The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum CommitteeMinutes

September 26, 2019

Attending: Helena Dettmer; Andrew Forbes; Eric Gidal; Kathryn Hall (staff); Anita Jung; Andrew Kitchen; Rebekah Kowal; Jennifer Rogers; Shaun Vecera

Absent: Brain Lai; Ana Rodríguez-Rodríguez

1. UEPCC members suggested changes to the minutes from September 19. The minutes will be reviewed at the next meeting.
2. Andrew Kitchen, UEPCC liaison to the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC), reviewed a GE proposal recently approved by GECC. PCOL:2220 *Drug Use and Abuse* presents an introduction to various drugs and their effects on the human body, helping students to understand scientific processes while educating students about the effects of common drugs. The course meets all of the related GE NS outcomes and is well designed with high impact practices as required for GE courses. The course was recommended for approval by GECC; after a short discussion, UEPCC also recommended approval.
3. Mark Harris, Director, the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) and Michael Venzon, Assistant Director for Accessibility Services, SDS, met with UEPCC to discuss the SDS accommodation requiring that class notes be provided. This accommodation can present some issues for both the student and the instructor. For example, another student in the course may not volunteer to take notes; even if a student does volunteer, the quality of the notes may not always be sufficient. Likewise, the volunteer could be absent or drop the course, with a gap in notetaking occurring. Too, there might be some discomfort with another student knowing about the needed accommodation. Sometimes multiple TAs or students provide notes for the sake of consistency, but this is not always feasible. Student Disability Services is now piloting three different technological solutions that students seem to appreciate. One service called *Livescribe Pens* is easy to useand provides excellent notes. The student uses a special pen to write in a related notebook that then digitizes the notes. At the same time, the pen records the lecture, with both lectures and the student’s notes available through the *Livescribe* app ([livescribe.com](http://www.livescribe.com/)).A second technological solution is called *Note Taking Express*, which allows a student to record lectures. The lecture is then uploaded by the student and notes are produced by an actual scribe at *Note Taking Express* within a certain timeframe ([notetakingexpress.com/](https://notetakingexpress.com/)). Finally, a student can use the *Sonoscent Audio Notetaker* that records lectures while also allowing students to add slides and images as well as PDF documents to this recording. *Sonoscent* works best if the student has access to PowerPoints before the lecture begins. The product requires some specialized skills but some students love it, especially those with an aptitude for technology or who have used it, for example, in high school. These three solutions provide additional options for students while also helping faculty. In some cases, a student may prefer paper notes taken by a classmate. Instructors should be sure to talk to students about their needs and to follow their lead about what might work best. Students who have not yet heard of these technological options but who are interested in them should be referred to SDS for help. These services are free for students with accommodations, so there is no need to discuss costs with students. Even if using one of these new solutions, student should still talk to the faculty member so that the instructor understands the procedures and the student’s needs. Faculty worried about the copyright of intellectual property may ask the student to sign an agreement in the instructor’s office not to release the notes publically. UEPCC members also discussed the fact that the physical act of taking notes can help students to organize and remember related information, with notetaking helping students to be active learners. The *LiveScribe Pen* might be the best option because it is the least passive of the three choices. Still, each student has different needs, and those needs must be considered. These tools can also work as a backup solution for a student who takes regular notes but who also wants to check them against a recording of the lecture. There is a way, in other words, for students to use a combination of tools, helping them to be engaged learners. The University of Iowa is responsible for providing notes for students who need this accommodation, and the faculty member is responsible for making a good faith effort to provide notes. If a faculty member is struggling to provide notes, a discussion with SDS should occur as soon as possible about solutions. Students have a right to class notes. In many cases and especially in large courses, it might be expedient for instructors to plan ahead to provide notes, keeping in mind that all notes must be thorough and cannot just be a PowerPoint, for example. The SDS page on notetaking accommodations is a good resource for instructors wanting more information and tips about how to best handle notetaking requests: <https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/accommodations/descriptions/classnotes/>
4. The meeting was adjourned.

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