

Quarters to Semesters Transition Team  
Meeting Notes  
September 17, 2008  
Baker Center 237

Present: Michael Adeyanju, Debra Benton, Brice Bible, Gina Calcamuggio, Tom Carpenter, George Cheripko, Shelley Conrath, Terry Conry, Craig Cornell, John Day, David Descutner, Sherry Downs, Connie Esmond-Kiger, Steve Flaherty, Tracy Leinbaugh, Ryan Lombardi, Bailey Miles, Brenda Noftz, Shelley Ruff, Tom Scanlan, Charon Smith, David Thomas, Martin Tuck, Becky Watts, Jeremy Webster, Pete Wickman, Bill Willan, Michael Williford

Descutner reviewed the summer research team's phone conference this Monday with representatives of other state universities considering the move to semesters (OSU, Wright State, Cincinnati). The hope is that all four universities will work together collaboratively and share lessons learned at various stages of the process. Descutner also reported on the deans meeting with the chairs and directors group on September 11 at which the transition to semesters was discussed constructively. Carpenter noted that the chairs of Arts and Sciences had a similarly constructive discussion about the transition earlier this month.

Leinbaugh: Faculty are not familiar with these (Q2S) documents. Can they be sent to all faculty with a note to read and pay special attention to the timeline?

**Question:** Could website send electronic notes to faculty every time new information is posted? Committee should ensure faculty know how to access the website (<http://www.ohio.edu/provost/q2s.cfm>) and should create links to the Faculty Senate, the Faculty/Staff page on the website and other sources that the faculty use. **Answer:** We will have everything posted on the provost's web page and will look to add links as well as to direct people to that location in our communications.

**Question:** Do we know that the university is financially able to bear the burden of the transition, including resources to help faculty update curriculum? **Answer:** Proposed budget for transition costs will be discussed in the near future. One part of that proposed budget is to fund a faculty member in each department or school who would manage her or his unit's curriculum conversion.

John Day led the discussion on the document "**Quarters to Semesters Conversion: Assumptions, Constraints, and Principles**"

**Assumptions:**

- 1) Overarching assumption: conversion needs to be neutral for size and structure of curriculum in balance with the resources needed to deliver the curriculum to the same number of students.

- 2) This is an opportunity to comprehensively review and revise the curriculum.
  - a. Review conversions at other schools;
  - b. Dream and create new things within the above constraints remembering that changing one variable constrains others;
  - c. Departments/schools need to coordinate curricular revisions to avoid adverse consequences to other units

**Constraints:**

- 1) Completion of transition by Fall 2012, new SIS should be in place by 2011
  - a) Current freshmen would not be impacted if they graduate in four years. Next year's class will have a senior year in semesters.
  - b) Thomas: We should add an assumption that conversion should align with the Vision Ohio Implementation Plan.
  - c) Bible: regarding timing of four schools; Cincinnati may go first by 2011; OSU can go by 2011 because their SIS is done.
  - d) **Question:** Do we know if surrounding two-year schools will also move to semesters?  
**Answer:** Williford responded that we lose students to the other state schools, as opposed to two-year schools, and among them they will not find quarters. The privates are also aligning with semesters.
  - e) **Question:** Scanlan regarding summer session. Serious consideration should be given to providing a comprehensive summer session to allow students to accelerate their degree completion.
    - i) Cornell noted there have been temporary enrollment drops during first year of semester transition at other institutions, followed by spikes in the prior summer.
      - (1) Revenue from spikes in enrollments ahead of transition should be banked to provide a financial cushion.
    - ii) Leinbaugh: Faculty should encourage summer enrollment to increase this benefit and provide flexible scheduling.
      - (1) We have not strategically approached summer to create something beneficial in the past. Summer will also be more important as a term in which to make up classes.
      - (2) Watts: Facilities needs to be included in summer sessions scheduling discussion as they use the summer for major refurbishing.
- 2) New curriculum must not disadvantage students by lengthening graduation time; a path for students must be clear and reasonable; resources must keep pace. We also need to determine a tuition rate that will make the cost of attending neutral on an annual basis.
- 3) FTE under quarters is 45; FTE under semesters is 30. Conversion ratio is therefore 3 to 2.
  - a) All curricular components will not be divisible by 3 so there will need to be a combination of course requirements along with reductions in credit hours; again one element of change affects other variables.

