

Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2024

Voting Members Present: Karin Nolan, Amber Rice, Ally Roof, Christopher Sanderson, Caleb Simmons, Amanda Sokan, Travis Spence, Joost Van Haren, Jeremy Vetter

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

Voting Members Absent: Doan Goolsby, Dereka Rushbrook

Chair Joost Van Haren called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. A quorum was established with 7 voting members. Two additional members joined after the meeting was called to order.

I. Approval of Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee meeting minutes, 1/23/2024

Christopher Sanderson motioned to accept the meeting minutes from 1/23/2024. Karin Nolan seconded the motion. The motion passed with 7 votes in favor.

II. Discussion Items

A. Undergraduate Dean's List, Honors and Awards

Presenter: Joost Van Haren

The subcommittee was reminded of previously discussed changes to improve equity across the student population:

- Full-time dean's list requirements have been reduced to 12.
- A half-time dean's list was created (with a required minimum of 6 units).
- Honorable mention has been removed (no longer needed due to reduced full-time requirements).
- Academic distinction has been removed, as it can be difficult to classify a student as full or part-time across multiple terms.
- Refer to graduation with academic distinction as Latin honors instead.
- Update language to be student friendly.

Discussion began:

- One member shared that faculty and advisors in their department were initially surprised by the proposed removal of academic distinction, but were indifferent once given an explanation.
- The same member asked if given the reduced use of the word "honors" in the policy, if individual schools would still refer to their ceremonies as honors convocations. They requested clear instructions for those who organize the ceremonies.
- Another member received favorable feedback from their department regarding the dissolution of academic distinction.

- A member stated that their department annually recognized academic distinction within the college, calling it an honors convocation.
 - Another member responded that this was a procedural matter, rather than related to policy.
 - The first member agreed that it did not require a policy change, only communication to departments to address confusion in response to the policy change.
- A member asked for updates regarding the discussion to include S/P/F grades in the dean's list calculation. They felt that courses taken for Optional P/F grading should not be eligible for the dean's list, only courses exclusively with a S/P/F grading basis.
- One member, whose departmental programs involve a semester of S/P/F courses only, stated that their school does award recognition for outstanding student teaching (though this honor is not on the transcript as with the dean's list).
- The same member continued that currently, the majority of instructors teaching S/P/F courses in their department don't utilize the S. They are reluctant to begin doing so, and foresee students submitting grade appeals to raise a P to an S (in the event that S grades are eligible for the dean's list).
- Members were indifferent to the inclusion of S/P/F grades in the dean's list. It was mentioned that not including S/P/F could be seen as discouraging experiential learning courses.
- One added that the reduced threshold for full-time dean's list still enables students to take a (S)/P/F course and still qualify as long as they have 12 credits of regular grades.

Ally Roof moved to approve the updated policy, and Caleb Simmons seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 9 votes in favor.

B. Course Types

Presenters: Joost Van Haren

The subcommittee was reminded of previously discussed changes to expand the policy to include all course types. They were then informed that one member had met with a college to discuss their needs for course types outside the current proposed model. The college requested the creation of an experiential learning course type, to encompass areas including productions, rehearsals, field experiences, and screenings. Because the University encourages experiential learning, the representative felt this label could be beneficial.

Discussion began:

- One member brought up that many ensembles are currently assigned a workshop course type. These ensembles could either be reclassified under experiential

learning, or its definition could be adjusted to remove references to “small groups” (in which case it could still be used for ensembles).

