



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK
Friday, November 18, 2011, 1:00 p.m.
Faculty Senate Meeting

Ross Hall 123

Minutes

Present: **CAHSS**— Amrhein, Bailey, Clausen, Deiser, English, Estes, Finzer, Giammo, McAbee, Yoder. **CB**—Nickels, Watts. **CE**—Burgin, McAdams, Nolen. **CEIT**— Anderson, Jovanovic, Tebbets, Tramel, Tschumi. **LAW**—. **LIBRARY**— Russ. **CPS**— Barnes, Collier-Tenison, Golden, Rhodes, Smith-Olinde. **CSM**— Benton, Douglas, Guellich, McMillan, Sims, Yanoviak. **EX OFFICIO**— Anderson, Robertson.

Guests Present: Daryl Rice, Angela Brenton, Angela Hunter.

Absent: **CAHSS**— Anson, Bunch, Kleine, Porter. **CB**— Edison, Funk, Mitchell. **CE**— Barrett, Hayn. **CEIT**— Babiceanu. **LAW**— Fitzhugh, Goldner. **LIB**—. **CPS**—Thombre. **CSM**— Cui, Grant-Scott, Prince, Tarasenko, **EX OFFICIO**— Ford; Senate Counsel Faust; Lewis, Patterson.

I. Welcome and roll call

President Smith-Olinde welcomed the senators and called the meeting to order at 1: 02 p.m. and invited the secretary to call the roll.

II. Review of minutes

Senators were invited to comment on the minutes of the October 21, 2011, meeting of the Senate as distributed with the agenda and posted on the web site. The secretary said that, although attendance was not taken when the meeting reconvened on 10/28, she will add the names of those who had been absent on 10/21 but were present and voting on 10/28, if you tell her who you are. Corrections to the minutes requested by Smith-Olinde and Tschumi had been made. It was moved and seconded that the minutes as amended be accepted. Motion passed on a voice vote.

III. Announcements

President Smith-Olinde remarked that apparently everyone present had grown up in her church, since they were sitting in the back.

She announced that UALR now has legal counsel available on campus, Associate General Counsel Mandy Abernethy.

UALR can look forward to a portal for all our web tools and resources. There will be a single sign-on for BOSS, Blackboard, and e-mail. Aaron Baker gave an overview of the plan at CLG [Chancellor's Leadership Group]; they anticipate portal nirvana but not immediately.

President Smith-Olinde had also wanted to show charts with some statistics that Sandra Robertson presented at CLG but the equipment in RH 123 didn't recognize her thumb drive. The information concerned degrees awarded to UALR native students vs transfers, with Pulaski Tech transfers split out separately. Over the last 3 years, native UALR students were about 50% of those receiving baccalaureate degrees (just under 50% in 2008-09 and 2009-10; up to 51% in 2010-11). The number of PTC transfers who received baccalaureate degrees has been inching upward, from 9.4% in 2008-09, to 11.3% in 2009-10, to 14.1% in 2010-11.

Smith-Olinde also reminded Senators that today is the last regularly scheduled Senate meeting of the fall semester.

IV. Introduction of New Topics (2 minute limit; no discussion)

President Smith-Olinde invited senators to address topics of interest to the body.

Yoder invited Senators to pick up a book mark with the schedule of Matthew Abraham's events November 21 and 22. Abraham's lectures and colloquium are relevant to the work of revising the core and the requirements for the baccalaureate degree; his topic is "The Humanities on Life Support? Re/ (En) visioning the Future of the Liberal Arts in the Corporate University.

V. Reports

A. Chancellor: Joel Anderson

Chancellor Anderson: This is a room that makes me suffer nostalgia – I taught many students here, but it was more primitive at the time. Derek Fisher was in one of my classes here as a freshman in the early 1990s.

