

Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2023

Voting Members Present: Karin Nolan, Ally Roof, Dereka Rushbrook, Christopher Sanderson, Joost Van Haren, Jeremy Vetter

Non-voting Members Present: Cassidy Bartlett, Holly Nelson, Abbie Sorg, Alex Underwood, Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski

Voting Members Absent: Doan Goolsby, Amber Rice, Caleb Simmons, Amanda Sokan, Travis Spence

Chair Joost Van Haren called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m. A quorum was established with 6 voting members.

- I. Approval of Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee meeting minutes, 11/14/2023**
Dereka Rushbrook motioned to accept the meeting minutes from 11/14/2023. Christopher Sanderson seconded the motion. The motion passed with 6 votes in favor.

II. Discussion Items

A. Course Types & Modality

Presenter: Abbie Sorg

The committee was informed that two different proposals had been prepared; one combining the required contact hours into the Course Types policy, and one that redirects to the Credit Definitions policy for the contact hours. Additionally, the subcommittee was reminded of the interest in removing the Interactive Broadcast/Webcast modality and creating or renaming some component types to accommodate programs that don't feel the current options are all-encompassing.

Discussion began:

- One member stated that there had previously been a working group assigned to define modalities, and though the changes were not implemented, the recommendations are still available. They suggested utilizing this feedback to update the definitions.
- A member reiterated that the interactive broadcast should be removed, as most departments currently using the modality are in a live (not recorded) format.
- One representative mentioned their department's concern surrounding preceptorships: there is a large group of students serving as preceptors, but the current set-up for this course type doesn't allow for scheduling regular meetings (and as a result, having a classroom to meet in).
 - In response, one member stated that exceptions are often made to individualized study courses, including preceptorship, to allow for a meeting pattern and classroom assignment. They suggested that when the House Numbered Courses policy is updated, it could include more

information on common situations such as this that can be accommodated.

- A member asked if selecting the proposal with contact hours meant that the Credit Definitions policy would be removed. They felt it would be duplicative to have the information in both places, but removing it from the Credit Definitions policy would also be a concern because accreditors are often directed to this policy.
 - Another member clarified that the contact hours would be located in one policy or the other, not duplicated. They asked if it would be preferable to link to the Credit Definitions policy from the Course Types and Modality policy, or to link to the Course Types and Modality policy from the Credit Definitions policy.
 - Multiple members agreed that the Credit Definitions policy is very useful as-is. One member mentioned they direct students to this policy to understand credit loads.
 - Another member agreed that the contact hours overview is helpful for students, but had no preference on which of the two policies it would be located in.
- A representative noted that one institution from the Course Type benchmarking had a rehearsal component and another had a screening component. They felt these would fit the College of Fine Arts' need; large ensemble conductors currently classify rehearsals as labs or studio, and the Theatre, Film & Television department could use a screening component for its film courses.
 - One member asked how much screening time would equate to a unit of credit, since component types are the method by which instruction is given that awards students credit.
 - The College of Fine Arts representative offered to confirm with the appropriate departments how credits are awarded for screenings.
- It was explained that component types are used to schedule classes. A member asked if the main problem was setting aside sufficient time for students, and whether students must attend the in-person screening for credit (versus watching on their own remotely).
- One member wondered about creating a secondary component.
 - Another member was interested in this possibility, as their department offers courses where the contact hours are split between the University and a public school campus (for example, 3 hours at the University and 1 offsite). This is currently classified as a lecture, but the ability to add 1 hour of a clinical component could more adequately define the courses.
 - A subcommittee member added that a workshop component would also be a possibility instead of clinical. They raised the concern that for a course to receive approval, it must define how credit is spread amongst the component types. To add a secondary component, the level of effort needed through that component to award credit would have to be identified.

