

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
The Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee

Minutes
240 SH
Feb 16, 2023

Attending: Cornelia Lang (chair), Melissa Bates, Asha Bhandary, Roxanna Curto, Jennifer Eimers (staff), Alan Huckleberry, Erin Irish, Cinda Coggins Mosher, Christine Shea, Jan Wessel, Jenna Yang

Absent: Jill Beckman

Guest: Jennifer Bertrand

1. The minutes from February 2, 2023, were approved.
2. Morten Schlutter, Professor and DEO, Religious Studies, presented a proposal to close the minor in Religion and Media. The minor was created in 2019 at the lead of a faculty member with a joint appointment in Religious Studies and Communication Studies. However, no students have declared this minor at any point, though enrollment in the Religious Studies minor is strong. If the Religion and Media minor is discontinued, the courses would still be available.

The committee appreciated that one goal of the minor was to attract Communication Studies majors to Religious Studies. They wondered if the pandemic played a role in the lack of enrollment and suggested that more strategic advertising might increase student interest. They were supportive of continuing the minor for another year or two to see if students could be recruited.

Professor Schlutter requested that the proposal be tabled while he takes the committee's suggestions and comments back to the department for further discussion.

3. The committee discussed some aspects of midterm and final exam policies.

Modality of final exams: CLAS does not support changes to the modality of a final exam from an in-person modality to an online modality. Changes of this nature (especially close to the end of the semester) can cause confusion for students, and issues related to the need for access to technology and internet arise. In addition, the use of online resources can contribute to academic misconduct during exams.

If an emergency arises and the instructor is unable to attend their final exam time and place, instructors should work with the department to find a solution. If the only solution is to offer the exam online, they should contact the department DEO and Associate Dean Lang for permission for undergraduate final exams to have their modality changed. It is

important that CLAS UP staff be aware of any changes to modalities to help when students share concerns.

Final Exam Review period: each fall and spring semester, the Office of the Registrar asks instructors to review a draft of the final exam schedule (see this [DEO memo](#).) The schedule works to minimize student conflicts, and the review period is important so that students receive accurate information. Final exam review is also important for SDS accommodations and for allowing students to make travel plans at the end of the semester. Changes made at the last minute are challenging for students.

The [Final Exam Schedule](#) has now been finalized for spring semester and has been posted for students. Once the information is released to students, making changes is challenging and not guaranteed, but should be requested right away if necessary. Changes to undergraduate exam times, places, and modalities now require approval from the DEO and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education.

Evening midterm exams: Associate Dean Lang proposed that CLAS develop guidelines on which types of courses can request evening exams and which should use class time. Right now any instructor can request an evening midterm exam. Evening exams are not ideal for students who have obligations of work, childcare, or a concern about their safety after dark. They can also cause students to miss regularly scheduled evening courses. However, in some courses they are necessary, particularly those with a single assessment for a large class that is spread over multiple sections. Evening exams can also allow students more time to accurately complete the assessment.

Dean Lang's proposal would be a set of criteria that would try to limit smaller courses, especially if they meet for 75 minutes, from having evening exams. For courses with multiple sections and a common assessment, midterm exams make more sense. UEPC members were supportive of implementing a midterm evening exam policy for fall 2023.

4. Adjournment of meeting

Respectfully submitted,
Erin Irish
Associate Professor, Biology
Secretary, UEPC