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

Minutes
December 2, 2021

Attending: Cornelia Lang (chair), Roxanna Curto, Jennifer Eimers (staff), Eric Gidal, Alan Huckleberry, Erin Irish, Andrew Kitchen, Cinda Coggins Mosher, Jennifer Rogers, Christine Shea, Jan Wessel, Jenna Yang

Guests: Jill Beckman, Cinzia Blum, Jennifer Haylett, Braeden Jones, Tom Paulsen

1. The minutes from November 18, 2021, were approved as written.

2. The committee returned to the discussion from October of the requirement that a syllabus be posted in MyUI for CLAS courses when the schedule is published. Jenna Yang, student representative, shared information gathered from a survey sent by Undergraduate Student Government.

   • About 300 students took the survey, with students equally distributed across their first year to their fourth year. Students who participated are from a wide variety of majors and minors.
   • When the course syllabus was available on MyUI (most of the time, approximately 70%), 75% of students read the sample syllabi and close to 90% of students found the syllabi useful for making their course selections.
   • Of the students that did not have sample syllabi available on MyUI while looking at courses, 84% of those students said they would have liked to have one.
   • When asked what students found useful about the syllabi they saw on MyUI, 80.6% said they use the course schedule the most when making course selections. The majority said that they review information about homework expectations and about half consider course descriptions.
   • Many students—primarily sciences students—would like to see sample course schedules. When it came to course descriptions, students wanted to know which topics would be covered in the class so they could determine which elective courses would better support their personal goals. Students also indicated they would like grading expectations (what is graded and how) to be clear.
   • Primarily students want expectations to be clear before they register for a course. They want to know what they will be learning and what kind of work is expected for the class.

The committee discussed the pros and cons of requiring a course syllabus in MyUI at the time of early registration and agreed that in advance of registering for the course, students should have access to information about the course. However, posting syllabi 3-6 months in advance can be a challenge for instructors. One suggestion is to synthesize the reasonable questions/key information that faculty could answer that far ahead and create a fill-in form for faculty (or department administrators) to submit that information to MyUI. Perhaps this form could move forward each semester if the information doesn’t change. Some introductory courses, like Rhetoric and introductory science courses, have templated syllabi. The committee consensus was that some course information should be available for students, but the format may vary by department and course type. The
committee feels that compliance should be strongly encouraged but not required. Further discussions with key partners (departmental administrators and the Office of the Registrar) will take place during Spring 2022, with adjustments to this policy to be brought back to UEPCC at the end of Spring 2022. Implementation in CLAS would occur no sooner than for Spring 2023 course planning and scheduling.

3. Tom Paulsen, Senior Associate Director, Admissions, joined the group (as did four other guests) to discuss the experiences of transfer students with the CLAS Core World Language requirement. The committee asked Tom to share what challenges transfer students face to complete the world language requirement. Tom noted that the goal of the Admissions Office is to help transfer students succeed at UI. One way they support success is by advising students on classes before and after admission. The Admissions Office sees the value of speaking more than one language; however, many transfer students need to start over or with the first-level course, and those world language hours take up a significant part of their remaining hours. Additionally, some transfer students have taken substantial time off from school, so are apprehensive about starting a world language. For these reasons, some students decide not to enroll in CLAS or at UI. Some transfer students are excited by the wider options of languages available, but for many, satisfying the CLAS language requirement at the UI can be challenging.

4. The committee briefly discussed FLIP credit for world language courses (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/furthering-language-incentive-program-flip) and will revisit this topic in the Spring 2022 semester.

5. Adjournment of meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Cinda Coggins Mosher
Associate Professor of Instruction, Rhetoric
Secretary of UEPCC