I want to say something about Mandy Abernethy too. I'm happy to have a General Counsel posted on our campus. We are the third campus in the state to have one. At one time all the lawyers were in the system office, but that has been changing. You should know that the campuses pay for these folks, but we are very happy to have her. She has great credentials; she comes to us from the Attorney General's office.

I'm in a terrific mood; the Board of Trustees met this morning and now it's over. UALR makes a good impression – so thanks to all of you for that.

Chancellor Anderson passed out and discussed three handouts of immediate relevance. The first is titled *UALR Online 12-year History*. The new University of Arkansas System President, Dr. Donald Bobbitt, comes to us from a campus that was a leader in online programs, the University of Texas at Arlington. What you see is that UALR has had very significant growth, from 570 SSCH in online enrollments in 1999-2000, to 70,715 SSCH in 2010-11.

The second handout is *Online SSCH Comparison by Institution*. You see that UALR, for a good number of years, was producing many more SSCH in online courses than the others. This graph gives you a sense of where we are; we have a lot of faculty with experience who know how to do this very well. You'll be hearing more about Dr. Bobbitt and the Board of Trustees.

The third handout has "Sociology and Anthropology at the top. To give you some setting for this information: for a number of years now, at the end of each semester, I've met with each head coach and athletic director to look at the academic progress of those students. Last year Provost Belcher and I started to meet with each chair to do essentially the same exercises, but once a year rather than every semester. Data on the handout are from Jeff Nash, Chair of Sociology; you can see the number of transfer hours the students brought in and other key indicators; the students' names and T-numbers have been deleted. Look at the right side of the page, at the first student's data: Is this student going to make it? If a student is close to graduating, can we nudge them? Can we find out why they've not gone on to graduate? We look at the total number of withdrawals they have done, the total number of transfer hours. We compare the cumulative GPA with the last semester's GPA, and typically those are pretty close together but if there is a gap, that should be a flag for the advisor. Reaching out to the student may help. I've always been intrigued by the highest composite ACT. What you see are some very low ACT scores but the students are achieving well. I see that as a big commendation to you. We've done an excellent job, given those indicators. I thought you would be interested in our increasing ability to provide data that will help move more students on to graduation.

Discussion:

Tschumi – For these data, how is online defined?

Provost Robertson – As courses taught totally online.

Tschumi – I would also like to see how we are doing in blended courses.

Jovanovic – As the person who brought WebCT here in 1999, I remember that back then, students were really interested in online courses for flexibility. But today, more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the students, when I mention online courses, say "I don't want that" – now that it's commonplace.

Provost Robertson – As devil's advocate (Chancellor Anderson: "An easy role for her. . ."), all our online courses fill up faster than Face to Face.

Chancellor Anderson – It's a disruptive technology . . . I'm proud of the fact that UALR has been out in front; at the same time, I realize there is much to do. Whatever we think of online instruction, it's here, it's coming, and it's up to us to learn how to do it. There are questions as to how to preserve the integrity of the courses: how do you know that the person on the other end is really the student? It's a legitimate question and there are new technologies that will make that easier, but I rely on the faculty and at some point, we just have to rely on the individual [student]. But the integrity issue is the layperson's issue.

Yoder – I used to do compressed video classes a lot – have those been abandoned?

Chancellor Anderson – More or less, they have.

Provost Robertson – Wimba is what I call Skype on Steroids, it has taken the place of compressed video and more; it is accessible to any student.

Chancellor Anderson – Some faculty do this well, some less so. We can rejoice in the diversity.

Tramel – We made Face-to-Face and online students take the same test and that pleased my advisory board.

Chancellor Anderson – When you think about the fact that a soldier in Kabul and a factory worker here can be participating in the same class, that's pretty impressive.

Watts – Do we have a consistent policy on capping them [online courses] at 18?

Chancellor Anderson -- I believe the average Face-to-Face class is 13 or 14 campus wide. System President Bobbitt is interested in multiple start times; I think it makes all the sense in the world. Not every class needs to be 15 weeks long. It's exciting.