- Another member stated their department had various levels of fieldwork, taking students outside the University for the entirety of some classes. They suggested that assigning an existing component type like clinical or practicum for these cases would keep things tidier; each new component type created is another area that can become complicated and require further revision.
 - One representative agreed that clinical and practicum components would work for music performances, but less so for rehearsals. They advocated for adjusting the name of studio to something such as Artistic Endeavors or Creative Application, to encompass performance arts in addition to visual arts.
 - Another member stated that the studio component definition was written to be agnostic, not singling out or excluding any art style. They proposed that the Fine Arts representative speak with their college to determine what term they felt would encompass all art forms. If a new term were implemented, the policy would need to explain that the definition varies slightly from ABOR's wording.
- One representative clarified that most rehearsals are currently classified as labs, but if the studio component definition was updated, this could instead be used.
- The same representative suggested that too much emphasis is placed on credit minimums in the current policy wording. Some faculty may be reading too much into ABOR's use of the word "minimum" where it concerns awarding credit for contact hours. If an ensemble meets 4-10 hours per week, the instructor would typically award the minimum of 1 credit. To students, that would be a considerable time commitment to only receive one credit, especially if a student is in multiple ensembles.
 - Another member responded that the University had previously been working on a project for contact hour compliance, wherein a minimum and a maximum amount of credits were proposed. Only the minimum was enforced, to leave an opportunity for academic units to determine if they wanted to increase the credit awarded. Reintroducing a maximum could be difficult to do, and would become more a matter of equity than compliance. They added that calculating credits is not purely about "seat time," but about how long it takes to master the subject that would equate to the academic unit.
- One member stated that their program had pared its credit requirements down from 145 to 125 credits. This was done by reducing 3-credit classes to 1 credit. Even though time commitments were also reduced accordingly, the member still felt it was unfair to students to truncate that information into smaller classes. They wondered how departments could be sure to equitably assign the correct number of units.
 - Another member agreed this was an important conversation to be had, but that the policy wording alone couldn't fix it. Courses would likely need to be re-evaluated to determine if the amount of credits assigned were matched to the required workload.

- One member mentioned that the current definition of Hybrid includes a combination of In-Person and Fully Online, but should also include In-Person and Live Online.
 - Others agreed that all modality definitions should be refreshed.
 - Multiple members also agreed that Fully Online should be changed to Asynchronous Online, to further distinguish it from Live Online.
 - One member suggested removing the alternate name of “Flex In-Person” from Hybrid, as the term was coined during the pandemic to explain how things were changing.

The subcommittee agreed for the Office of the Registrar to move forward with the proposal draft that links to contact hours. Some updates to make to the proposal will include updating the modality definitions and removing the Interactive Broadcast modality and reference to Flex In-Person. The College of Fine Arts representative agreed to confer with their department about a suitable component name for studio to suit their needs. Discussion will resume at a future subcommittee meeting.

B. Academic Distinction, Dean’s List, Honors and Awards

Presenters: Joost Van Haren

The committee was informed that the deans and associate deans had not yet been consulted regarding changes to the distinction policy. Though the deans’ input would be involved in shaping the policy, the subcommittee was encouraged to identify a way forward which could then be recommended to the deans.

Discussion Began:

- Regarding a line of the proposed policy directing students to their advisors for questions about honors, a representative explained that not every advisor would be the right referral for this policy, and would end up redirecting students elsewhere (such as to the dean’s office).
- The same member asked whether the Office of the Registrar was responsible for determining award eligibility.
 - It was clarified that the Office of the Registrar generates the lists of eligible students and disseminates them to the respective deans’ offices.
 - The member responded that in this case, the director of advising would be a better resource, as they tend to work with the dean’s office more than a typical advisor.
- Another member stated that the line directing students to advisors should be removed, as the list is functionally created by the Office of the Registrar, and the various colleges choose whether to present a physical award.
 - One subcommittee member clarified that this line was added due to students contact the Office of the Registrar about obtaining honors

- ords, which are bestowed by their primary college. They added that part of this confusion stems from the fact that “honors” in the policy can refer to term honors, annual honors, or graduation with honors.
- Another member suggested remedying this confusion by creating separate categories within the policy.
 - One member reminded others of the last meeting’s discussion around retitling the section called “University Academic Honors,” which misleads students into thinking they can be part of the Honors College convocation for achieving one of the academic recognitions in the policy.
 - Another member pointed out that some of this confusion will be inevitable; for example, if colleges refer to honors cords, the policy would need to use that same terminology.

