

University General Education Council
March 25, 2015 - 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Adams Center Classroom

Present: E. Gumm, G. Straughn, R. Ashlock, L. Baker, C. Flanagan, M. Garver, B. Hammack, D. Perkins, C. Niccum, J. Nichols, K. Pamplin, P. Roggendorff, M. Smallwood, N. Santana

Absent: P. Wertheim, J. Xu

Ex-officios: T. Milholland

Guests: C. Barbarick, D. Kneip, L. Lemley, S. Lewis, S. Macaluso, J. Neill, J. Stewart

The meeting began at 3:34 p.m.

I. Call to order by E. Gumm

II. Prayer by C. Flanagan

III. Approval of the minutes from 2.25.15

C. Flanagan noted that the language on the discussion with English item was not clear. It was suggested to add “if implemented” to the first sentence of that section.

Motion to approve the minutes with the edits by L. Baker; seconded by R. Ashlock; all in favor; none opposed; motion passes.

The 2.25.15 minutes have been revised to reflect this motion.

IV. Include FIN 419 in the Cultural Awareness menu

J. Neill and J. Stewart presented this item. J. Neill began by stating FIN 419 would be an option for the Accounting and Financial Management majors. There are currently three COBA courses in the cultural awareness menu, so they’d like to include this one, too. C. Niccum asked why this course should be given an exception to the cultural awareness criteria since it’s only applicable for two majors. J. Stewart noted that the other COBA international courses (BUSA 419, MGMT 419, MKTG 419) are part of the menu, and limited to few majors. FIN 419 does meet the course content criteria. If this course is not included then it will penalize students who choose to take FIN 419 as opposed to BUSA 419, which can double dip between COBA and general education requirements. He then mentioned that the course looks at cultural differences in financial markets; they also look at current events. K. Pamplin concluded by stating that most of the classes in this menu have prerequisites; councils in the past haven’t held to the “no prerequisites” rule stated in the criteria.

Motion to approve by K. Pamplin; seconded by B. Hammack; 11 in favor; 1 abstention; motion passes.

V. Include SOCI 222 in the Social Science menu

S. Macaluso presented this proposal. This class (Social Problems) is a general overview of Sociology from the perspective of understanding social problems. The class focuses on issues of poverty, race, gender, sexuality, mental health, aging population, etc. Students will apply basic social theory to those issues; they will also discuss possible solutions to the problems. M. Smallwood asked if this course should also be considered for the cultural awareness menu. S. Macaluso said she's open to propose to add it to that menu, but the course will be offered on a limited basis.

Motion to approve by C. Niccum; seconded by N. Santana; all in favor; none opposed; motion passes.

VI. Include SOCI 442 in the Cultural Awareness menu

S. Macaluso presented this proposal. This class (Cultural Diversity) is a survey of culture in the U.S. based on racial, ethnic, and religious standpoints. It's also a historical look at minority and majority groups. It requires a higher level of thinking, but it does not have any prerequisites.

Motion to approve by C. Niccum; seconded by C. Flanagan; 11 in favor; 1 abstention; motion passes.

VII. General Education Review - Findings and Recommendations

G. Straughn began by stating that the council would look at the recommendation to reduce the required number of CORE hours. Students currently take 9 hours of CORE (CORE 110, 210, BCOR 310). The review committee put forth two recommendations: 1) make each of the three courses two hours each 2) remove one class. The course directors were at this meeting: C. Barbarick directs CORE 110, L. Lemley directs 210, D. Kneip directs BCOR 310. He noted that the council does not have to make a decision this day, but they need to be informed. He asked the council to consider the implications of the two suggestions, as well as the central implication of removing a course or reducing the number of course hours.

Discussion on CORE course hour reduction

C. Barbarick said the courses would be much lesser if they are reduced to two units. They currently cannot have all of the spotlights they want, so that problem would be worse if the hour reduction happens. He also mentioned a concern regarding the impression students would have if the hours are reduced. L. Lemley said CORE might as well be cut if it were to drop to two hours for each class. She also mentioned it would affect students' GPAs if it's a two hour course. D. Kneip noted that he's taught BCOR 310 five times; he's noticed student attitudes have drastically changed toward the course;

students are now more open to the course material. He's concerned about the potential loss of deeper knowledge of what is learned in BCOR. G. Straughn noted that he's hearing that there is a difficulty in containing good content in a two hour course. He also mentioned that a two hour course would affect faculty teaching loads, and that is not ideal. L. Lemley stated that there is content overlap between CORE 210, COMS 211, and ENGL 112 in regards to how to make a good argument; this overlap is good because students are getting a full picture of constructing arguments. C. Niccum noted that CORE provides a great model of what should be done in other courses (integrating different disciplines). K. Pamplin said he'd like to hear what the course directors thought about ACU's 128 hour requirement when some peer institutions have 120 hours. C. Barbarick said he does not want the 128 requirement to be reduced. D. Kneip also said he is also in favor of the 128 hours; he thinks of it as 113 hours plus 15 hours of Bible, which reflects ACU's Christian heritage.

G. Straughn then said the council needs to pick a CORE class to cut or to at least begin that discussion. Clear indicator of best practice is a gateway course to introduction to college; that was U100 now CORE 110. There is value in making sure students have an introduction to college experience. L. Lemley noted that the CORE 210 faculty would be happy to single teach the course if that helps save money and/or the course. G. Straughn noted that budgetary implications will be brought to the council in a future meeting. There was then a brief discussion about the implications of not team-teaching the courses. E. Gumm noted that there would be substantial savings if they changed the number of offered sections. He also noted that it's difficult with the current construction to find rooms that seat 60.

K. Pamplin suggested that students could choose two of the three CORE courses. G. Straughn noted that building a common experience was a main feature of creating CORE. It is hard to do this when students bring in a lot of hours. He stated that if BCOR is cut that would reduce the amount of Bible hours from 15 to 12, so there needs to be a parallel conversation about the possible reduction of Bible hours. P. Roggendorff suggested that a faith and discipline course could be an alternative to BCOR; if a department doesn't have a course like that, then the student would have to take BCOR. G. Straughn noted that capstone courses should have a faith and discipline component. He then mentioned that the 128 hour requirement is not a major deterrent for prospective students. D. Perkins brought up the transferability of CORE. The required three hours of history in the university requirements was taken away and replaced by CORE, so an opportunity for a student to transfer in a course was lost. G. Straughn noted that it could be the power of the committee to loosen the rules on possible CORE transfers. He also mentioned state mandated "core complete" at public universities. He concluded the meeting by going over the schedule of the remaining meetings (see last page).

The meeting adjourned at 5:00.

UGEC End of Semester Timeline

4.8.15 UGEC meeting (Wednesday)

- Finalize General Education recommendations
- Set date for faculty meeting

4.9.15 - 4.13.15 (Thursday - Monday)

- Faculty meeting
- Present UGEC recommendations

4.13.15 - 4.15.15 (Monday - Wednesday)

- Faculty survey

4.22.15 final UGEC meeting (Wednesday)

- Wrap up of survey