B. Provost: Sandra Robertson

Provost Robertson: I don't really have a report. I decided not to do a report because your agenda is long. I want to hear what you have to say and will reserve the right to say something whenever I want to.

C. Director, Office of Communications: Judy Williams – New UALR ad Campaign:

President Smith-Olinde relayed the information that the ads are not yet ready, so we won't be receiving that report today.

D. Graduate Council Chair: Amanda Nolen

Nolen: Grad council has had a light semester. The graduate coordinators and department chair survey was successfully administered in early November and I hope to report the findings in January. At our final meeting on November 30, we will discuss a possible change to graduate faculty status. We currently have two statuses, affiliate and full. We are deliberating whether that's sufficient and perhaps more levels are needed. One such possibility is to divide the current "Full Graduate Status" into a Master's status and Doctoral status. You are welcome to join our meetings or contact your representative and convey comments, questions, or concerns to us.

E. Undergraduate Council Chair: Jeanette Clausen

Clausen: The UGC has also had a rather light load so far this semester. We have approved several course and program changes; you can read about them on the web site if you are interested. We are also in the process of discussing whether to propose a change in UALR's course withdrawal policy and if so, what kind. Daryl Rice, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success, brought this topic to our attention as an issue for student success. He presented data on the large numbers of UALR students who withdrew from classes in fall 2010 and spring 2011, and suggested that UALR's extremely lenient course withdrawal policy might not be as student-friendly as we may think. Certainly, large numbers of course withdrawals are not going to advance the goal of doubling our numbers of graduates by 2020.

To refresh your memory, UALR students can withdraw from a course without penalty and without giving a reason through the 12th week of classes; ours is among the most lenient withdrawal policies in the state:

9 th week	Henderson State, Lyons U
10 th week	Hendrix U, SAU Magnolia, UAPB
11 th week	UA Fort Smith, UA Monticello
12 th week	ASU Jonesboro, Harding U, U of A F'ville, UALR
14 th week	Arkansas Tech

Data on UALR course withdrawals, 2010-11:

In fall 2010 there were 3,036 withdrawals by 2,162 students (not counting students who withdrew from the university).

In spring 2011 there were 2,779 withdrawals by 1,976 students (again, not counting those who withdrew from the university).

That's a lot of students who paid for classes they didn't complete.

The UGC also consulted retention literature compiled for us by John Siegel of the Library: reports by Clifford Adelman, Senior Research Analyst at the U.S. Department of Education, whose work is based on huge data sets representing years of work (*Answers in the Toolbox: Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns and Bachelor's Degree Attainment*, 1999; and *The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School through College*, 2006); also several white papers and publications by some of the universities that have grappled with the issue of excessive numbers of withdrawals (University of Minnesota; Illinois State U; Southeastern Louisiana University; University of South Alabama). Here I just want to highlight a few points that are made in several of these publications:

“ . . . one of the most degree-crippling features of undergraduate histories is an excessive volume of courses from which the student withdrew without penalty and those the student repeated. (*Toolbox Revisited*, p. xxii)

“For all students, there is a clear correlation between high numbers of W grades (3 or more) and lower rates of graduation” (U Minnesota)

“Illinois State University discovered that the median time to degree rates are approximately 4 years for students with no withdrawal hours, 5 years for students with a record of 1 or 2 withdrawals, and 6 years for students with 3 or 4 withdrawals” (p. 19)

“The student who withdraws from a course required for a degree or one who repeats a course does increase the credit hours required for a degree and thus increases the cost to the state and decreases the overall capacity of the postsecondary system.” (Florida State, p. 7).

At first glance it seems that 3 or 4 withdrawals isn't a high number – but a moment's reflection makes it obvious that 3 or 4 courses, if they are needed for the student's degree, can easily delay graduation by a semester or, if the courses are not offered every semester, by a year. Besides delaying graduation, excessive course withdrawals add to the cost of the student's degree – both in terms of money paid / borrowed by the student and his/her family and in terms of resources provided by UALR and the State of Arkansas.