- Another subcommittee member stated that course types are all connected to ABOR definitions utilized to determine how credit is awarded, as contact hours and individualized study time vary across course type. If a new course type were created for experiential learning, it would need to be associated to ABOR’s definitions. Creating a category as a catch-all would have a wildly different division of how much credit is associated with each course. For example, rehearsals might warrant more credit than screenings.
- One member explained it’s difficult for programs that heavily rely on solo and ensemble rehearsals to find an appropriate balance for coursework credit hours that both complies with ABOR credit hour policy and keeps the program total units near the standard 120 units for a Bachelor’s degree. Current practice relies on scheduling courses beyond the minimum hours required for a unit of credit, leading students in these programs to receive less total credit for the number of hours they are putting into their coursework compared with students in other programs.
- One member noted the call-out on ABOR definitions for the National Association of Schools of Music. It was asked if NASM’s requirements need to be reviewed to confirm that UA practice is in alignment with NASM.
 - Another member responded that this would be difficult to comply with, as credits were recently reduced from 145 to 125 to comply with ABOR.
- One member asked what the difference would be between a workshop and the proposed experiential learning course type.
 - It was clarified that experiential learning would ideally include field experiences to account for education programs that require experiences outside of the institution, which is seemingly not included in a workshop. However, updating the definition of workshop was also a workable solution.
- One member mentioned that though the definitions seem clear, it’s unclear how closely courses need to adhere to those labels.
 - Another agreed, stating that courses oftentimes cover more than what is addressed in a single course type. For this purpose, they recommended an experiential learning course type encompass combination learning methods.
 - A separate member stated that in their experience, designating these combination course types as practicums successfully communicates to students an expectation for spending X amount of hours teaching in a classroom.
 - A third member expressed that the current definition for practicum refers to an individual basis, which deters their program from classifying courses as practicum when they meet in a group setting. They requested loosening the language to apply to more situations.
- In response, a member stated that these experiential courses could fit within workshop and/or laboratory with some minimal updates to the descriptive language.

- A member asked whether the definitions should be simplified to leave interpretation up to individual departments.
 - Another mentioned specifically loosening the language for workshops and laboratories to include experiential learning.
- One member noted that ABOR defines credit, but not how a course type should look. They asked if that was defined separately.
 - Another member responded that the descriptions currently used were pulled from the University-Wide House Numbered Courses policy, which could be adjusted.
- A member asked whether the University-Wide House Numbered Courses policy should be reviewed simultaneously, or even combined with, the Course Types policy.
- One member asked if the course type definitions should be simplified, or if there should be multiple house numbers to account for variations of the same course type. For example; there could be two varieties of workshop, one for large groups and one for small groups. Alternatively, size could have no bearing on the workshop course number if the description was simplified.
 - Other members felt this would be a lot to ask of the individual colleges to adhere to additional course numbering structure.
- A subcommittee member asked if course types could be combined for a single course.
 - Another member answered that they could, and this was often the case with lecture and discussion course types. If the course will be consistently doing 1+ credit of each course type.
- A member noted that ABOR has a provision for off-campus courses.
 - One member felt that because a large amount of coursework occurs online, it was important to keep physical location separate from course type.
- A subcommittee member mentioned that while leaving the language loose is helpful for faculty, providing as much clarity as possible is helpful for students and advisors.
- A member expressed interest in adding “experiential learning” to the description for workshop or lab.
 - Another member agreed that this would solve some class designation issues, adding they were unsure whether adding it to lab or workshop would be more suitable. Rehearsals are nearer to the classification of workshop, while screenings are closer to labs (based on the field trip element). For this reason, they requested adding “field trips” to the description for lab or workshop.
- The subcommittee was asked whether it would be helpful to add another column to the table to give examples of how the course type could look in different disciplines.
 - One member thought this could be helpful, but could potentially dissuade individuals designing new courses if they don’t see theirs represented.
 - Another mentioned that their department schedules nearly all its courses as "lecture" even when using discussion, experiential learning, etc. just for

ease of scheduling. The current definition in this table is excellent for that since it is open and permissive.

- A third member stated that their department didn't use lab because the definition didn't resemble the courses. If examples are added, they should be made more vague OR add in language to encompass other groups.
- One member suggested updating the definition to the following: "Lab: Supervised laboratory, field experimentation, experiential learning or observation, incorporating practical experience" and "Workshop: The practical application of theoretical learning involving an exchange of ideas and practical methods, skills, and principles, or experiential learning."
- One member reminded the committee that the course types would never be fully comprehensive, and it would be best to avoid a lengthy policy.
- A member felt the definition of practicum did not need to be changed.
 - There was some disagreement among members regarding whether a practicum was for students to learn as a cohort or individually.
 - Because of this, a member requested adding "and possibly individualized" to the end of the definition for practicum.
 - A member noted that practicum is included in the definition for individual studies, but also has its own definition on the following line. They asked that the updated policy remove one of the references to practicum for clarity's sake.
 - Another member relayed that the University did not previously have practicum, so it was lumped into individual studies. Now that practicum is its own course type, it can be removed from individual studies.

