

**Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**  
**March 26, 2024**

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

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

**Voting Members Absent:** Doan Goolsby, Caleb Simmons

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Chair Joost Van Haren called the meeting to order at 3:33 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, 2/27/2024**

Amanda Sokan motioned to accept the meeting minutes from 2/27/2024 with the suggested updates. Karin Nolan seconded the motion. The motion passed with 7 votes in favor.

**II. Action Items**

**A. Course Types**

**Presenter:** Joost Van Haren

The course type definitions had been updated based on feedback from the previous subcommittee meeting to remove some of the specific language that excluded courses, such as the class size. This could open course types for more interpretations/use.

Discussion began:

- One member shared that faculty at the College of Fine Arts want to see a course label such as rehearsal with a description that the course would be in alignment with NASM's (the National Accreditation for Schools of Music) specifications. This note exists on the ABOR policy, but not within the University's policy. Faculty are concerned about using workshop and lab designations for rehearsals due to how those credit hours would be defined.
  - Another member questioned how rehearsal would be defined, as the course type is what dictates how credit is awarded.
  - It was explained that it's widely accepted across institutions for ensembles to count as a single credit despite meeting for 6-8 contact hours per week (plus some possible outside of class time to prepare for performances). As this exceeds ABOR's credit designations, faculty has concerns that if meeting hours are reduced, the University would be disadvantaged compared to peer institutions. Adding a call-out would clarify that the University is in

alignment with NASM. Leaving the information simple (rather than including the requirements) will keep the policy evergreen if the NASM policy is updated.

- One member suggested replicating the NASM call-out currently in the ABOR policy, but not creating a new course type.
  - It was clarified that the primary concern from the schools in the College of Fine Arts was being locked into a course type for which their classes wouldn't meet the contact hours/credit requirements.
  - One member suggested decoupling the course definitions from contact minute compliance, as the content is kept in separate policies.
  - There will need to be continued coordination with the School of Music to ensure that NASM standards and University policy align correctly for their coursework.
- The School of Music faculty believed there had once been a course designation for ensembles. Rather than alter an existing course type description to absorb music's needs, they requested bringing back an ensemble course designation.
    - It was questioned whether the University had previously had an ensemble course type. The office of the registrar representatives confirmed that there had not been an ensemble course type within the past 20 years, and agreed to research whether it had ever been a course type.
  - A member asked if the NASM call-out would offer the most support in the House-Numbered Courses policy or the Credit Definitions policy, where the actual contact hours are listed.
    - The College of Fine Arts representative felt the note was most pertinent with information on credit requirements.
    - Referring to the benchmarking, one member noted a peer institution's definition of rehearsal referred to "the extensive preparation for public performance". Based on this, they asked whether rehearsal could fall within the definition of practicum.
    - Another countered that the course description should include the word "ensemble" to indicate to performing arts faculty which course type to use.
  - A member suggested "creative endeavors" be added to the description for Studio rather than Workshop or Lab, since Studio is the course type in ABOR's policy with a call-out for NASM.
    - The subcommittee was reminded that the original goal of the course type descriptions was to generalize for individual departmental interpretation, rather than to use specific wording.
    - Two other members advocated that "rehearsal" would be more encompassing a term to add than ensemble.

- The subcommittee was cautioned that the Studio course type has a more stringent contact hour requirement of 30 hours, whereas workshops offer more flexibility.
- One member brought forward the concern that too many modifications to course types could cause upheaval for departments to reclassify several existing courses.
- A separate concern about studio course types was relayed; the School of Music's studios grant 4 units and involve private lessons with an instructor for an hour per week. However, these courses often involve ~6 hours of personal practice time per day. This is in alignment with NASM standards, but has been called out by administration for insufficient contact hours and/or excessive homework hours for the allotted credit.
- When asked whether all ensembles are assigned the same course number, a member clarified that the course number was MUS 400 followed by a letter of the alphabet to designate the type of ensemble. The term ensemble does not appear in the course title, but the numbering is used consistently within the College of Fine Arts.
  - One member expressed that having a house number for ensemble defined in policy would assist non-COFA advisors in recognizing ensemble courses and preparing students for the work involved.
- Members discussed how to revise the studio definition to include rehearsal.
  - One member reminded that the language should not require rehearsal, as it may not be applicable to all studios. Another member agreed that such language may deter select programs from assigning the course type.
  - It was noted that the studio definition currently refers to creative and artistic endeavors, and questioned whether both terms are needed. Another member pointed out that programs such as Architecture have studios and may not consider them artistic.
  - One representative suggested the following: "Supervised creative instruction either individually or in groups incorporating practical experiences, artistic endeavors, and/or rehearsals. \*Note: Music instruction and specialized types of music performance offerings must conform to the requirement for accreditation of the National Association of Schools of Music."
  - The COFA representative agreed to check in with faculty from their college for approval of the new definition.
- The discussion continued about whom to consult on policy language; CAPLA (the College of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture) should be given a chance to review the studio definition, and the clinical definition should be reviewed by the Colleges of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.