What should UALR do about this? Other institutions have implemented a variety of measures, such as requiring the student to get permission to withdraw, limiting the total number of W grades a student can accumulate, limiting the number of times a student can repeat a class, and withholding financial aid for excessive withdrawals. UGC members are very reluctant to propose any change that might be perceived as punitive to students, and no one wants to prevent students from withdrawing from courses in which they are floundering, or over their heads, or need to exit because of unforeseeable family or work emergencies.

On the other hand, we believe that there should be “informed consent” – that students should be aware of possible consequences of withdrawing from a course, including delayed graduation, increased student loan debt, and also the fact that multiple grades of W, while they are benign in the sense that they don’t affect the student’s GPA, may have a negative impact, for example, on applications to graduate school or law school.

We have discussed the possibility of requiring the instructor’s signature for withdrawal from any course after the first two weeks of the semester (drop/add period). The intent is to ensure that the student is fully informed before making a decision to withdraw – maybe the student is right and withdrawal is their best option, but maybe they are not doing as badly as they fear. In such a case, consultation with the instructor could encourage the student to finish the course after all.

We haven’t finished our discussion by any means. We are looking for options on how to handle a signature requirement for students in online courses, and how to deal with students who wait until the 11th hour and then find that their instructor is out of the country and can’t be reached for several days. We also agree that simply adding a signature requirement and asking students to give a reason for withdrawing is a VERY small step that won’t solve anything in and of itself – rather, there will have to be an educational process involving faculty, staff, academic advisors, AND students. We view this as one step toward creating a campus culture that fosters student responsibility and is conducive to student success. I look forward to hearing your thoughts – perhaps another time, since we have a full agenda.

Discussion:

Provost Robertson – I’m remembering the case of a student who withdrew from 13 classes. Performance funding is coming and course completion is a large part of it; we will lose money [funding] on that kind of student.

Sims – In UGC, we discovered that Banner won’t do all the things we wanted to do. It won’t handle the idea of letting students drop the same class only twice.

Rice – Well, “Vanilla” Banner won’t, that’s correct. Banner could be modified, but it’s expensive.

Tschumi – It seems that there’s a correlation between the number of W’s and the success of the student. The real question is: if we shift that date around does that affect the data. We’ve had different withdrawal dates but . . .

Rice – I actually started with the idea of the date because I kept hearing at conferences that a late withdrawal date is not a helpful policy for student success. I went to grad council and to UGC – there seemed to be less interest in a later date than in requiring the student to get some kind of approval.

Smith-Olinde – Moving the date came up in Senate last year – has UGC considered that?
(Clausen: yes).

Provost Robertson – A long time ago, Tom McMillan said students should not have more than two times to take a course. Students will rise to the level we expect them to.

VI. New Business

A. Motion: FS # 2011-12_04. December Graduates. Second needed, majority vote at one meeting.

Estes moved, and Tschumi seconded FS 2011-12_04:

That the Faculty Senate approve the December 2011 graduation of students who have met all the requirements of their respective programs and colleges.

The motion passed on a voice vote.

B. Resolution: FS # 2011-12_05. Faculty Summer Pay, and C. Resolution: FS # 2011-12_06. Regarding Faculty Health Insurance. Second needed; majority vote at one meeting.

President Smith-Olinde recognized Senator Watts.

Watts said he would speak to both resolutions at once because they are related. One could be handled at UALR but the other has to go up the system. Background: a COB faculty member, who resigned on good terms; submitted a letter expressing his intent to resign at the end of the summer term. He was told (we are not sure by whom) to change the effective date to the end of the spring semester. He did this and then was told he was no longer on contract and ended up being paid as an adjunct for summer teaching, which cost him thousands of dollars. COB is not a place where I'd expect support for workers' rights, but in a case like this If we put this [policy] in place, we create an incentive for faculty not to tell us when they are leaving. Case in point: another faculty member did not notify us until the very last minute – when asked why, he said: I heard what happened to the other guy, I had to protect myself. What we have here is a real case study. Then I also found that your insurance coverage ceases at end of the 9 month contract, if you resign with that effective date. Yet we have our portion of the insurance withheld to cover the summer AND we have earned the portion paid by the university. We want to create a policy that is fair to faculty and gives the university sufficient time to begin searching for a replacement for faculty who resign.

