Chair Pratt called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm.

1. APC briefly discussed the draft language related to Skills Outcome 1 in the APC document in process articulating language covering proposed University Graduation Requirements encompassing the new Liberal Education core for the Undergraduate Catalog. APC members agreed, as a matter of unanimous consensus, that this language is fine.

2. APC and guests discussed proposed liberal education core requirements in relation to integrative learning (and, in particular, as currently articulated in the draft document in connection with Integrative Learning Outcome 1, IL1). As a result of this discussion, APC members agreed, as a matter of unanimous consensus, to support the language as currently written in the draft document articulating University Graduation requirements concerning what is required of students as part of the liberal education core, in relation to integrative learning. Members and guests discussed all of the following issues prior toward voicing this consensus agreement:

a.) who will decide, according to what criteria, and through what means, what kinds of courses and other educational experiences will count as qualifying in satisfying the integrative learning component of the liberal education core (the consensus, in response to this set of questions, was that ULEC [University Liberal Education Committee] will take charge of this responsibility, working together with faculty proposing/interested in proposing such experiences, and in consultation with UAC [University Assessment Committee]);

b.) the importance of relying upon AAC&U definitions of what counts as integrative learning, and AAC&U rubrics for assessing integrative learning, in developing UWEC criteria and procedures for determining what should count as satisfying the integrative learning component of the liberal education core;

c.) that how well a particular ‘learning experience’ satisfies the integrative learning outcome, or any other liberal education learning outcomes for that matter, will ultimately be best determined once data has been collected and examined, not prior to actually offering such an experience;
d.) that it is possible to be both flexible and rigorous in defining what kinds of learning experiences count as contributing to integrative learning;

e.) that it will be potentially somewhat complicated yet it is also possible nonetheless to minimize, if not even eliminate, any burden that requiring three integrative learning experiences as part of the liberal education core will impose on transfer students;

f.) that requiring three integrative learning experiences demonstrates the seriousness of UWEC’s commitment to integrative learning as not only one of our four liberal education learning goals and eleven liberal education learning outcomes but also as a fundamental principle underlining and guiding what we believe undergraduate liberal education can and should involve; and

g.) that requiring three integrative learning experiences as part of the liberal education core means three separate experiences, but it is impossible to specify ahead of time exactly what will and will not count as a satisfactory kind of integrative learning experience, because whether or not it is satisfactory will depend upon whether it can meet the AAC&U derived criteria specifying what an integrative learning experience must entail, as well as what specific criteria ULEC comes up with, in working together with faculty and UAC to determine whether or not a course, or other kind of educational experience, will receive approval as an option for students to pursue in satisfying this (integrative learning) dimension of the total series of liberal education core requirements.

4. APC and guests next discussed the current required minor for students not pursuing a comprehensive major, including whether this requirement should be changed and if so, how so. S. Fish spoke about Student Senate concern that the required minor might contribute toward extending average student time to graduation, while also indicating that he personally did not see this as necessarily an insurmountable problem. Discussion proceeded toward the current 60 unique credit rule; eliminating this rule, many have suggested, likely will help address the concern that S. Fish raised on behalf of Student Senate, and on behalf of students more generally. The motion was moved to remove the 60 unique credit rule from the baccalaureate degree; S. Duckworth-Lawton moved, and B. Nowlan seconded. APC voted in favor of this motion 8-0.

5. Further discussion continued on whether to keep the minor requirement, to modify it so as to allow for greater flexibility (such as, perhaps, allowing for minors of less than 24 credits, or, perhaps, allowing students to count a certificate as part of a required ‘second area of concentration’), or eliminate it. In favor of maintaining some kind of minor requirement, perhaps with modification and greater flexibility, the following points were raised:

a.) such a requirement encourages all students to be sure to take advantage of the opportunity a secondary area of concentration provides for further substantial learning in depth, and for further intellectual and personal growth, as well as enhances students’ marketability in their pursuit of desirable jobs and careers and in relation to students’ qualifications in striving to be accepted to—and offered helpful levels of support while attending—graduate school.
b.) such a requirement encourages students to explore fields that they enter UWEC knowing little to nothing about, yet which they experience of strong interest, but which they are at the same time hesitant to concentrate in because they don’t readily associate these fields with desirable job and career prospects; in working with a required major together with a required secondary area of concentration students can balance concentration in a seemingly more overtly vocationally oriented area with concentration in a seemingly less overtly vocationally oriented area.

c.) such a requirement supports the viability of academic disciplines, and intellectual fields, which are central to our mission, and our values, as a liberal arts institution, but which currently tend to rely heavily on minors to be able to sustain major along with general education course offerings.

In response, objections to the continuation of the required minor, centered on the following points:

a.) why can’t or why shouldn’t students have the option to take advantage of the benefits a minor can provide, if they choose to do so, without requiring this of all students?

b.) it seems that a significant dimension of the concern to preserve the required minor is about protecting programs and not necessarily about enabling outcomes for students.

c.) a number of current minors maintain hidden requirements, in terms of prerequisites students must satisfy before they can even begin to take any courses in the minor; this means the minor turns out to require often significantly more than 24 credits.

6.) A final concern was raised, by D. Mowry: if a move develops to eliminate prerequisites for minors, how might this effect comprehensive majors, such as social work, that require a number of prerequisites, before taking major courses, and for good reason, in order that students be qualified to do the work that they need to do throughout and over the course of the social work major sequence? This scaffolding, D. Mowry suggests, is valuable and necessary.

7.) APC agreed to resume discussion of the required minor, and possible elimination or modification of this requirement at our February 5, 2013 meeting, including voting on what specific policy in relation to this issue we want to bring to Senate.

Chair Pratt adjourned the meeting at 3:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Nowlan, Secretary for the Meeting