**Undergraduate Council Meeting Minutes**

**December 3rd, 2024**

**Voting members present**: Allison Lee, Melissa Goldsmith, Amanda Sokan, Karin Nolan, Lisa Rezende, Joost Van Haren, Jeremy Vetter, Travis Spence, Dereka Rushbrook, Moe Momayez, Jennifer Schnellmann, Christopher Sanderson, Marie Wallace, Christopher Domin, John Leafgren, Dana Lema, Michael McKisson, Allyson Roof.

**Non-voting members present**: Greg Heileman, Kian Alavy, Alex Underwood, Cassidy Bartlett, Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski, Melanie Madden.

1. **Lisa Rezende called meeting to order at 3:35 pm.**
2. **Approval of Minutes from the**[**UGC Meeting on November 5, 2024**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2024-11/UGC-November-2024-minutes_1.docx)**– Lisa Rezende, Acting Co-chair**
   1. Christopher Domin motioned to approve. Michael McKisson seconded. Motion carried unanimously
3. **Reports:**
   1. **Academic Affairs Report – Greg Heileman, Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education**
      1. Changes to the transfer policies, streamlining compliance with ABOR (Arizona Board of Regents), and other adjustments have passed. We've seen a decrease in transfer students. Previously, the number was around 1,700, but it's now closer to 1,100.

Our transfer numbers from community colleges have been declining over the past few years. We've assembled an ad hoc task force, as requested by the Provost, to examine second language requirements broadly. Alex, Susan Miller-Cochran, and I are working with this group to develop a recommendation that will come to this committee.

We conducted a peer set comparison with ABOR peers and in-state peers. None of them have a second language requirement as part of General Education, though many have it as a college-level requirement. In a recent meeting, we polled the group, and most were in favor of creating college-level requirements for second language proficiency. The reason for this is tied to ABOR policy: if a student completes the AGEC, it satisfies General Education requirements regardless of our internal policies. Moving the second language requirement to the college level would allow us to maintain it while aligning with ABOR policies.

At our February ABOR meeting, we’ll have three new programs coming forward from this group, all at the graduate level. This isn’t a large number, and we speculated about the reasons behind this. While there are numerous certificates, minors, and program changes, there aren’t many new degree program proposals currently.

Additionally, we’re working with Sharon on a project involving Associate Deans. If you know others who might want to participate, let us know. We've identified students who are 70% through their degree requirements and could potentially graduate this year. We've shared these lists with the colleges and plan to make a concerted effort during the spring term to help these students cross the finish line. This initiative aims to improve our 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rates. In total, we’ve identified nearly 7,000 "near-completers," and we’re committed to doing everything we can to support their success this year.

* 1. **Arizona Online Report – Caleb Simmons, Executive Director for Online Education**
     1. No update
  2. **Distance, Continuing Education Report – Bonnie Taylor, Director of Outreach and Business Affairs and Aviva Doery, Assistant Director, Administrative Support and Strategy**
     1. No update
  3. **Registrar’s Report – Alex Underwood, University Registrar**
     1. It’s almost Reading Day, which means finals are just around the corner—and you’ll soon be receiving a message from our office reminding everyone about the importance of grades. This year’s academic calendar runs unusually late, with finals ending as late as December 21. This is one of the latest final periods we’ll have for a while due to how the calendar aligns.

Because of the late fall term, we’ve decided to run academic eligibility checks for undergraduate students after the start of the new year. While we’ll still follow up with faculty members who haven’t submitted grades, we want to avoid doing this during the holiday period. Eligibility processing will occur on January 2, when we return from the winter break.

I’d like to thank Sharon and the advising community in advance for their outreach efforts with students who are deemed academically ineligible, assisting them with appeals to return for the spring semester.

Speaking of spring, registration is underway! As of this morning, 32,754 undergraduate students are enrolled for Spring 2025, which is exciting. We expect those numbers to continue increasing in the coming weeks.

Looking ahead to Summer and Fall 2025, the priority scheduling deadline for rooms, common finals, and related assignments was yesterday. This week, our team is assigning classrooms and plans to release the assignments next week. We’ll also begin "resolution weeks," during which academic departments can meet one-on-one with the RCS staff to address unmet classroom needs. These meetings will allow for real-time swaps and adjustments, making the process more collaborative than just email exchanges. Resolution weeks will run through December 20, just before closure. We’re excited about the upcoming spring term and want to remind everyone to stay on top of grades as we wrap up the semester.

