriculum Committee unanimously approved the proposed revisions to ACC 211-212 Principles of Accounting I and II, to be effective Fall 2014.

MDL 277 Revisions
Mr. Andrew Cornell (Dean, MEC) requested approval to change the course title and course description of MDL 277 Clinical Immunohematology and Immunology Technique. The proposed revisions include removing serology from the course description and changing the title to Clinical Blood Banking Techniques to be more descriptive of the revised content. The advisory committee supports these changes, which reflect changes to the industry. Only NOVA and Tidewater Community College (TCC) offer this course currently, and TCC supports the revisions.

Ms. Karen Gordon (MDL, MEC) explained that since the original course description was written, many serological screening tests have become available in kit form and are performed in the core area of the laboratory rather than the blood banking department. To offset the lack of exposure to immunology methods in the clinical setting, NOVA students participate in the online Immunology virtual lab procedure through the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI).
Curriculum Committee members suggested changing the wording slightly from “deals with” to “provides training.” Presenters agreed with the proposed wording change.

The Curriculum Committee unanimously approved the revisions to the MDL 277 course title from Clinical Immunohematology and Immunology Technique to Clinical Blood Banking Techniques. The Committee also approved the proposed revisions to the course description. If they receive final approval, both changes would be effective Fall 2014. Dr. Robertson stated that the course content summary and form sent forward to the Administrative Council and Deans’ Course Review Committee will include the course description changes added at this meeting.

**Discussion Items**

**Credit for Prior Learning at NOVA:**

Dr. Robertson outlined credit for prior learning, formerly referred to as advanced standing, at NOVA. In addition to generally accepting recommendations made by the American Council on Education (ACE) regarding credits earned in non-traditional educational/training programs (military, industry, state and federal government), the College has developed a number of course-specific opportunities for credit for prior learning.

The process of determining whether credit is appropriate is termed Prior Learning Assessment (PLA). Some forms of credit for prior learning, such as AP or IB, are used by high school students. However, many students seeking credit are adults who have gained college-equivalent knowledge and skills via non-traditional experiences. Categories of credit for prior learning include: credit by exam, credit for evaluated courses/programs, credit for evaluated credentials, and credit for experiential learning. Discipline faculty evaluate prior learning and recommend credit. The Credit for Prior Learning Committee considers the request and if approved the request moves to the Curriculum Committee for consideration and approval and then on to the Administrative Council for consideration and final approval.

Recent credit additions include IT credit for Marine Corps MOS, course-specific credit for some StraighterLine courses, and course-specific credit for some Saylor.org courses. ADJ credit for graduates of the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy may come to the Committee for approval this semester.

At NOVA, students who wish to earn credit for life experiences do so through a portfolio process called PLACE = Prior Learning Activity for Credit Evaluation. The portfolio is evaluated by a faculty member and if recommended, a pass, not a letter grade, is granted for a given course. In order to convert college-level experiential learning into college credit, students must enroll in the 3-credit SDV 298 Seminar and Project PLACE Workshop and pay tuition and fees for each course being evaluated. NOVA would like to reduce the cost of the course evaluation and a proposal has been forwarded that recommends charging students a flat fee per course for portfolio evaluation.

On the faculty side, the current PLACE portfolio model pays faculty evaluators 0.1 credit. This means full-time faculty who are teaching within their workload limits receive no additional pay for evaluating a PLACE portfolio. The proposed faculty evaluation structure will cost students less and will pay every faculty evaluator a set stipend regardless of the faculty member’s salary and irrespective of the number of credits for the evaluated course.
Length of Time Students Can Graduate from a Closed Program:
The Committee discussed NOVA’s policy that allows students to graduate up to seven years after a program has been closed. Members unanimously agreed that whatever timeframe is chosen, the communication to students of that timeframe is crucial. It was considered important to collect data on past evidence before making a policy decision, but on balance, the majority of Committee members felt that the timeframe should be reduced to three or four years.