The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum CommitteeMinutes

November 14, 2019

Attending: Helena Dettmer; Andrew Forbes; Eric Gidal; Kathryn Hall; Anita Jung; Rebekah Kowal Andrew Kitchen; Ana Rodríguez-Rodríguez; Jennifer Rogers; Shaun Vecera

Absent: Brian Lai

1. The minutes from November 7 were approved as written.
2. During the last two years, the administration of Honors in the Major has moved from University Honors, the honors program that serves all UI undergraduates, to CLAS, which now administers Honors in the Major in partnership with CLAS professional academic advisors, the faculty Honors in the Major coordinator in each unit, and the Registrar. CLAS has traditionally set the minimum overall UI GPA required for Honors in the Major while CLAS units set all other requirements, including the required minimum GPA for the major. UEPCC members recommended that this practice continue since the variation in standards and requirements is appropriate because of differences in subject matter and pedagogy, for example. Each unit offering Honors in the Major is therefore asked to review the related Honors in the Major Catalog section when the Fall 2020-Spring 2021 edition opens for editing, making updates as needed. The requirements for Honors in the Major as portrayed on the unit’s website and in the Catalog must match so that students are not confused. CLAS will continue to set the overall UI GPA, with UEPCC members recommending that the College move to a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.33. CLAS will confer with the University Honors Program on this matter before making any changes.
3. Helena Dettmer updated UEPCC members on the progress of the GE CLAS Core Review Committee (CCRC), with CCRC members Andrew Forbes and Kathryn Hall also adding to the conversation. CCRC has, in part, discussed how to better market the GE CLAS Core, strengthening its profile by helping students to understand the crucial nature of foundational skills taught in GE courses, including the various modes of inquiry and approaches to learning and problem-solving. CCRC has also discussed requiring a 0-3 s.h. applied learning experience before graduation, with current students excepted. The proposed requirement is modeled on the Tippie RISE requirement (0-3 s.h.), with research, internships, study abroad, and experiential learning options counting toward completion of the requirement. Tippie departments also offer a number of applied learning courses for the requirement that also count for a Tippie major, resulting in a very flexible and relevant requirement. Options must be available to all students without any additional cost associated with the requirement. CCRC members overwhelming voiced the opinion that students need such an experience in order to reflect more deeply on their undergraduate education. Social mobility is also important and such experiences can help students later in the job market. UEPCC members agreed. CCRC is also considering the addition of a sustainability (3 s.h.) requirement since this issue is crucial. Andrew Forbes (Biology) and Cornelia Lang (Physics and Astronomy), brought this proposal to the CRCC, and it was met with enthusiasm because of its relevance. Sustainability is a key concern of undergraduates and of this year’s UI Student Government (UISG). DSAC, the Dean’s Student Advisory Committee, has also endorsed the importance of sustainability at UI and supports the concept of the new GE requirement. Several options for implementation exist, with unintended consequences to be studied before a decision is made; meetings will also be held with departments and programs and with faculty. UEPCC briefly discussed the proposed new requirement, noting that it may run into issues since it adds 3 s.h. to the GE requirements.

As a reminder, the College conducts overall reviews of its General Education requirements at least every five years to ensure they meet the learning needs of current students. Recent changes include two new requirements, Diversity and Inclusion (3 s.h.) and Values and Culture (3 s.h.). The most recent UI visit by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) was very positive in its report about the content and administration of the General Education CLAS Core; HLC did not suggest any changes. However, the goal of CLAS is to keep the program relevant for students and aligned with the UI and CLAS strategic plans. Faculty are welcome to email Helena Dettmer or other members of the committee with suggestions.

1. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Jung, Professor, Art and Art History

Secretary for UEPCC