

**Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes  
November 29, 2022**

**Voting Members Present:** Michelle Berry, Joan Curry, Jeff Millburg, Karin Nolan, Claudia Stanescu, Jennifer Schnellmann, Joost Van Haren

**Non-voting Members Present:** Cassidy Bartlett, Molly Bolger, Carmin Chan, Abbie Sorg

**Guests Present:** Susan Miller-Cochran, Mark Stegeman, Jeremy Vetter

**Voting Members Absent:** Leslie Dennis, Amber Rice, Caleb Simmons

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Chair Joost Van Haren called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. A quorum was established with 5 voting members; two additional members arrived after the approval of the minutes.

- I. Approval of Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee meeting minutes, 10/25/2022**  
Claudia Stanescu moved to accept the meeting minutes from 10/25/2022 as submitted. Karin Nolan seconded the motion. The motion passed with 5 votes in favor.

**II. New Discussion items**

**A. General Education: Civic Knowledge and American Institutions**

**Presenter:** Susan Miller-Cochran

Representatives from the Office of General Education presented a proposed attribute that is required to ensure ABOR compliance. As the attribute's development is in early stages, the task force requested feedback in two primary areas:

- a. Is a 2-course requirement to meet the proposed attribute appropriate and reasonable?
- b. If so, should it be clarified for students which courses can satisfy all components of the attribute, and which can only satisfy some?

The Office of General Education aims to avoid complicating the curriculum as well as give students the autonomy of choice rather than establishing a set course requirement. In order to see how the current process is working with 4 attributes before a fifth is added, this may mean letting a full cohort complete the new General Education program that was established Spring 2022. This would provide an opportunity to address other factors that should be changed along with adding the new attribute, to implement all changes all at once. There is flexibility in the implementation timeline, and the attribute as proposed is not definitive.

Discussion began:

- One committee member agreed with the OGE's sentiment that it would be best to take the time to collect data, adding that it would let advisors become familiar with the current General Education program before it shifts once more.

- A committee member suggested using a credit requirement rather than a course requirement for the new attribute. For example: requiring 4 credits, which can then be split between attributes.
  - Though the committee and representatives expressed interest in this idea, it was pointed out that the courses applying towards this new attribute would likely be an existing Exploring Perspectives/Building Connections courses, which tend to be 3 units.
  - An additional member questioned whether 1-2 units would be sufficient to fulfill an attribute by ABOR's standards.
  - A third member mentioned that under previous GE systems, when one area of the requirements specify a 1-unit course, students mistakenly think that they can use 1-credit courses to satisfy other areas. Writing in a credit requirement such as this could create similar misconceptions.
- Another committee member felt it best to keep the requirements simple, as the new GE can already be complicated for students.
- In support of the 2-course requirement for the new attribute, a member stated that a course aimed to meet all of the attribute's components would be a cursory, insufficient overview.
- The same member suggested creating an interdisciplinary course that fulfills the attribute, with different instructors teaching different aspects of the same course.
- Another member felt that if students have the option to take one course or two to satisfy the same requirement, the overwhelming majority will want to complete the requirement in one course.
- A variant of the interdisciplinary course idea was proposed, wherein a required course is technically 3 credits, but then divided into three 1-credit courses, offered by individual departments.
  - A member advised caution in proceeding with this option, as it would need to be stated specifically which mini-course satisfies which aspect(s) of the attribute, to prevent students from doubling up or taking incorrect combinations of courses.

**The task force for the new GE attribute will continue to gather feedback. A presentation on the institution's progress will be made to ABOR in January 2023; an official proposal will likely begin review following this presentation, incorporating any feedback provided by ABOR.**

## **B. Audit Policy Proposal**

**Presenter:** Abbie Sorg

The Audit Policy proposal simplifies the text for student understanding and streamlines the conditions under which one may audit a course. A section has been created for how audit appears on transcripts, but the content draws from the existing policy text.

**NOTE: If implemented, instructors may approve a student's request to change from audit to credit (or vice versa) regardless of whether the student is passing the course. This information was not made explicit during the meeting, but is to be communicated at the full UGC committee meeting.**

Discussion began:

- One member explained that some individuals request to audit without being enrolled at the university. It can be uncomfortable for the instructor to say no if they don't feel like they have policy to point to.
  - Another member remarked that this example is closer to a student sitting in on a class than actually auditing the class. While they agreed that the circumstance is not ideal, it likely doesn't have a place in the audit policy to be addressed.
  - It was noted that the proposed audit policy does give greater prominence to the mandate that those applying for audit be current students, placing it with the first bullet point following "procedure."
- Another committee member felt that a conversation should be held at another time to address how to keep non-students out of the classroom.

**Claudia Stanescu moved to approve the Audit Policy proposal as drafted, and Michelle Berry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 5 votes in favor.**

### III. Continued Discussion Items

#### A. W Grade Unit Maximum

**Presenter:** Abbie Sorg

Continuing the discussion that began January 2022, the subcommittee was provided with further data regarding how many students reach the W grade unit maximum.

Between Spring 2018 and Fall 2022, 32,000 students (~80% of the student population) earned a number of W grades within the limit. Just over 200 students (~0.5%) reached the limit exactly. Around 1.5% of the student population had exceeded the limit with 19 credits, whether through petition or other special circumstances. These numbers exclude the W grades earned during Spring 2020, where there was a temporary policy change.

Discussion continued:

- One committee member felt that though the number of students who reach the limit is seemingly low, it's important to consider the select students who do need extra support; there shouldn't be punitive policies in place to restrict them.
- Another committee member requested information at a future meeting on what happens to the students who *have* hit the W limit – did they graduate, drop out, or find other work-arounds?

- The same member questioned the harm in leaving the limit in place, stating that students sometimes think withdrawing is the best option when it is not. If there were no W limit, it could enforce to students that this is what's recommended.
- Another member provided context as to why the W limit was established in the first place, demonstrating that it hadn't served its intended purpose:
  - Too many W grades can hurt a student's chance of acceptance into professional schools. However, students find work-arounds once they reach the limit, such as auditing the course.
  - It was also meant to help seat availability, so an excess of seats would not be wasted on students receiving Ws. Seat availability is not as significant an issue at this time.
- One member commented on how the current policy creates undue burden on students enrolled in summer/winter session, as they may only have a matter of days to apply for a W.
- A committee member summarized the general sentiment: the policy regulates itself, the change will not make a large impact overall, but to students who need it, it may be a saving grace.

**The Office of the Registrar will proceed with drafting the W Unit Maximum policy to remove the 18-unit cap. Subcommittee members will speak with colleagues regarding any other concerns to be addressed at the next subcommittee meeting. A proposal document will be included on the January 10, 2023 meeting agenda.**

Joost adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The next subcommittee meeting will be held on January 10, 2023.

*Respectfully submitted by Cassidy Bartlett, 12/07/2022*