The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee

Minutes

November 7, 2019

Attending: Helena Dettmer; Andrew Forbes; Eric Gidal; Kathryn Hall; Anita Jung; Andrew Kitchen; Jennifer Rogers; Shaun Vecera

Absent: Rebekah Kowal; Brian Lai; Ana Rodríguez-Rodríguez

1. The minutes from October 24 were approved, with an edit suggested.
2. Two General Education (GE) proposals were presented by Andrew Kitchen, UEPCC liaison to the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC), with the proposals recommended for approval by UEPCC:

* RUSS:2050: *Women from an Unknown Land: The Fight for Independence* proposed for International and Global Issues (IGI), 3 s.h.
* EDTL:2670: *Peacebuilding, Singing, and Writing in a Prison Choir* proposed for Diversity and Inclusion (DI), 3 s.h.

1. Tanya Uden-Holman, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of the University College, met with UEPCC to update members on the Provost’s academic priorities related to retention and graduation. The Provost has set four top priorities, with the first as undergraduate student success. This priority has central goals: improving graduation and retention rates; offering more experiential learning opportunities; increasing the number of high ability students; and attracting diverse students while building a culture of inclusion and appreciation.  The Associate Provost shared enrollment trends and retention rates, especially noting the overall equity gap in retention and four-year graduation rates for first-generation students, underrepresented minorities, and Pell Grant recipients when compared to the overall UI undergraduate population. These equity gaps remain even when incoming high school GPA and ACT scores are held constant. The causes of these equity gaps are complex, with multiple strategies needed to help students. A number of different offices across campus are involved, creating new initiatives and strengthening older ones proven to work. For example, Supplemental Instruction now offers additional sections, with student attendance rapidly growing. A newer initiative is PLUS (Peer-Led Undergraduate Study), which is a 0 s.h. component of a course led by a trained peer who can help students better understand the learning process, the university culture, and how to master course content. The program is very successful, and there has been some discussion about requiring PLUS enrollment in targeted courses (currently it is optional). Other avenues of support have been created for veterans and for students who have left UI because of poor grades, such as the CLAS ReStart program. Experiential learning opportunities also help students to become more engaged with academics, their peers, and the local community. UEPCC members wondered how the committee could help with these related initiatives, and the Associate Provost suggested that departments could especially help by examining how courses in a major work together, ensuring integration and continuity while helping students to learn in a steady progression of courses. Additionally, analyzing requirements that typically are difficult for students and providing additional support when needed, perhaps through peer-led tutoring groups, can also be helpful. Clear standards and expectations also give students important information that they need; likewise, helping students to understand the various opportunities available on campus as well as how to find additional support can be crucial. UEPCC members then brought up related issues, including the importance of sustainability as part of creating UI as a destination experience. Sustainability is an area of urgency, with students wanting to belong to an institution taking meaningful action.
2. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Jung, Professor, Art and Art History   
Secretary for UEPCC