

## NOTES

April 2022

DUS meeting

9:30-11:00, Zoom

1. Brief welcome and announcements
  - a. The drop deadline for individual courses was April 4. From now until the end of the semester, late drops for courses administered by CLAS are granted only for extenuating circumstances and require approval from CLAS Undergraduate Programs. Please refer students to 120 SH or [clasps@uiowa.edu](mailto:clasps@uiowa.edu) with questions and/or requests. If a student is working with the Title IX and Gender Equity office, that office will contact CLAS Undergraduate Programs on the student's behalf.
  - b. Please review this [DEO memo](#) from March 30 on supporting undergraduates. The memo includes reminders about the guidelines for granting an Incomplete and a link to the undergraduate student academic concern form.
  
2. Shaun Vecera, Director of UI Honors and Professor, Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, provided updates on the UI Honors Program.
  - a. There are two pieces to the UI Honors curriculum—a coursework piece and an experiential learning piece. Coursework is the first focus for students; they are asked to complete 12 s.h. of honors coursework within their first 4 semesters. What counts as honors coursework depends on the courses that departments offer. Most students will try to fulfill general education requirements with honors sections. Students can also contract courses with instructors. Contracting a course involves an agreement between student and instructor for an enrichment opportunity, a project, or other engaging work that lets the student explore the course content in greater depth. See <https://honors.uiowa.edu/facultycontract> for more information.
  - b. For honors sections, students benefit simply from being in a course with other honors students because students tend to be more engaged, and the courses help to create a sense of belonging. For the instructor and students there should not be much more work or harder work. The Honors Program prefers instead that the depth of engagement increase. The same is true for honors contract courses.
  - c. Two links with additional teaching resources: <https://honors.uiowa.edu/teachinghonors> and a [teaching toolkit](#).
  - d. What qualifies as experiential learning differs based on discipline. Study abroad, research or scholarship, service learning, and honors in the major, which fulfill all 12 hours of experiential learning, are all examples of experiential learning.
  - e. For transfer students who want to earn UI Honors, the 12 s.h. of honors coursework is often the challenge because their GE requirements are usually completed on admission. For coursework, students will primarily contract

courses because they typically need only upper-division major courses. However, a new recognition program is being developed. It is the equivalent of UI Honors, but it gives honors recognition for 15 s.h. of coursework and experiential learning on a student's transcript.

3. As a follow up to Wayne Jacobson's visit in March (see [DUS Notes](#)), the group discussed undergraduate program assessment. Undergraduate program assessment can include assessment of learning outcomes for majors, minors, and certificates; this assessment can also be used to evaluate and improve the student academic experience in majors, minors, and certificates.

Associate Dean Lang posed some questions before sending those in attendance into breakout rooms for discussion. Those questions were:

- a. How is your department/program engaging with undergraduate program assessment (majors, minors, certificates)?
- b. What is working well with how your department/program is doing this assessment? What are the challenges and/or bottlenecks with carrying out this work?
- c. How can the college help your department with undergraduate program assessment?

Participants had a robust discussion in response to these prompts. They shared activities their departments participate in as well as suggestions:

- departments solicit program feedback from students who are currently in the program (not only from graduating students).
- in larger departments especially, encourage more of the faculty to get involved in these assessments, both in creating and in sharing the information.
- occasionally use a monthly department meeting to discuss assessment.
- work with Office of Teaching, Learning and Technology to get better idea of course profile, typically large enrollment, which helps to understand who is in the course.
- in concert with written survey, host a town hall where students come and discuss the program with the department.
- create longitudinal assessment on longer timeframes (after graduation) to assess what skills students felt were valuable in their degree. Survey seniors and alums. Use Pomerantz Career Center data to see what students are doing after graduation.
- midterm surveys/check in
- consider the experiences of minors, not only majors
- curriculum/assessment committees and subcommittees, formal curriculum review
- solicit feedback from academic advising staff and advising faculty

- review iteration and feedback loops from assessment to changes in the major
- create/assess portfolio or capstone course

4. The meeting was adjourned.