The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee

Minutes

October 3, 2019

Attending: Brain Lai; Helena Dettmer; Andrew Forbes; Eric Gidal; Kathryn Hall (staff); Anita Jung; Andrew Kitchen; Ana Rodríguez-Rodríguez; Shaun Vecera

Absent: Rebekah Kowal; Jennifer Rogers

1. UEPCC members approved the minutes from September 19 and September 26.
2. Andrew Kitchen, UEPCC liaison to the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC), reviewed a GE proposal recently approved by GECC for status in Diversity and Inclusion (DI). The course, AFAM:2064 African American Families, examines the experiences of African American families and the effects of racism, looking at both historical and structural issues. After a short discussion, UEPCC also recommended approval of the course for DI status.
3. The committee discussed a rough draft of suggested strategies about how to incentivize excellence in teaching. Members suggested dividing the list of ideas into two categories, those appropriate for the College to consider and those for departments. The committee also suggested that the ideas be presented as general rather than specific recommendations to make them useful for any unit, regardless of discipline. The suggested changes will be made, with a further discussion on the topic scheduled.
4. Lori Adams, Associate Professor of Instruction, Department of Biology, spoke to UEPCC about her work as the Executive Director of the Latham Science Engagement Fellowship Program, a supplemental program within the Department of Biology that was started in Fall 2015. The program was made possible by a very generous gift of the Latham family of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The program is dedicated to engaging very talented undergraduates in research across the sciences while bringing the students’ scientific projects to the public, helping the public to better appreciate the changes such research can make in the quality of life for many. The students not only design their own research projects but also ways to engage the public in this research. The program prepares students for a first career related to scientific research and to public service by helping students to transform an idea into a reality, step by step, with students leading the project while being supported by program mentors and other Latham Fellows. The students especially learn to strengthen their ability to work with others while also following their own passions and interests. Students who have been Fellows in the program have gone on to graduate school and have accepted research opportunities at UI and elsewhere. The program functions as a model for one way that higher education today can help transform the lives of students. The director is happy to talk with other departments hoping to start similar programs that, though small, can help transform both learning and teaching.
5. The meeting was adjourned.

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