* 1. **Advising Resource Center/ Advising Community Report – Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski, Assistant Vice Provost, Academic Advising**
     1. Update for the Advising Resource Center (ARC) and the A Center: November is a very busy time with registration, as we just heard from the registrar. This keeps advisors busy meeting with students and helping them navigate their schedules.

This year, I’ve had a few students come to me expressing dissatisfaction with the number of online versus in-person seats available. I spent some time addressing these concerns and was almost late to this meeting due to working with one of these students. While seat availability adjusts with adds and drops, the process can be frustrating for students. It was encouraging to see the technology in place that allows students to join waitlists in UAccess and get notified when a seat becomes available, making it easier for them to register.

However, this isn’t the first year I’ve heard these concerns, and the feedback seems to be increasing. Many students—especially those in the "COVID cohort" now entering college—express a strong preference for in-person classes over online options. It might be worth exploring this trend further through a study to understand what’s driving this shift.

Looking ahead, in December we will hold an end-of-year check-in for all advisors on campus. The ARC has scheduled this event for December 19, from 10:00 AM to 1:30 PM. The agenda will include updates on policy changes, such as the adjusted dates for academic eligibility, as well as a chance to reflect on the year and thank advisors for their hard work. There will also be food and activities to make it a celebratory event.

This year, we introduced a new tool for advisors. The Strategic Advising Dashboard was replaced by Advising Central, developed through UAIR. The rollout occurred in October, and we’ve scheduled workshops for February to provide additional support. These workshops will be tailored to different advising roles: frontline advisors, advising directors, and those working on retention and data for colleges.

The workshops will be held as Wednesday lunch-and-learn sessions, and participants can attend the entire series or select the sessions most relevant to their needs. We’ll share more details and dates soon, and attendance will be open to the broader advising community and others interested in learning about the tool.

* 1. **University-wide General Education Committee Report – Jeremy Vetter, UWGEC Chair**
     1. We had a productive meeting with the Academic Advising Council and an important Faculty Senate special session on General Education (Gen Ed). The session covered a wide range of topics, with civic learning taking center stage. It became clear that many Faculty Senate members are deeply engaged with Gen Ed issues, which will influence how we address civic learning moving forward.

Civic learning remains the one outstanding ABOR-mandated requirement that has not been fully incorporated into the Gen Ed curriculum. While some courses align with the requirement, others still need development. Although we initially planned to move quickly, we’ve had to adjust the timeline. The Civic Learning and Civic Knowledge Advisory Group extended its input period to allow for additional feedback, which closed on November 15. At the most recent meeting, Ryan Winet from the Office of General Education presented a preliminary report summarizing the feedback. The key issues include ensuring compliance with ABOR’s seven required areas for civic learning, incorporating diverse disciplines, and preserving student autonomy within the Gen Ed program. There is also a desire to scaffold civic learning across courses, minimize disruptions to the recently updated curriculum, and ensure the approach is easy to assess.

The committee is considering several models for implementing civic learning. These models vary in the number of courses required and where the requirement would be placed within the Gen Ed curriculum. A single-course model, which enjoys the most support, offers the least disruption. Another option is a breadth-and-depth model, where one course provides a broad introduction, and another allows for deeper exploration. A two-course model has been proposed but has received little support due to its impact on curriculum space. Placement options include treating civic learning as an attribute alongside existing requirements like writing and diversity, making it a foundational requirement, or integrating it into Building Connections (BC) or Exploring Perspectives (EP) courses. Hybrid models, such as combining a foundational course with an attribute, are also being discussed.

The next UWGEC meeting, the last of the semester, will include further deliberation. While there is a chance we may present updates at the Curriculum and Policy Subcommittee meeting later this month, it is more likely that a formal proposal will move forward in early spring. The committee is also working to ensure Faculty Senate’s concerns and ideas are integrated early in the process, which may result in a slight delay to allow for more extensive discussions.

Civic learning remains the committee’s primary policy focus, alongside the ongoing review of courses and updates to the Gen Ed program.

* 1. **Subcommittees:**
     1. **Academic Programs Subcommittee report on November 19, 2024 – Lisa Rezende, Chair**
        1. See item IV.
     2. **Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee report on**[**November 19, 2024**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2024-11/CPS-Minutes-11-19-24.pdf)**– Joost van Haren, Chair**
        1. We can revisit the grade replacement and course repetition policies in the subcommittees, primarily because the advising community has recommended some changes. We're currently reviewing these suggestions and may refer the matter back to the Registrar's Office to gather additional data. This will help us gain a clearer understanding of the situation and determine the best course of action. Additionally, we had a brief discussion about the General Education foundations, which did not require much time.
  2. **UGC Report - Joost van Haren – Acting Co-chair**
     1. As we discussed earlier, and as Greg mentioned, I presented at Faculty Senate yesterday. Although the transfer policy should have been on the consent agenda based on how it was approved, we decided to move it for open discussion to address any questions. I think that was a wise decision, and it passed. So, that matter is now resolved.