Watts moved, and Nickels seconded **FS 2011-12-05 Faculty Summer Pay**.

WHEREAS it is important that the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) have the maximum amount of time possible to seek highly qualified replacements for faculty who are leaving UALR; and

WHEREAS the goal of continuity is best served when faculty who are leaving UALR provide as much notice of their departure as possible to the University; and

WHEREAS it is important that faculty leaving UALR in good standing be treated in a fair, ethical way; and

WHEREAS it is important to faculty leaving UALR that they not lose summer teaching compensation, to which they would have otherwise been entitled,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF UALR that the Faculty Senate urges that the following be adopted as policy, reflecting a general understanding, for UALR and for faculty leaving the University in good standing:

1. Faculty are encouraged to notify the administration as soon as possible if they plan to leave UALR. They may specify in their notice to the University if they plan to terminate at the end of the Fall semester, at the end of the Spring semester, at the end of the first five-week Summer session, at the end of the second five-week Summer session, or at the end of the ten-week Summer Session.
2. Faculty will not be punished or lose significant benefits including, but not limited to, summer teaching (subject to availability, as outlined in the Faculty Handbook) for giving notice of leaving UALR.
3. Specifically, a faculty member who resigns other than at the end of the Fall semester and teaches during his or her final summer at UALR will be paid as specified under the Faculty Handbook and will not be paid as an adjunct or other appointment that would result in a lowering of the faculty member's compensation.
4. To insure the highest quality replacement for the departing faculty member, advertising for the position being vacated may begin as soon as the faculty member tenders notice of leaving UALR.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

5. Upon approval by the UALR Faculty Senate, this policy ~~statement~~ *recommendation* shall be forwarded to any and all appropriate bodies to encourage its adoption as a policy for the University as a whole

Respectfully Submitted by:

Michael Watts
UALR Faculty Senator

Discussion and Vote:

Tschumi – Which one has to go to the system?

Provost Robertson – Insurance.

Tschumi – Have you contacted Fayetteville? (Answer: Yes, Ford has, and we are working to get them to take action too.)

President Smith-Olinde called for a vote. The motion passed on a voice vote.

**C. Resolution: FS # 2011-12_06. Regarding Faculty Health Insurance.
Second needed; majority vote at one meeting.**

Watts moved, and English seconded, FS 2011-12_06.

WHEREAS it is important that the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) have the maximum amount of time possible to seek highly qualified replacements for faculty who are leaving UALR; and

WHEREAS the goal of continuity is best served when faculty who are leaving UALR provide as much notice of their departure as possible to the University; and

WHEREAS it is important that faculty leaving UALR in good standing be treated in a fair, ethical way; and

WHEREAS it is important to faculty leaving UALR that they not have a lapse in health insurance coverage or other significant benefits, to which they would have otherwise been entitled,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE FACULTY SENATE OF UALR that the Faculty Senate urges that the following be adopted as policy, reflecting a general understanding, for UALR and for faculty leaving the University in good standing:

1. Faculty are encouraged to notify the administration as soon as possible if they plan to leave UALR. They may specify in their notice to the University if they plan to terminate at the end of the Fall semester, at the end of the Spring semester, at the end of the first five-week Summer session, at the end of the second five-week Summer session, or at the end of the ten-week summer session.
2. Faculty will not be punished or lose significant benefits including, but not limited to, insurance coverage for giving notice of leaving UALR.
3. Specifically, a faculty member, until the official date of resignation, will continue to be covered by any insurance or other benefit to which the faculty member would otherwise be entitled.
4. To insure the highest quality replacement for the departing faculty member, advertising for the position being vacated may begin as soon as the faculty member tenders notice of leaving UALR.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

5. Upon approval by the UALR Faculty Senate, this policy ~~statement~~ *recommendation* shall be forwarded to any and all appropriate bodies to encourage its adoption as a policy for the University and for the University of Arkansas System as a whole.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Michael Watts
UALR Faculty Senator

Vote:

There was no debate. President Smith-Olinde called for a vote. The motion passed on a voice vote.

