CAP meeting 2/4/16

Attending: Karen Brewer, John Eldevik, Rob Hopkins, Tara McKee, Cheryl Morgan, Steve Orvis, Steve Wu, Penny Yee

Visitors: Sharon Rivera, Stu Hirschfield, and Jim Helmer

1. The meeting began at 4:15 pm. The Committee approved the minutes of January 28, 2016.

2. Karen gave an update on the plan to have department and program chairs “opt in” for those courses that should be included in the course listing for the next four years. Chairs will be asked to indicate when a bracketed course is next offered, or list it as an occasional course.

3. Karen discussed the electronic add/drop with the Registrar. Changes will not be made until some point in the fall 2016 semester.

4. Karen brought the committee up to date about conversations with the Italian faculty about the proposed minor in Italian.

5. The Committee met with Sharon Rivera, Stu Hirschfield, and Jim Helmer to discuss the proposal for a Speaking-Intensive (SI) designation to replace the Oral-Presentation (OP) designation. Sharon spoke about the increased interest on the part of students for speaking skills. There has been a fivefold increase in demand for peer tutoring over the past 10 years. Many professors are using OCC resources. The visitors argued that, as proposed, using SI guidelines would be more effective in helping students improve their speaking skills. There was a recognition that some courses with the OP designation would not meet the guidelines for the SI designation. The Committee agreed that in order for a course to meet the guideline of having a “substantial” part of the grade devoted to speaking activities, the course should have at least 30% of the grade devoted to speaking. The visitors noted that some of the feedback required by the SI guidelines can be handled by the OCC. The Committee agreed to take the proposal to the Faculty for a vote once the Committee has had a chance to finalize the wording at its next meeting.

6. The Committee briefly discussed the data that Gordon Hewitt had shared with chairs about grade distributions. Rob pointed out that the data conflated very different kinds of courses because it included partial-credit courses as well as upper-level courses usually taken only by concentrators in many departments (and therefore often with high average grades). The Committee asked that Karen speak with Gordon about obtaining information about grades in 100-level full-credit courses by department.

7. Steve Orvis presented the diversity requirement proposal from the Working Group on Diversity in the Curriculum and the Committee discussed the
proposal at some length. The Committee agreed that the rationale should be based primarily on our educational goals. The Committee decided that the CAP would make any final approval for meeting the requirement, whether or not that included a change in the concentration. We noted that it should be stated more clearly that a department can meet the requirement in their existing courses. Steve Orvis will revise the document based on the discussion and the Committee agreed to work toward finalizing the proposal at its next meeting. Once finalized, the proposal will be shared with the Faculty together with an invitation to participate in a committee-of-the-whole discussion at a Faculty meeting in the near future, preferably in March.

8. The Committee reviewed, edited, and approved the CAP response to the Philosophy Department’s external review.

9. The Committee continued its ongoing discussion of issues with regard to the languages at Hamilton. John reported on his conversation with John Bartle and Edith Toegel, in particular about German. The Committee agreed to take up the discussion of languages again at its next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 pm.