The Office of the Registrar will remove the line directing students to their advisors for questions regarding academic honors, and rephrase where possible to avoid the confusion surrounding the multiple meanings of “honors”. Discussion will resume at the January subcommittee meeting.

C. Change of Major or College; Bachelor’s Degree Candidacy & Related Information
Presenters: Abbie Sorg

The subcommittee was reminded of the feedback from the advising community that the current practice does not match the written procedure; students are incorrectly directed to obtain permission from the dean to change majors. Additionally, information in the policy about declaring a second major may be more applicable in the Bachelor’s Degree Candidacy policy, which covers related topics like obtaining a second bachelor’s degree.

Discussion began:

- One member explained that with the new Activity Informed Budgeting (AIB) model, there is greater importance on how the primary program is defined, and this would be something to consider addressing in the policy to prevent staff from adjusting a student’s primary college (which would allocate more tuition dollars toward that particular academic unit). The member suggested that the first major declared be the primary.
- One member questioned the need to determine a student’s primary college.
 - It was explained that the primary college is how the AIB determines a headcount for a department, and therefore allocation of tuition dollars. This used to be split between double majors, but now only goes to the primary.
 - A member mentioned that while this would create an advantage for the first major declared, it would disadvantage any subsequent program the student declared.
 - A second member agreed, stating that retaining a primary college rather than splitting it evenly would lead to attempts to “game the system”. They

questioned what would happen if no primary were selected; would AIB adjust accordingly?

- A subcommittee member asked if outside of the headcount, there was an academic or intellectual justification for designating a primary major.
- A member agreed to confirm with the Budgeting Office, but tentatively determined that all declarations made by a student would be treated equally, splitting the tuition based off of how many majors and degrees the student is enrolled in. With this in mind, they posed whether a primary program is necessary to specify, saying this should be a topic of conversation at a future meeting.
 - Another member added that establishing a primary may be for the sake of determining which program a student graduates from.

The Office of the Registrar will gather insight from the Budget office regarding splitting majors rather than declaring a primary major. Discussion will resume at a future subcommittee meeting.

D. General Education: Guiding Principle on Course Levels and Accessibility to All University Students

Presented by: Jeremy Vetter

The committee was briefed on updates made to the guiding principle: information on pre-requisites had been further clarified and 400-level GE courses could not be co-convened with graduate courses. This is because GE coursework should generally be suited for students with no prior coursework in a particular field of study, which would be difficult to accomplish in a course also for graduate students.

UWGEC sought feedback from the subcommittee on whether this guiding principle should become codified policy or remain a guideline.

Discussion began:

- A member stated that if the guiding principle became a policy, it would need to be reframed either within the course approvals process as a sub-policy, or become more student-focused within the General Education curriculum policy. They cautioned that if it became policy, it would need approval from faculty governance every time it was revised, which would take a significant amount of time.
- Another member wondered about implications related to student enrollment and credit hours. Because graduate students bring in more revenue to the University, it may be the case that co-convened courses help off-set costs.
 - One member countered that because nothing below a 400-level course can be co-convened, and there were so few 400-level General Education courses, the financial impact shouldn't be significant.
 - Others felt it may be worth checking with the various colleges to determine that the impact indeed wouldn't be significant.

- A member expressed that the current wording of pre-requisite language, requiring the completion of a foundations math requirement rather than a specific math course(s), would be difficult to enforce from a systems perspective.
- In defense of keeping 400-level (non co-convened) General Education courses, one member stated that there are times when a student needs both upper-division coursework and general education courses, and this is a helpful way to obtain both simultaneously.

Due to time constraints, the conversation ended; the UWGEC chair was invited to bring the proposal for further discussion at the next meeting if more feedback is desired or the committee is interested in codifying the guideline as a policy.

The meeting was officially adjourned at 5:06 PM. The next subcommittee meeting will be held on January 23, 2024.

Respectfully submitted by Cassidy Bartlett, 01/04/24