Discussion:

Nickels – I thought we were self-insured. Why do we have to deal with an insurance company?

Provost Robertson – I'm not sure. We are working on it. We hope for a resolution soon.

Watts – On the issue of summer pay, someone should figure out how to pay that faculty member what he should have been paid for his summer teaching.

Jovanovic – This issue of paying the premium over 9 months: when does it start?

Provost Robertson – August 15.

Rice – It happened in AHSS [that departing faculty had their insurance benefits cut off], and people were given their money back [=their share of the premium for the summer months].

D. Motion: *FS # 2011-12_07. Academic Calendar 2014-15. From the Academic Calendar and Schedules Committee. No second needed; majority vote at one meeting.*

President Smith-Olinde recognized Jason Kushner, chair of the Academic Calendar and Schedules Committee. Kushner: I didn't come prepared for a speaking role. A senator has to move the calendar. I'm just here to answer questions.

Sims moved, and Tramel seconded, that the Faculty Senate approve the attached calendar (Attachment A), with Fall Break, for 2014-15 [= **FS 2011-12_07**]

Discussion:

Burgin – Why do we need a fall break? We in the College of Education are married to the Little Rock Schools – we have interns, student teachers, and so on working in the schools. What's so great about a fall break?

Barnes – The sense we got [in the committee] was that it's too much to attach additional days to the Thanksgiving break, so we put it earlier; we find that students start to wear thin by mid-semester.

Bailey – Many students have requested this.

Deiser – I see it as a sort of half-time; I think it would enhance student performance.

Smith-Olinde – Under this calendar, classes would begin on Monday Aug 18; if we adopt this calendar, we would have to have university, college, and departmental meetings on the Thursday and Friday [August 14 and 15]; we need to have the meetings and the expectation is that we will attend them.

Tschumi – If Ford were here we would hear

Smith-Olinde [interrupting] – but he’s not here, so we don’t have to hear it.

Deiser – The 26th of November says there are no classes; that’s the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. So Thanksgiving turns into a 3-day break.

Giammo – I thought it was an either-or: to have no classes on that Wednesday or a fall break.

Burgin – If we had that Wednesday off, it would match the Little Rock School District.

Watts – As the calendar is set here, there are 15 Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays – it’s as clean as it can be.

English – Does this include no classes on Wednesday? I kind of like Wednesday classes.

President Smith-Olinde called for a vote by show of hands. **FS 2011-12_07** passed by a vote of 20 for, 8 opposed, and 2 abstentions.

E. Resolution: *FS # 2011-12_08*. To Adopt the ADHE State Minimum Core as the Framework for the UALR General Education Requirements. Second needed; majority vote at one meeting.

Jovanovich moved, and Tramel seconded, “just the resolves” [the action part of the motion], which he distributed as a handout. [In what follows, the omitted portions of the resolution on the agenda are indicated by ~~strikethrough~~ and new material is indicated by *italics*.]