The subcommittee agreed for the Office of the Registrar to update the proposal with simplified course type descriptions to encompass experiential learning in workshops and/or labs, remove language about small groups from workshop, and remove language about individual basis from practicum. Discussion will resume at a future subcommittee meeting.

C. American Institutions and Civic Learning

Presenter: Jeremy Vetter

The subcommittee was briefed on the background of the need for the new attribute:

- The most recent addition to ABOR's general education policy is the addition of the American Institutions requirement.
- Learning outcomes were developed by a small working group to meet the 7 aspects the American Institutions should cover. Based on those learning outcomes, potential models to meet these requirements were workshopped, as well as ways for faculty to implement the information in existing courses.
- UWGEC has narrowed down 5 potential models for meeting the requirement:
 1. 2-Course Model (Breadth & Depth): students enroll in one course that addresses all 7 learning outcomes and one course that goes into depth in one area.

2. 2-Course Model (A & B): the 7 requirements are divided into two categories (each with 3-4 requirements); students enroll in one course from each category. However, faculty feedback indicates mixed feelings about how the 7 requirements should be divided.
 3. 1-Course Model: students enroll in one course that addresses all 7 learning outcomes. This model has the least effect on the overall structure of general education curriculum.
 4. Sub-Attribute Model: The 7 requirements (altogether or in clusters) are tracked through different courses; the set-up would likely be complicated.
 5. Foundations Model: Students are required to enroll in an American Institutions foundations course. This model would increase the total required units of general education, which is potentially problematic for select colleges that do not have room to increase their graduation requirement.
- There has been concern raised by some about the American-centric quality of this attribute. One potential solution could be to require students take 2 courses with the World Cultures and Societies attribute (instead of just one course).
 - Currently, students must take 7 Exploring Perspectives and Building Connections courses, and they must obtain 7 attributes in this coursework: 2 for Diversity and Equity, Writing, and Quantitative Reasoning, and 1 for World Cultures and Societies. Adding another attribute means that students will need to take at least one course that meets 2 attributes. However, this is a common quality for general education courses.
 - It will be necessary to look in depth at what's covered in AP exams for U.S. History, American Government, and Economics, and what their equivalent University courses would be.
 - There is interest in adding a civic engagement practicum focusing on topics including debate, op-ed writing, journalism, and policy. Though some advocate for this to be required, others feel it should merely be encouraged. There is speculation that ABOR would prefer this course not be required.
 - One concern is how to make this American-centric attribute relevant to international students and teachable in a global campus setting. The content should fit with student experiences.

Discussion began:

- One member asked whether the General Education Attribute policy would need to be updated again to reflect this new attribute, as the policy was reviewed the previous term.
 - The UWGEC representative confirmed this was the case; the policy was recently amended to go into effect in 2026 partially to allow more time for the development of the American Institutions attribute, as well as to track how many of the existing attributes students met over the course of 4 years while they were not required. If students barely meet the proposed requirement, it would imply that adding an additional requirement would

be problematic. If students exceed the proposed requirement, the prospect of adding another requirement is more promising.

- Another member asked if any existing courses would satisfy the proposed attribute.
 - The UWGEC representative noted that this couldn't be confirmed as the proposal was not yet an attribute. They estimated based on faculty feedback that there are currently 8-10 courses that would fit the breadth (comprehensive) course attribute, and just as many courses that could be adapted to fit the attribute. However, for depth courses, there are several existing possibilities.
- To allow ample time for new course submission and review, it is recommended that the new attribute be published in policy no later than the middle of the upcoming Fall 2024 term.

Due to time constraints, the conversation ended; discussion will resume at the next subcommittee meeting.

The meeting was officially adjourned at 4:59 PM. The next subcommittee meeting will be held on March 26, 2024.

Updated by Cassidy Bartlett, 03/29/24