

Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
August 25, 2020

Voting Members Present: Chair Molly Bolger, Joan Curry, Moe Momayez, David Ortiz, Claudia Stanesco, Jennifer Schnellmann, Joost Van Haren

Non-voting Members Present: Roxie Catts, Neel Ghosh, Greg Heileman, Abbie Sorg, Alex Underwood

Voting Members Absent: Leslie Dennis, Kirk Dimond

Guest Presenter: Susan Miller-Cochran

Chair Molly Bolger called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. A quorum was established with 7 voting members.

I. Introductions and Meeting Procedure

Molly welcomed members and asked for introductions. As all members present are continuing to serve from last year, no additional orientation to the purpose or procedures of the subcommittee was needed.

II. Discussion Items

A. Assignment of Functional Office Contacts for Catalog Policies

Presenters: Abbie Sorg, Alex Underwood

In an effort to make the policies in the general catalog easier for students and faculty to navigate, and with the goal of better facilitating policy updates, Academic Administration would like to assign functional office contacts to each policy in the catalog. These contacts would be the units most directly involved in the implementation of the policy, and would be listed on the policy page so that students and faculty who have questions about the policy will be able to direct those questions to the appropriate office. Additionally, these contacts would be tasked with reviewing the policy regularly and proposing updates to the policy as needed. These contacts would also serve as subject matter experts for faculty and staff who wish to propose updates to the policy.

Discussion commenced:

- Who would these contacts be? This will depend on the content and the implementation of the policy; some initial examples include the Office of the Registrar, Admissions Office, Advising Resource Center, and Bursar's Office. The Policies subcommittee should be responsible for determining what the appropriate unit is for each policy. The subcommittee should also take the lead on defining how these contacts will be labelled, as well as defining the specific responsibilities and limitations for this role.
- It would be preferable to keep the list of distinct units assigned as contacts short. Depending on the policy, it may help to list multiple units as contacts for the policy if there is overlap in implementation.
- We need to be sensitive to the fact that policy is owned by the faculty, not by central administration. Naming and defining the role appropriately will be important to ensure that we don't give these units or the UA community the false impression that ownership is shifting to administration.
- Some policies have come up that aren't things the faculty can deny- e.g. policies to comply with federal laws or accreditation rules. How should those be handled? They should still be brought before the subcommittee so the faculty can be made aware, but not voted upon. Perhaps it would be best to make a distinction between faculty-owned policies and directives from the Provost.

Abbie Sorg will prepare a complete list of academic policies, with recommendations of possible contact units for each policy, to be discussed at a later meeting.

B. General Education Refresh

Presenter: Susan Miller-Cochran, Executive Director, General Education

The General Education Refresh team is in the final stages of developing a proposal for the new General Education curriculum. The plan for the new curriculum has already been presented to the following bodies for feedback: Heads Up, UWGEC, CAAC, President's Executive Committee, Provost's Council, Deans' Council. Will present to Faculty Senate on Sept. 3, to ask for feedback and a vote of affirmation. A full slide deck for this presentation is available on the agenda; highlights of the changes involved in the new curriculum:

- Two new course categories (Exploring Perspectives and Building Connections) will replace the current Tier 1 and Tier 2 sequence.
- A General Education Office will be created to partner with colleges/units on enrollment management and schedule, and to provide faculty support.
- Two attributes – Writing and Diversity – will be developed to be attached to courses in the Exploring Perspectives and Building Connections categories. An emphasis on writing will no longer be a requirement for every Gen Ed course; students will need to ensure that two of their Gen Ed courses are tagged with the Writing attribute, and two are tagged with the Diversity attribute, regardless of category. It could be possible for students to fulfill multiple requirements with the same course.
- Two new 1-unit courses will be developed to bookend the Gen Ed experience – an introductory Gen Ed course and a concluding portfolio course.
- Courses in the new curriculum will not be required to use a specific course numbering system; units can select catalog numbers as needed in the 100-300 levels (400-level courses may be possible, but unlikely in a General Education curriculum).

Discussion commenced:

- Has the Gen Ed Refresh team sought input from academic advisors? They will likely have useful feedback and will need to know how to work with students once a new curriculum is approved. It would likewise be good to seek input from students and Directors of Undergraduate Studies.
- How does course size fit into the new curriculum? One of the reasons for such large Gen Ed courses is that our current funding model incentivizes it. While the Gen Ed Refresh team is still working with the Provost on the funding model for the new curriculum, the hope is to structure it in a way that encourages smaller class sizes. The Provost has set a minimum class size of 25 students for Gen Ed courses this year in an effort to make it fiscally responsible; this will be a delicate balancing act, especially given the current situation.
- How will the introductory and portfolio courses be offered? If they're required for all students, it will require a large number of offerings. One possible model would be ASU's model, where a course with a shared curriculum is offered by each college to their own students. The answer to this question will also depend on the funding model that is ultimately decided upon.
- How long will the funding model be a black box? Gen Ed is currently seen by some units as a way to easily make money for their department; a new Gen Ed curriculum could be seen either as a threat or a benefit, depending on how the funding model will affect each department. Until a funding model is in place, it will be difficult for departments to appropriately plan their Fall 2021 schedules, and it will be difficult for faculty to support the curriculum. Susan will give the Provost this feedback and ask for the funding model to be prioritized.
- Could the Gen Ed Refresh team send a survey to Faculty Senate now to solicit their feedback? It would be good to be able to incorporate that feedback into the plan, and get their tentative

approval of the big picture for the new curriculum before it goes through the approval process and before the individual policies are changed. Susan will be presenting to Faculty Senate on September 3rd, with the hope of receiving a vote of affirmation for the general plan.

- Part of the reason for the aggressive timeline is that ABOR put into place a new General Education policy in 2019; the new Gen Ed curriculum is an attempt to comply with that new policy. Affected policies would need to be approved quickly this Fall in order to have the necessary system changes made and the necessary courses reviewed and categorized in time for the curriculum to be offered to students beginning in Fall 2021.

Susan Miller-Cochran will continue to draw up proposals for updates to the policies that will be affected by the change to the General Education curriculum, to be discussed and voted on at the next meeting of this subcommittee.

Molly adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The next Subcommittee meeting will be on September 22, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted by Abbie Sorg, 9/3/20