~~**Whereas**, The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) adopted the State Minimum Core more than 20 years ago, in response to a state legislation passed in 1989;~~

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~~**Whereas**, All State Minimum Core courses taken at other state institutions in Arkansas must be fully transferrable to UALR and must be applied to UALR general education requirements;~~

~~**Whereas**, The Roger Phillips Transfer Act of 2009 prevents UALR from requiring transfer students to take lower division general education courses if they hold an Associate of Arts, Associate of Arts in Teaching, or Associate of Science degree from state institutions in Arkansas, with the following exceptions:~~

- ~~• The course is a prerequisite for a course in the student’s major degree program~~
- ~~• The course is a required course in the student’s major degree program, and the student has not completed a comparable course~~
- ~~• The course is required by independent licensing or accrediting bodies~~

- ~~• The student received a 'D' grade in the course and UALR does not accept it for transfer credit~~
- ~~• Any combination of two or more of the above reasons;~~

~~**Whereas,** All transfer students, from public or private, in-state or out-of-state, institutions, are eligible for waivers, at the discretion of the major department, through the Trans-Flex program, to satisfy the UALR general education requirements by completing the ADHE State Minimum Core courses;~~

~~**Whereas,** The only students who absolutely must complete the UALR general education requirements in full are students who have chosen UALR as their primary institution of higher education and offer fewer than 12 credit hour of transfer courses;~~

~~**Whereas,** More than two-thirds of UALR graduates every semester are transfer students who do not need to satisfy the UALR general education requirements in full;~~

~~**Whereas,** Fairness dictates that UALR establish the same general education requirements for all students;~~

~~**Whereas,** the only way to establish the same general education requirements for all students is to modify the UALR general education requirements so that they conform to the ADHE State Minimum Core;~~

~~**Whereas,** All other four-year state institutions in Arkansas have already adopted the ADHE State Minimum Core as the basis for their general education requirements; and~~

~~**Whereas,** the Arkansas General Assembly has passed legislation establishing a maximum of 120 semester credit hours for baccalaureate degree programs, thereby making it more difficult to design curricula with a larger than necessary general education requirement; now, therefore, be it~~

Resolved, That the UALR Faculty Senate hereby declares its intent to adopt the ADHE State Minimum Core, as described in Agenda Item No. 9, *State Minimum Core Required for Baccalaureate Degrees*, dated April 20, 1990 (attached), as the UALR general education requirements;

Resolved, That the UALR Undergraduate Curriculum Revision (UCR) Task Force is hereby directed to use the ADHE State Minimum Core as the framework for its recommendations regarding modifications to the UALR general education requirements;

Resolved, That the UALR UCR Task Force is hereby directed to develop a list of courses and/or alpha codes (e.g., ENGL, RHET, etc.) of courses that can be used by students to satisfy the UALR general education requirements in each category of the ADHE State Minimum Core; and

Resolved, That the UALR UCR Task Force gather departmental recommendations for the aforementioned lists, and develop those lists to be as inclusive as possible of all courses offered at UALR, and to allow students as much flexibility as is possible, while still satisfying the ADHE State Minimum Core.

Brief Description:

In short, the motion establishes the clear intent of the Faculty Senate to adopt the 35-hour ADHE State Minimum Core as the UALR general education requirements. It also guides the Undergraduate Curriculum Revision (UCR) Task Force in three specific ways:

1. Use the ADHE State Minimum Core as the framework for its recommendations concerning UALR general education requirements.
2. Develop lists of courses, or lists of alpha codes (e.g., ENGL, RHET, etc.) that can be used by students to satisfy each category described in the ADHE State Minimum Core.
3. Gather recommendations for lists from departments, develop inclusive lists, and allow as much flexibility as possible while still meeting the ADHE requirements.

The primary rationale is fairness: all UALR students should be subject to the same general education requirements. Legal constraints prevent UALR from requiring many transfer students from completing general education requirements in excess of the ADHE State Minimum Core. All other transfer students can have UALR core requirements waived through the Trans-Flex program, which was adopted by the UALR Faculty Senate last year. That means that the requirements in excess of the State Minimum Core apply mostly to students who have chosen UALR as their primary institution of higher education. Strangely, we saddle these students with unnecessarily large and inflexible core requirements that most transfer students do not have to satisfy. Since UALR cannot change the laws regarding transfer students, the only path to fairness is to adopt the ADHE State Minimum Core as the UALR general education requirement. This would require all UALR students, transfer or non-transfer, to complete the same general education requirements.

