Annual Report  
Educational Policy Committee  
2012-2013

Membership: Thandi Buthelezi, Alex Butcher-Nesbitt ’15, Dolita Cathcart, Ronald Crutcher (President), Linda Eisenmann (Provost), John Kricher (Chair), Hector Medina, Felicia Stewart ’14, and Javier Trevino. Also attending were Joel Relihan (Associate Provost, non-voting) and Susan Colson ’96 (recording secretary).

The Educational Policy Committee held twenty meetings, normally one per week during each semester, in academic year 2012-2013. It also conducted business once (11 February 2013) by conference call, necessitated by inclement weather.

A primary function of the Educational Policy Committee is to consider matters such as review of newly proposed courses, review of newly proposed majors and non-majors, as well as proposed revisions of majors and non-majors. The committee also exerts oversight over the requirements of the Wheaton Curriculum and oversight over various subcommittees associated with the curriculum. During the course of the academic year the Educational Policy Committee was involved in all of these functions, each of which is detailed as it occurred in the weekly minutes of the committee (all available on the Educational Policy Committee onCourse site).

The Educational Policy Committee considered several broad elements of the Wheaton College curriculum: curriculum evaluation (some of which derives from expectations for assessment from NEASC); programmatic changes that could result from grants such as the recent Teagle Grant on “Integrative Liberal Learning”; new additions to the curriculum (and faculty), specifically the formulation of a major in Business and Management. In addition the committee reviewed its various subcommittees and focused on several issues such as curriculum evaluation and global programs that are the purview of particular subcommittees.

Another responsibility of the Educational Policy Committee is to select one of its members to serve on the Faculty Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC). This year that person was John Kricher, who also chaired the F-PPC.

Several issues and initiatives were discussed at length by the Educational Policy Committee:

• In response to last year’s work of the committee plus a survey conducted by the student members of the committee at the start of the academic year, as well as a report listing recommendations of the Curriculum Evaluation Subcommittee, the efficacy of the Connections component of the curriculum was considered. It was agreed that Connections should be revisited by the faculty and, in preparation for that discussion, a Subcommittee on
Connections (Dolita Cathcart (chair), John Kricher, and Javier Trevino) was formed late in second semester. This subcommittee met twice and reviewed the various issues that were raised concerning Connections. A decision was made to open discussion with the full faculty at the beginning of the academic year 2013-2014.

- The Subcommittee on Student-Initiated Connections, chaired by Javier Trevino, reported that in the fall semester they approved 38 petitions, of which seven were returned for revision prior to acceptance and that in the spring semester the subcommittee received 28 petitions of which five were returned for revision prior to acceptance. Thus a total of 66 student-initiated connections were accepted.

- The committee invited professors Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus and Kathy Morgan, along with Provost Eisenmann to discuss the goals and scope of the Teagle Grant on “Integrative Liberal Learning,” a project of AAC&U LEAP that involves nine liberal arts colleges including Wheaton. This grant is only in its first year and much more will follow as activities associated with it unfold.

- A major initiative of the committee was to review the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Business Major, formed during first semester and to develop the proposal for consideration by the faculty. The Educational Policy Committee met with members of the Ad Hoc Committee at a special meeting on 28 January 2013. The Educational Policy Committee strongly endorsed the Ad Hoc Committee’s proposed Business and Management major and determined a time-table in which to invite general discussion, revision, and to bring the proposed major to the faculty for a vote. The legislation was brought before the faculty at its 1 March 2013 meeting and was voted into the curriculum.

- John Kricher informed the committee that the Faculty PPC met with Associate Provost Gail Sahar who presented a proposed pilot program to offer a few selected summer courses, including one to be taught by two Wheaton faculty members as an online course, to begin this summer. The PPC was supportive of the program as a pilot program and the Educational Policy Committee agreed that the pilot program should go forward. The committee noted that prior to the program being continued in future summers, a full review by the Educational Policy Committee would be required and in the case of the online course (an experimental 298 designation), by the Wheaton faculty.

- Lisa Gavigan, Director of Career Services, was invited to join the committee for a discussion about granting credit for internships. The committee also discussed a draft report from Associate Provost Relihan (15 January 2013) on this same topic. This is a complex and important topic and as a result of the conversation the committee elected to create a Subcommittee on Credit-Bearing Internships to formulate a policy to propose to the faculty. This subcommittee, which will begin its work in the fall semester of 2013, is composed of faculty and staff with a faculty member and a staff member to act as co-chairs. The subcommittee members are: Bianca Cody-Murphy,
Lisa Gavigan, Mark Hoesly, Kathy Morgan, Laura Muller, Vereene Parnell, Raquel Ramos, Scott Shumway, and Gabriela Torres.

As is customary, many of the issues that formed the focus of this year’s deliberations will be continued in the next academic year.

The Educational Policy Committee wishes to express its sincere thanks and appreciation to Joel Relihan for his help throughout the year as well as to Susan Colson for her continuing efforts as recording secretary and record keeper extraordinaire.

John Kricher
Chair of the Educational Policy Committee