**Undergraduate Council Minutes**

**May 13, 2025**

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

**Non-voting members present**: Cassidy Salazar, Kian Alavy, Greg Heileman, Alex Underwood, Melanie Madden, Bryanna Andrade.

1. **Joost Van Haren called meeting to order at 3:34 pm**
2. **Approval of Minutes from the**[**April 1st, 2025 meeting**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2025-05/UGC-April-2025-minutes.docx)**– Joost Van Haren, Acting Co-chair**
	1. Caleb Simmons motioned to approve. Christopher Sanderson second. Motion carried unanimously.
3. **Reports:**
	1. **Academic Affairs Report – Greg Heileman, Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education**
		1. We’ve officially reached the end of the semester—congratulations to everyone, and thank you for all the hard work and dedication you've contributed to this committee over the past year. We've seen several important policy proposals move forward, especially those related to undergraduate education and general education. These changes are expected to have a meaningful and positive impact on our students.

One item we were not able to complete this term was the proposal regarding the second language requirement. Unfortunately, this is the item we spent the most time on. A dedicated subcommittee worked on the recommendation for six to seven months. However, the recommendation was ultimately split and not presented in its entirety to the full committee. As a result, what was approved does not align with the original intent of the recommendation, and it's unlikely that the Provost will approve it in its current form.

Because of this, we’ll need to revisit the second language requirement in the fall and work toward a resolution that better reflects the subcommittee's work and aligns with university goals.

On a more positive note, other initiatives are moving forward smoothly. In particular, progress is being made on the math policy updates, with Alex beginning the process of updating the advising materials—this will be an important and ongoing effort.

**Q: Could you clarify what was approved regarding the second language requirement and why the Provost might object?**

A: Yes. The original proposal was a cohesive recommendation developed by a subcommittee. It suggested that the first two semesters of second language study be included in general education requirements for both BA and BS degrees. The second two semesters would then become part of the degree requirement specifically for BA students. This approach was intended to simplify policy and avoid issues where students switching majors could inadvertently unfulfill general education requirements.

However, during the approval process, the proposal was fragmented. Most notably, the portion that would allow high school language coursework to count toward the first two semesters of the requirement—similar to the exception currently granted to the College of Engineering—was not approved. Several other colleges had requested the same consideration, citing common practices at peer institutions (e.g., UC Boulder, UT Austin). Since the final approved version lacks that flexibility, it’s unclear if the Provost will support it. The policy, as it stands, may need to be revisited and revised in the fall to address these inconsistencies and consider a more holistic solution.

* 1. **Arizona Online Report – Caleb Simmons, Executive Director for Online Education**
		1. I just want to echo Greg’s comments—what a great year it’s been! We accomplished a lot, and it’s been fantastic working with all of you.

As for updates from Arizona Online, I mentioned some of this in our last meeting, but I’d like to provide a more complete overview. The unit previously known as Odyssey—Outreach, Distance, and Continuing Education—has now been restructured and fully integrated into Arizona Online. These units will now operate under Arizona Online, with a renewed focus on a digital-first approach in our work with satellite locations and continuing education initiatives.

This integration has brought about some structural changes, including adjustments in personnel. The goal of this reorganization is to create a more scalable model that aligns better with our current student population. We’re also working to "right-size" our staff FTE—not faculty, but administrative and support staff—across these four units to reflect the needs of the growing Arizona Online community.

Overall, we believe this is a positive step forward and positions us well for continued growth and innovation in digital education.

* 1. **Distance, Continuing Education Report – Bonnie Taylor, Director of Outreach and Business Affairs and Aviva Doery, Assistant Director, Administrative Support and Strategy**
		1. No report.
	2. **Registrar’s Report – Alex Underwood, University Registrar**
		1. I just want to echo what’s already been said—what a great year! We’ve accomplished so much together. This semester, we focused heavily on two impactful policy changes. The approval of the course repeat policy is particularly exciting, as it will significantly improve students’ ability to recover their GPA. Alongside that, the continued work on General Education has been substantial.

I also want to take a moment to highlight some of the important progress we made back in the fall, including updates to the undergraduate transfer credit policy and revisions to the Bachelor's degree requirements—covering majors, minors, and multiple degrees. These four updates represent major, substantive changes to core university policies, and I’m grateful for your collaboration, patience, and humor as we worked through them all.

