The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee

**Minutes**

Thursday, March 22, 2018

Attending: Amber Crow (student member); Helena Dettmer (Chair); Steve Duck; Andrew Forbes; Kathryn Hall (staff); Cornelia Lang; Jerald Moon; Mary Noonan; Ana Rodríguez-Rodríguez; Rachel Williams

Absent: Meena Khandelwal

1. The minutes from March 1, 2018 were approved as written.
2. Cornelia Lang, Chair of the CLAS GE Curriculum Committee (GECC) reviewed the following proposals as approved by GECC. UEPCC recommended final approval for these courses in the area of Diversity and Inclusion:

* SRM:1045 Diversity and Inclusion in Healthy Living
* ITAL:2660 The Italian American Experience
* ANTH:2151 Global Migration
* GWSS:1002 Diversity & Power: Examining Gender, Race and Class in America
* NAIS: 1290 [Formerly AINS] Native American Foods and Foodways
* JMC:2500 Community Media

1. Annette Beck, Director of Enterprise Instructional Technology, Office of Teaching, Learning & Technology, began the discussion on ACE evaluations with a presentation about ACE-related problems. Other institutions using online evaluations have had higher response rates than UI and CLAS. Response rates are often higher if the evaluations are completed in class, just like paper forms, with the instructor stressing the importance of student feedback for the improvement of teaching and learning. It could be that instructors are not implementing this best practice. Another problem might be the number of questions a student is expected to answer. For example in one scenario, a student taking 4 courses in CLAS would need to complete 137 questions, with one CLAS course having 49 questions. By the end of the semester, students are often ready to leave campus, and students’ lack of interest in the ACE forms is understandable. Other problems also exist, such as cross-listed courses; off-cycle courses; misuse of the override tool; and the number of custom requests made by department and instructors, which must be made by hand each semester. This individualized service is impossible to sustain. The plethora of questions has occurred, in part, because different interest groups have added questions on specific topics. Underlying this is a lack of clarity about the function of the evaluations, with ACE being used for unintended purposes. Because of these issues, Provost Susan Curry has decided to convene a campus-wide committee to analyze problems and to recommend solutions. All of the UI undergraduate colleges and the Graduate College are represented on the committee as are most of the professional colleges, such as the College of Law. The timeline for the committee’s work has not yet been decided but will conclude with the committee recommending a course of action to the Council of Deans. CLAS representatives will request input as soon as possible from CLAS instructors, departments and programs, UEPCC, Faculty Assembly, the Faculty Senate, and others. UEPCC’s discussion then returned to some of the ACE issues raised at the March 1 meeting. The first step for the ACE committee might be to decide the purpose of the evaluations; to analyze how that purpose can best be met; and to recommend if the improvement of instruction should be separated from instructor effectiveness as used for the personnel file. [For more information on ACE, see <https://teach.its.uiowa.edu/ace-online-best-practices> and <https://teach.its.uiowa.edu/technology-tools/ace-online-course-evaluations>, including information on ACE open/close dates; explanation of the median for ACE results; and student FAQs.]
2. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Forbes   
Associate Professor, Department of Biology  
Secretary for UEPCC