Minutes
University Senate Academic Policies Committee
Volume 48, No. 18
March 6, 2012


Chair Pratt called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

The minutes of the February 28, 2012 meeting were approved with the following changes/clarifications:

The minutes were amended to reflect C. Theo’s preferred wording, as brought forward by J. Olm:

Re-examining the effectiveness of the current BFA degree and entrance review requirements. This includes discussions regarding the viability of reinstituting a 60-credit BA degree, e.g., requiring students to apply for the BFA degree after completing a BA with a major in A & D.

J. Olm asked about where we were making the changes to the proposal from ULEC.

There was considerable discussion about where we were making the changes.

M. Cassidy asked if the intent of the APC was to replace the wording of “earning three credits in” with “completing a course” under the Mathematics/Statistics Competency (p. 39). The original intent to replace the wording was noted.

M. Wick suggested that when APC’s proposal goes forward to the Senate, that APC should also show where changes would be made in the official document (in this case, the course catalog). He suggested keeping a running tally of changes to the catalog, so these changes would be easy to understand as it would show the context of the changes that are recommended.

Minutes were approved as revised.

“Effective Communication” LELG: First-year writing and Communication-intensive requirements
One semester college level Writing
C. Manning and S. Watson

With the changes that are recommended for the “effective communication” requirement, UWEC would be moving away from requirements that can only be fulfilled by one course or that are department-specific. The purpose is for students to get a beginning foundation so that they will have the skills they need to succeed at UWEC and elsewhere.

Currently 97% of the students are served by English 110. Under the proposal 90% of students would be served by English 110.

The proposed array of courses will more efficiently meet the requirement of effective communication. It will make use of placement tools to better serve students.

Currently the average class size is 28 students in each writing course.

Under the proposal, the class sizes will be as follows:

- English 108 will have 15 students
- English 110 will have 20 students
- English 112 will have 22 students
- English 114 will have 22 students

The recommended or optimal class size for English 110 is 16 students

With this proposal, students can demonstrate that they meet the “effective communication” requirement with a portfolio placement option. People interested in evaluating student portfolios are welcome to join the portfolio review committee. Ideally these would be accepted on a rolling basis.

The proposed changes allow for greater flexibility as students can meet outcomes in a variety of ways.

One of the exciting possibilities is that this could help other instructors facilitate writing in their own classes by teaching sections of English 110.

Communication and Journalism:
M. Hoffman: Writing fits perfectly, but the concern is that the outcome is about writing, speaking and listening and that current proposal does not address the outcome.

M. Wood: It is a desirable thing to have fewer requirements that only one course can satisfy.

Chair Pratt asked if there were any cons to the current English 110 that the APC should consider.
Cons to the current English 110:
- English 110 is impossible to assess.
- Cannot predict how well students will do in the future based on how well they do in 110.
- Class as it currently is makes lacks consistency and the students don’t understand why they are taking it.

Transfer students and students with an AP score or 4 or 5 will be in English 112.

High-performing students would have the option to place out with a portfolio.

This is more targeted.
Writing center is provided as support for students.

The new curriculum establishes a new approach to writing. Rather than put all the students into a 5 credit class, the approach is outcomes-based and uses assessment tools to help give them what they need.

Stressed is that a small class size, rigorous curriculum with support.

R. Knight raised the issue of sustainability and mentioned the cost to add the 4.5 FTE needed to have 110 serve 90% instead of 97%.

Someone told us to think of it as an investment.

Chair Pratt announced that we will pick up vote for writing requirements at our next APC meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie H. Wical, secretary for the meeting