- 4) Weeks per year: Quarters have three 10-week segments; so to preserve the same number of annual weeks of instruction, semesters should have 15 weeks of instruction not counting any breaks. Both calendar systems remain 30 weeks. Fifteen weeks of instruction are necessary to remain neutral.
  - a) Start/end dates will need to be set.
  - b) We also need to consider if partial semester courses will be possible.
  - c) Bible affirmed that we can do a variety of week structures within SIS.
- 5) Revenue and cost neutrality mean we can't increase instructional staff. Curriculum design must be built around the same number of students with the same graduation rate using the same number of faculty providing instruction.
  - a) The USO funding formula will impact revenue streams. The formula may be based on course and degree completion rather than credit hour production. Subsidy and tuition are frozen now so it will be difficult to do an exact projection of revenue changes caused by the conversion.
  - b) Day noted that Toledo was in enrollment decline while on quarters but, following conversion, enrollment came up a little and remains steady.
  - c) Thomas: This is the place to discuss compensation for faculty to retool curriculum as part of one-time cost for conversion. **Answer:** We will add some language to the document.
- 6) Degree requirements under semesters should be equivalent to quarters. Currently, 192 hours required to graduate; a simple conversion requires a 2/3 reduction to 128 (minimum to graduate).
  - a) If you assume the standard course unit is 3 credit hours instead of 4, a student could take 15 hours per quarter (5 courses) but still have 8 hours left to reach 128. At 120 hours, students take 5 courses per semester arriving at exactly 120 to graduate. We should propose consideration of 120 credit hours as the minimum; some units with specialized certifications may require more hours.
    - i) New curriculum must be delivered with the same faculty resources. Thomas asked about retaining quality and not losing curricular components that we currently have. **Answer:** The conversion of curricular components will be required to be proportional in terms of the percentage of the number of hours to graduate. Example: If general education is 25% of curriculum under the quarter system, it would remain 25% under semesters too.
    - ii) Adeyanju suggested that an even number of credit hours per semester will be easier for students to understand and remember, and so 120 hours would be better.
    - iii) Benefits of 120 credit hour system include some flexibility in course delivery and approval of accreditation agencies.
      - (1) If the minimum is 120, it allows certain programs to add a few hours as needed without going to something unmanageable.
      - (2) Using 120 as the minimum takes some pressure off faculty workload.

- (3) Areas with more than 192 hours required currently would have proportionally more than 120, which means that 120 would be a *minimum* to graduate.
- (4) Units must consider neutrality and proportional arrangements so as not to disadvantage other units. This will need more discussion.
- 7) Uniform weekly schedule: Correction: 80 minutes should be 75.
  - a) Thomas: There are issues in various majors that will need longer blocks of weekly instruction time. There should be a variety of spans of instruction/lab time. There are two different ways to get to 40 time slots per week.
  - b) Another issue may be classroom space and a possible increase in need for large classrooms.
    - i) Units can create the faculty load they want as long as curriculum matches the load. Minnesota reduced 21,000 to 14,000 courses by repackaging its curriculum.
    - ii) Section size does not necessarily have to increase, and we should be careful about allowing the approach to be used since we have classroom size constraints. Workload is more dependent on the curriculum conversion.
  - c) Leinbaugh: Need to allow more time at local level to think about these things. Information on course revision needs to get to faculty now.
    - i) There is room in the timeline to extend the departmental time and we should look at that modification.
    - ii) If departments really get it right, the work at the college and university level may be less complicated.
      - (a) The plan is to have a representative from each department form a group of 53 to be trained on the conversion principles and work out these constraints. This group can solve many issues by having them all at one table, smoothing the way for course approval by colleges and UCC.

Descutner: Will continue this discussion at the next meeting, 8:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 24, Baker 230.