

## Directors of Undergraduate Studies, December 2021 meeting notes

### Announcements:

- (1) **ACE Evaluations** – please encourage your colleagues to encourage students to fill out ACE feedback forms; time can be used in class for this; the student video is engaging. The link to the DEO memo with suggestions on how to administer and encourage students to provide feedback is at: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/deos/ mailing/november-17-2021/ace-teaching-evaluations-important-information>
- (2) **GE Sustainability – Call for Proposals:** Proposals for courses that will satisfy the CLAS Core requirement in Sustainability are due Tuesday, January 18, 2022. <https://clas.uiowa.edu/deos/ mailing/december-01-2021/call-general-education-clas-core-proposals-sustainability>
- (3) **Low Major GPAs:** As a follow up to our October conversation about low major GPAs, please see this DEO memo regarding minimum GPA requirements for coursework in the major. Contact [jennifer-bertrand@uiowa.edu](mailto:jennifer-bertrand@uiowa.edu) with questions: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/deos/ mailing/december-08-2021/minimum-grade-point-course-work-major>
- (4) **CDE discussion** – Tab Wiggins (director) and Cassie Walizer (associate director) from the Center for Diversity and Enrichment presented information about CDE and how faculty and departments can better partner with CDE to support students. Their [slides](#) and two additional documents with information about [academic coaches](#) and the [Iowa Edge program](#) are included with these notes.

Tab noted that the CDE staff pride themselves on supporting students from historically minoritized communities, specifically students affiliated with their programs: Iowa Edge, Storm Lake Scholars, Advantage Iowa (AI), TRIO SSS, and TRIO Upward Bound (for high school students). They support students inside and outside of the classroom.

In January 2022 CDE will officially transition to a new name: Center for Inclusive Academic Excellence.

Below are some of the ways that CDE would like to partner with faculty in CLAS. If faculty have other ideas not on this list, they would love to hear those, too!

- Faculty mentorship opportunities within disciplines
- Iowa Edge faculty panels
- Collaborations with academic coaches
- Academic support within the space
  - Ex: review sessions, faculty office hours, more formalized support hours
- Referrals to CDE

If faculty would like to connect with CDE, they can contact Tab ([tabitha-wiggins@uiowa.edu](mailto:tabitha-wiggins@uiowa.edu)) or Cassie ([cassandra-walizer@uiowa.edu](mailto:cassandra-walizer@uiowa.edu)) via email.

#### (5) World Languages and the GE CLAS Core Discussion

The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing adding flexibility to the CLAS options for fulfilling the GE World Language (WL) requirement.

**Context and Motivation:** CLAS has been asked by Dean Sara Sanders and central administration (e.g., Provost's Office, Office of Admissions, etc.) to consider adding flexibility to the CLAS Core GE WL requirement. CLAS is hoping to review proposed ideas for flexibility in the WL requirement during Spring 2022.

- This is NOT a conversation about removing the WL requirement; CLAS believes strongly in the value of having a WL requirement and we are pleased that the requirement is part of the CLAS Core.
- This is a conversation about the College considering adding some pathways for students to satisfy the WL requirement.
- Associate Dean Lang has been discussing this topic with three groups during the last 6-8 weeks: the Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures (DWLLC), the CLAS General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC), and the Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee (UEPCC). The minutes from UEPCC from the last few weeks of discussion of this topic (October and November 2021) are available at this [website](#).
- Members from these three groups attended the DUS meeting to listen to the conversation and hear the perspectives of DUSs.

**To fulfill the GE CLAS Core requirement in World Languages, students in CLAS may choose one of the following options:**

- Complete four years of a single world language in high school; or
- Achieve the fourth level of proficiency in a world language by completing the appropriate sequence of courses offered at the University of Iowa.
- Additional options, including transferring courses completed at another institution, placement testing in languages taught and not taught at University of Iowa, AP credit, etc., are summarized at this link: [CLAS WL requirement details](#).
- Substitutions are available for students who have a documented language-learning disability.

**The requirements for other UI undergraduate colleges are as follows:**

- College of Education—4<sup>th</sup> level proficiency (only UI college with all CLAS Core requirements)
- College of Engineering—no additional requirement after admission
- Tippie College of Business—4<sup>th</sup> level proficiency **or** 2<sup>nd</sup> level proficiency in two different languages

- Colleges of Public Health and Nursing: 4<sup>th</sup> level proficiency **or** 2<sup>nd</sup> level proficiency in two different languages **or** 2<sup>nd</sup> level proficiency in one language plus one GE course in the area of Values and Culture, Diversity and Inclusion, or International and Global Issues
- University College—no additional language requirement

#### **How CLAS students fulfill the WL requirement:**

- ~60% of first-year students have fulfilled the requirement before arriving in CLAS because they have four years of high school language.
- ~40% of first-year students have not satisfied the WL requirement; approximately 30% have some experience in a language and take the placement test to determine how many courses they will need to satisfy the requirement; approximately 10% of students need to complete their entire WL requirement.

#### **Challenges related to students satisfying the WL requirement:**

- **Recruitment and Admissions:** A priority for CLAS over the next 5-10 years is to increase its student enrollment. During the admissions process, students and their families ask about and consider the WL requirement in their decisions. In some cases, students are trying to figure out how they will satisfy this requirement along with their major (especially for those with heavy coursework requirements). Some students who have applied and are considering enrolling in CLAS have not had access in their high schools to many language options and sometimes not the third and fourth level.
- **Transfer Students:** A related priority for CLAS is to increase the number and breadth of transfer students who pursue CLAS majors. The WL requirement can be especially challenging for transfer students who have taken time away from education and are returning to pursue their studies (and have not studied a world language in many years), or students who were not aware of the WL requirement before transferring. For CLAS students who have earned AA degrees and need 60 additional s.h. to reach the graduation requirement of 120 s.h., fitting in their upper-level major courses and the WL requirement can be especially challenging.
- **Current students and retention and graduation:** CLAS students have shared that the current WL requirement can feel inflexible when they have majors requiring large numbers of s.h., particularly in the physical sciences with heavy laboratory and experiential requirements. Students report that the high s.h. per WL course is also challenging to work into their academic and work schedules; some WL courses require 4-5 days of in person attendance per week. Some current CLAS students transfer in WL coursework, often from community colleges, because they find those courses easier to balance with their UI schedules. In addition, CLAS students have shared concerns about the placement exams for heritage speakers. CLAS students contact the Academic Programs and Student Development office to work with staff on their concerns around satisfying the WL requirement, and in some cases, satisfying the WL requirement adds unplanned time to degree.
- **Returning students** (those who have been away for more than 5 years and wish to complete their CLAS degrees): in this population of students who have not yet

completed their CLAS degree, approximately 50% have yet to complete their WL requirement. Many of these students perceive the WL requirement to be a barrier to graduation and choose a University College degree or attend a different institution.

**Perspectives that CLAS is interested in from all Directors of Undergraduate Studies related to adding flexibility to the CLAS Core GE WL requirement:**

- i. What perspective do students in your program(s) of study/major(s) have about the WL requirement?
- ii. What languages are particularly important for students to know in your program of study?
- iii. Does the WL requirement come up in your recruitment conversations with students?
- iv. Are students in your area interested in learning languages other than those they may have encountered in high school?
- v. Should CLAS add flexibility to the WL requirement?