1. **Consent Agenda Items – Lisa Rezende, Chair**
   1. [**New Major: BS in Integrated Business and Engineering (Engineering)**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2024-11/Proposal_BS-in-IBE.pdf)
      1. We now have a new major in Integrated Business and Engineering, a collaboration between the College of Engineering and Eller. This degree program will eventually replace the current Engineering Management major. The new major offers two key advantages over Engineering Management: first, the collaboration between the two colleges provides a stronger focus on management; second, it incorporates more project-based courses, modernizing the curriculum in that area.
   2. [**New Minor: Food Science and Fermentation (CALES)**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2024-11/Proposal_UG-Minor-in-FSF.pdf)
      1. What’s notable here is that this program uses all existing resources—no new classes need to be developed. Unlike most land-grant universities, we don’t currently have a food science major on campus. While this is just a minor, not a major, it could serve as a stepping stone to gauge interest in that area. The minor consists of 19 units and may include applied coursework, such as working at the campus brewery or participating in various internships around town
   3. [**Modification: Minor in Human Services (CAST)**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2024-11/Modification_Human-Services-UG-Minor.pdf)
      1. This update is based on changes to other programs that introduced new courses while discontinuing an existing one. As a result, they replaced the discontinued course and incorporated new skills-based courses from other areas into the minor. These updates are designed to better prepare students for careers in various human service programs.
   4. [**New Major: BS in Medical Pharmacology and Toxicology (Pharmacy)**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2024-11/Proposal_BS-in-MedPharmTox.pdf)
      1. This program builds on existing resources—no new faculty, facilities, or other resources are needed. It leverages the college's strengths in pharmacology and toxicology, which are topics of great interest to students. It offers a unique perspective for students, especially those who may want to pursue medical school from a different angle. This major, which is not widely offered at other universities, is expected to attract new students to the university. Both a major and a minor are available.

All items were approved unanimously.

1. **Items for Discussion and/or vote:**
   1. **Bachelor's Degree Requirements, Multiple Majors & Degrees policy and Major Declaration policy:**[**Proposal**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2024-10/BA-Degree-Candidacy-Related-Info-policy-amendment_0.docx)**and**[**Benchmarking**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2024-04/second%20bachelors%20degree%20benchmarking.docx)
      1. The main reason for the changes we discussed in the subcommittee was to address the requirement of 30 credits for students pursuing a sequential degree. Previously, students doing a concurrent degree only needed 30 fewer credits. We also made smaller adjustments, such as requiring students to earn at least 80 unique university credits for each degree to align with current policies.

We also renamed the policy and removed a stipulation that students could not complete more than 50% of their second degree requirements before earning their first degree. There were several other minor changes, but the major improvement is the new table format, which makes it easier for advisors to work with students and ensures consistency across multiple majors.

The big change is that students doing a sequential degree will no longer be penalized compared to those doing a concurrent degree. This creates more flexibility for students, particularly those who may need to defer graduation. This change allows them to finish their first degree and then pursue the second one without having to worry about excessive credits or restrictions.

There was a question about the time limit for sequential degrees. As long as students maintain continuous enrollment, they can stay within the catalog. However, if a student leaves for 10 years and returns, they would no longer need to earn 30 additional credits. They would just need to meet the current requirements for the degree.

One concern raised is that students who return after a long time may not need to take as many courses but would have to meet the 30-credit requirement, even if those credits aren’t relevant to their degree. There’s a possibility that some students may wait until both degrees are completed before graduating, which could delay their graduation.

For students who didn’t finish a course and need to substitute or waive it, a department chair or dean can approve the substitution. This is common when a program is no longer offered, but we work with students on a case-by-case basis to ensure they can still earn their degree.

If this new policy passes, it should be effective immediately, simplifying degree requirements and allowing more students to graduate sooner. Over the past four years, 812 students have pursued a sequential degree, compared to just 183 for concurrent degrees, indicating that the sequential option could potentially delay graduation for many.

Allyson Roof motioned to approve. Dereka Rushbrook seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

* 1. **Updates to Degree Search & Trellis - Meredith Aronson, Director, CRM and Digital Experience Services**
     1. Moved to January meeting.

1. **Meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm.**

*Respectfully prepared by Bryanna Andrade*