As a quick reminder: it’s grading season, and finals week is here! Hopefully, everyone enjoyed the recent email we sent out about grading—it was probably the most thrilling thing in your inbox. More seriously, I want to draw attention to the newly updated process for handling grades in cases where there’s a pending academic integrity investigation. This change is designed to better support faculty by allowing a temporary grade entry that won’t impact the rest of their roster. We've already received positive feedback from faculty currently navigating those situations, and we hope this provides some needed relief.

Looking ahead, the 2025–2026 catalog will be published on Monday, May 19. We’re continuing the practice we began in recent years of releasing the catalog on the Monday after commencement, and we're excited to maintain that consistency.

Finally, looking toward fall, we currently have just over 26,000 undergraduate students enrolled for the upcoming semester. So it’s shaping up to be another busy summer of preparation, policy implementation, and student support.

* 1. **Advising Resource Center/ Advising Community Report – Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski, Assistant Vice Provost, Academic Advising**
		1. The approval of the repeat policy is an important milestone, and we want to thank Undergraduate Council members for asking thoughtful and engaging questions throughout the process. Sharon especially appreciated the council’s commitment to student success. To ensure a smooth rollout, advisors will be offered training opportunities to fully understand the policy change, which will take effect in Fall 2025.

Sharon is currently attending the Region 10 NACADA Advisor Conference, where she is presenting. Arizona is well represented this year, with five presentations from University of Arizona advisors. Region 10’s Chair is our own Allison Ewing Cooper, further highlighting the strong leadership and presence our institution has in this space.

We’re also excited to share some recognition of our advising colleagues. Brian Pierce, from the Department of Physiology in the College of Medicine, received the Region 10 New Advising Professional Award. Jasmine Acosta, from Animal and Comparative Biomedical Sciences in CALES, received a Certificate of Merit in the Primary Academic Advisor role category. Congratulations to both!

With regard to Project Graduation initiatives for Academic Year 2025, several key activities are underway. These include a survey as part of the project graduation inventory, an “impact traffic light” activity, a cohort analytics review of over 7,000 students, and targeted efforts to support students on track to graduate by summer 2025. The team is also working to identify and address systemic policy and process issues and is engaging in a “Creating the Future Through Collective Vision” activity to help shape ongoing efforts.

Currently, the focus is on reviewing this year’s progress and continuing conversations with partners about AY25 initiatives. Looking ahead to Academic Year 2026, the goal remains to increase student completion through sustained engagement and strategic policy development. More updates will be shared as that work continues.

* 1. **University-wide General Education Committee Report – Jeremy Vetter, UWGEC Chair**
		1. I’m here to provide an update from the University-wide General Education Committee (UWGEC), which has met several times since our last meeting. We've made significant progress in advancing various components of the General Education reform, including updates to the math and writing foundations, changes to GE attributes, and a consolidation of core policies. These items have all successfully moved through the Faculty Senate.

However, two remaining items have not yet cleared: (1) the Second Language foundation area and (2) a minor revision related to course substitutions. These topics have spurred extended debate, both within UWGEC and in the Curriculum Policy Subcommittee. Interestingly, the concerns raised in both groups have shown considerable alignment.

The second language provision—particularly the proposal to allow **two years of high school language to meet the GE requirement without a proficiency test or credit by exam**—has been especially contentious. While there is broad support for most aspects of the proposed change, this specific point has been a sticking issue.

We’ve explored multiple compromise solutions, including allowing the high school language option only if a student has completed **three or four years**, rather than two. The rationale here is that three or four years of instruction significantly increase the likelihood that a student has achieved language competency. Nonetheless, the committee did not reach consensus on these compromises. In the end, the majority vote favored **removing the high school language provision entirely**—this is referred to as **Option One** in the attached document.

We understand this remains a complicated issue. On one hand, other Arizona institutions and many peer schools nationwide have eliminated or reduced language requirements. On the other hand, there’s a real concern that if the admissions requirement (two years of high school language) becomes identical to the GE requirement, then we’ve essentially eliminated the latter altogether. We’ll need to continue this dialogue into the fall to find a workable solution that honors both our academic standards and institutional flexibility, particularly for colleges under accreditation pressure.