Two secondary reasons are offered. First, all other four-year public institutions of higher education have already adopted the State Minimum Core as their general education requirements. It is difficult to justify general education requirements in excess of every other institution in the state. Secondly, recent legislation has established a cap of 120 credit hours on baccalaureate degrees. While some waivers might be granted, this new requirement provides additional pressure to reduce general education requirements so as not to damage major programs and the ability of students to seek employment or attend graduate school in their chosen specialty.

Commentary:

Rationale: Fairness. *Two students who receive the same degree from UALR should not be subject to different general education requirements. Currently, transfer students have different requirements than non-transfer students.*

Rationale: Flexibility. *The diverse course offerings of the various programs, departments, colleges, and schools that comprise the university should be accessible to students, and students should have the flexibility to explore subjects of interest while obtaining a broad undergraduate education.*

Respectfully Submitted by:

Nickolas S. Jovanovic
UALR Faculty Senator

Discussion of FS 2011-12_08 and vote:

Tschumi – Insert “Commentary” above “Rationale.”

Jovanovich – The basic issue is fairness; students taking same major should have the same core. Every institution in Arkansas has some version of the state minimum core and we should adopt this too. Also, flexibility: my students have no free electives because the courses they must take for the core don’t give them any flexibility. I have other handouts. This [indicating handout] is the state minimum core that’s referenced; the core the state has had for more than 20 years. Another handout shows the flexibility that Fayetteville has in their core – their students have much more flexibility than ours; I don’t see why we can’t do something similar. One additional rationale is that having the state minimum core will make everything more efficient.

Giammo – The main thing I want to think about is that at our last meeting, we said we wanted to create task groups to work on new requirements. I do not think we should make this decision until we’ve heard from the Task Groups – we need to have the conversation before making a decision. I would make a motion to table . . .

Jovanovich – A motion to table is out of order unless there is pressing business that the Senate has to move ahead with. [Parliamentarian Steve Yanoviak verified that this is correct and that a motion to table is out of order.]

Sims – We are not Fayetteville. And the second thing is, your second motion means that NO Students will have the same core.

Jovanovic – I would like to remind you that we’ve had this discussion for about five years now. Ford’s response was to create this plan for reviewing the core; it’s not like my proposal is out of the blue – really it’s been around since 1999, when we started the Engineering program. In my program there are actually 149 hours (we made algebra, comp 1 and other courses into pre-admission requirements in order to keep the total to 128. My program is subject to a core that requires 44 hours of . . .

English – I thought you were talking about a more flexible curriculum and this seems to be less flexible.

Jovanovic – My proposal would allow any ENGL course to meet a humanities requirement; that would be flexible.

English – Are you saying students could take an engineering course to meet a core requirement?

Jovanovic – I’m not making any specific recommendations. The [UCR] Task Force should do that.

Giammo – I move to postpone this indefinitely. Sims seconded this motion.

Douglas – Do we have a date by which we expect a report from the Task Force?

Brenton – We are asking the Task Groups to report to UCR by March 15th –it depends on whether you are asking for raw data or a finished report from UCR.

Yoder – I wish to speak in favor of Joe [Giammo]’s motion; Nick’s motion, it seems to me, is premature.

Tschumi – I’m in favor of voting on this now; for me, the primary purpose is putting in place what the structure is for the task groups. My concern is that critical thinking cannot be taught only in lower-level courses, it needs to be in upper-level hours and outside of the student’s discipline. So I think giving the work groups guidance at this point is an advantage. I’m in favor of approving this today.

Jovanovic to Giammo – Are you willing to change your motion to postpone until there is a report from the Task Force?

Giammo: Yes, I'm willing to go until May. I'm willing to change my motion.

Tramel – How many people are on these task groups right now?

Brenton -- