

Re-Affirmation of the REMAND SUB-COMMITTEE of the CURRICULUM COMMITTEE  
Submitted by Ed Martin – Chair, Curriculum Committee  
for discussion and vote at the October 2017 Curriculum Committee Meeting

BACKGROUND:

Curriculum Committee minutes of April 24, 2002 include "...a meeting will be scheduled shortly to discuss and determine the remand policy by which proposals by academic departments do or do not reach the Curriculum Committee of the College Council." The October 12, 2004 minutes list a motion made and carried to "have the Provost retain the right to remand curriculum items back to the department for corrections, if necessary. (Vote: 15 yeas, 1 abstention)."

At that time, remanded items were not included in the agenda (unless the submission was corrected by the department in time to be added back). After the October 12, 2004 meeting, in response to a few chairs' concern about there being no recourse to the Provost's remands, the Curriculum Committee created a "Remand Subcommittee" to be composed of 3-4 elected members and chaired by one of them. It was created to provide an additional oversight by reviewing the submission, the reasons for remand, and any department response. The Remand Subcommittee was charged with deciding that (1) the remand was appropriate and the item should remain off the agenda, or the item (as is) should be added to the agenda for consideration by the full committee. At no time did the subcommittee make a decision of approval, but simply should the item come to the full committee that semester.

The following excerpt from the college's *Middle States Self-Study of 2005-6* (Standard 1, page 3) briefly explains the process:

When proposed actions, such as new courses or programs, are seen by the Provost as not consistent with either mission or priorities, they are discussed with the department chairperson and faculty, and the College Curriculum Committee Chair and, unless the proposed action is changed or withdrawn by the department, the Provost remands it to the department with a written explanation and recommendations. The written explanation states the inconsistency with the College's mission. In 2004, the College Curriculum Committee revised this procedure. Now, when the Provost remands proposed actions to the department, the Chairperson of the College Curriculum Committee is notified and the issue is reviewed by a sub-committee of the College Curriculum Committee with the department chairperson and/or faculty.

The October 17, 2006 Curriculum Committee minutes reaffirm that the Remand Subcommittee was in operation with the election of Professor Matthew Gartner, Mr. Ali Sebro, Professor Rina Yarmish, and Professor Arthur Zeitlin (who served as its chair) as its members for the year. Since then, there has been little need to activate the subcommittee, and the practice of selecting members early in the academic year disappeared.

## PROPOSAL:

There seems to be a growing need to ensure that the subcommittee be available should it be needed and that Curriculum Committee members understand its purpose and operation. There is also a need to specify certain procedures that may have been absent from the original configuration. Since many current members of the curriculum committee were not part of the original formulation of the remand subcommittee, it makes sense to reaffirm the subcommittee at this time, and clearly delineate its purpose and process going forward. Therefore, the following is proposed:

1. We reaffirm the Curriculum Committee action of October 12, 2004 that the Provost retains the right to remand curriculum item(s) back to a department for corrections, if necessary. Such remands remove the item(s) from the upcoming agenda.
2. We further resolve that the Curriculum Committee Remand Subcommittee continue to provide (when requested) additional oversight into items that have been thus remanded as follows:
  - a. The Remand Subcommittee shall consist of 3 current members of the curriculum committee (and one alternate should a member be unable to serve) who shall be elected for a year's term at the first Curriculum Committee meeting for the upcoming year (typically in May). Members of the subcommittee shall elect a chair and be available once each during the Fall and Spring semesters (typically October and April) should the subcommittee be "activated." (Note: a subcommittee member whose own department's submission is being remanded, shall recuse him/herself from serving for that item and be replaced by the alternate.)
  - b. When "activated" by the Curriculum Committee Chair, the subcommittee shall examine the curriculum submission, the reasons for remand, and the department's response, and decide by majority vote either: (1) that the remand was appropriate and the item should remain tabled, or (2) that the item should be added back into the Curriculum Committee agenda.
3. Process:
  - a. If a Provost's remand is contested by a department chair, that chair shall immediately notify the Provost and Curriculum Committee Chair that he/she wants the matter to be reviewed by the Remand Subcommittee. (Of course, if suggested changes are made to the submission and accepted by the Provost, or the remand is accepted by the chair, there is no need to activate the subcommittee.)
  - b. Once the Curriculum Committee Chair is notified of the request, he/she will contact the subcommittee chair, provide the appropriate documentation (department submission and remand letter), and specify a deadline by which a decision is needed so as to properly prepare and distribute the agenda. The subcommittee is thus "activated." Note: Only the department chair can initiate the request to "activate" the subcommittee—there is obviously no need for the Provost or Curriculum Chair to do so on their own.
  - c. The process used by the subcommittee is determined by its chair and members, who may hold discussions face-to-face, by email, by phone or any combination thereof. They should review the documentation and may contact any persons deemed appropriate to provide additional insight or clarification (e.g., Provost or representative, Department Chair, Program Director, etc.).
  - d. The final vote (which can be by closed ballot if the subcommittee desires) should answer the question: "Is the remand appropriate"—that is, should the item(s) remain tabled? A

positive vote is simple majority—it need not be unanimous. The Subcommittee Chair shall inform the Provost and Curriculum Chair, who will, in turn, inform the appropriate Department Chair in a timely manner.

- e. Items for which the remand was deemed appropriate by the subcommittee will not appear on the agenda, nor will they be discussed at the Curriculum Committee meeting. However, they may be resubmitted the next semester for consideration without prejudice. It is hoped that the extra time will allow thoughtful and appropriate changes to the submission which will guarantee a successful result.