Another area that needs further attention is the **course substitutions policy**, which proposes to shift the authority for deciding GE substitutions from colleges to the Office of Undergraduate Education. This change, though minor, has caused significant concern—particularly among advisors who worry about implications for transfer credit judgments. Clarification is needed to ensure the scope of this change is limited and manageable.

Additionally, we received a significant report on **civic learning**. This has been in discussion for several years, and the Civic Learning Advisory Group has now coalesced around a proposal. The group (with near-unanimous support) recommends a **“breadth and depth” model**:

* **Breadth**: Students would be required to take one course from a designated menu that covers all areas of the ABOR policy on Civic Learning in American Institutions.
* **Depth**: A non-graduation-requirement attribute would allow students to further engage with civic learning themes through other GE courses.

The benefit of this model is that students and advisors would only need to track the single required course (breadth), while faculty would have a pathway to integrate civic learning into additional courses without making it a graduation requirement. It represents a compromise between a single-course model and a broader attribute-based approach.

We anticipate a formal civic learning proposal will be brought forward in early fall, in time to meet the ABOR expectation for progress by November. Alongside second language and course substitution policy, this will be one of our top priorities.

* 1. **Subcommittees:**
		1. **Academic Programs Subcommittee report on April 29th, 2025 – Lisa Rezende, Chair**
			1. [**AY 2024-2025 APS Accomplishments report**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2025-05/2024-2025_Academic-Programs-Accomplishments.xlsx)
			2. This year was quieter than usual for our committee—especially compared to the Curriculum Committee—but we still accomplished quite a bit.
				1. New Program Approvals:
				We approved a total of 17 new programs, which included:

5 new majors

5 new minors

3 new emphases

4 new certificates

* + - * 1. Program Modifications:
				We reviewed and approved 6 program modifications. These were substantial changes and generated productive discussions.
				2. Informational Items:
				We also received 5 program changes that did not require formal approval, including:

2 disestablishments (one minor, one emphasis)

Several name changes

* + 1. Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee report on [**April 29th, 2025**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2025-05/CPS-Minutes-4-29-25.pdf)**– Joost van Haren, Chair**
			1. We passed five different policies this year, including some major ones, as Alex mentioned. That represents significant progress. However, we still have several important items on the docket, including the second language requirement as part of General Education, as well as civic learning and the attribute component. We'll continue working on those as proposals come in, and we plan to maintain parallel discussions with UGC and Jack to stay aligned with what's coming from their side. This collaboration should help streamline the overall process moving forward.

Regarding the UGC-wide report, Faculty Senate has approved the General Education (GE) packet as submitted. That packet, which was forwarded by UGC, has now passed and will be implemented. Importantly, attributes will no longer be treated as student requirements, which marks a shift in how they're applied. The remaining components of the proposal were included on the consent agenda and passed without discussion.

* 1. **UGC Report – Joost Van Haren – Acting Co-chair**
		1. No report.
1. **Consent Agenda Items – Lisa Rezende, Chair**
	1. [**New Major: BS in Medical Device Development & Application**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2025-05/Proposal-BS-in-MDDA-2.pdf)
		1. This is an item we discussed briefly last time, and the representatives from the College of Medicine returned to present the proposed major in Medical Device Development and Application. Previously, the program was titled Medical Device Technology and Development, but there were concerns about the name. In this revised proposal, the name has been updated, and they have aligned the learning outcomes across the program—addressing the issue of missing outcomes in some of the emphases. Additionally, they removed one emphasis, resulting in a total of three emphases. The presenters also shared details about internship opportunities and other program components. This proposal passed and is moving forward on the consent agenda.

Michale McKisson motioned to approve. Caleb Simmons seconded. Motion passed with 16 yeas, 1 nay, and 1 abstention.

* 1. **Informational Item Only:**[**Disestablishment: Pre-law Minor (SBS)**](https://academicadmin.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2025-05/Disestablish_Pre-Law-Minor.pdf)
		1. While this isn’t up for a vote, it is being replaced by a new Law Minor. Although the current minor still has a number of students enrolled, those students will be allowed to complete it, or they may choose to switch to the Law Minor. Moving forward, only the Law Minor will be available to new students.
1. **Meeting adjourned at 4:41 pm**

*Respectfully prepared by Bryanna Andrade*