**The committee decided to postpone a vote to gather feedback from CAPLA, Medicine, Vet Medicine, and Fine Arts. Discussion will resume at the April subcommittee meeting.**

### **III. Discussion Items**

#### **B. Bachelor's Degree Requirements, Multiple Majors and Degrees**

**Presenters:** Abbie Sorg

The subcommittee was reminded that while reviewing the Change of Major policy in recent months, a suggested update had been to relocate the information on multiple majors. The Bachelor's Degree Candidacy policy has information on sequential and concurrent degrees, and as students don't always understand the difference between majors and degrees, it is beneficial to house all three definitions together. The information has been pared down to a table.

The differing requirements for concurrent versus sequential degrees should be reviewed to determine if they are still warranted. A student finishing two degrees concurrently must complete 120 units and meet all major, minor, and general education requirements for both programs. However, students earning sequential degrees must meet those same requirements and an additional 30 units. They also cannot complete more than 50% of the second degree by the first degree is completed.

#### Discussion began:

- One member stated that advisors would be inclined to tell a student pursuing two degrees and nearing completion of one degree to wait and attain the degrees concurrently, so they wouldn't be penalized with an extra 30 units. For this reason, they suggested the requirements should be made more equal.
  - Another member confirmed that student data indicates students in this situation are often delaying graduation to fall under the more liberal concurrent degree option. However, this incentivizes unwanted behavior, as a student could experience a life event that forces them to leave the institution before graduating with either degree.
- Regarding the removal much original policy language, it was clarified that because this information was procedural rather than related to policy, it would be relocated and linked to within the policy.
- Members requested data on how many students earn sequential or concurrent degrees, as well as how many students leave the institution prior to completion of either dual degree type.
- One member asked if the extra 30 credits needed for a sequential degree could be required for accreditation.
- Members questioned the intent of the policy at the time it was created.

- Another member wondered if the extra 30 credits were required to compensate for students double dipping coursework across degrees.
- It was questioned whether boundaries could be set to require students earning sequential degrees to take additional units if a certain amount of time had passed.
- Speculation from a different member was that the extra 30 units are required from an integrity standpoint, so the University does not become a “diploma mill”.
- Another member noted that the University might view students who leave the institution and return differently than those who remain enrolled. The current policy may be warranted if it encourages continuous enrollment.
- The idea that students are likely too overwhelmed for concurrent degrees was brought up.
- One member mentioned that if some programs are more affected (for offering more dual degrees, etc.), their graduation numbers could be impacted by students delaying graduation to earn concurrent degrees.

**The subcommittee requested that the Office of the Registrar gather data on students who have earned sequential and concurrent degrees or dropped out during that time, prepare benchmarking on peer institutions’ policy, and investigate the original intent of the extra 30 units for sequential degrees. Discussion will resume at a future subcommittee meeting.**

### **C. American Institutions and Civic Learning**

**Presenter:** Jeremy Vetter

The committee was reminded of the goal to have language drafted for review by fall 2024, but that more feedback was required.

The final model may be a combination of 2 or more current proposed models, or something new entirely. One suggestion from a faculty forum had been to combine the foundations and attributes model. However, this adds additional credit to the GE curriculum. This would result in additional graduation credit requirements for programs that can’t accommodate any more units.

A separate suggestion that had originated in the subcommittee involved the implementation of three 1-unit courses to satisfy the requirement. Though still a candidate, it’s unlikely as general education courses aren’t currently permitted to have less than 3 units.

#### Discussion began:

- When asked whether a committee was reviewing feedback from the faculty forums, the representative confirmed the Office of General Education was still

consolidating all feedback. A summary of the feedback would be provided at a future meeting.

- One member felt that the one course option and the 2 course (Breadth and Depth) option would be the most complicated with trying to fit all the information into one course. They added many students would avoid such a course.
- It was relayed that faculty is concerned about offering these courses without the budget or resources to do so. Some programs are already reluctant to add GE courses because they detract from other areas, and this has been further impacted by the redesigning of the budget model. Depending on the new budget model, there may be greater incentive for faculty to offer Civic Learning GE courses.

**The committee was asked to discuss the models with their colleges; the representative will provide a summary of faculty feedback when discussion resumes at a future subcommittee meeting.**

The meeting was officially adjourned at 5:00 PM. The next subcommittee meeting will be held on April 23, 2024.

*Respectfully submitted by Cassidy Bartlett, 04/05/2024*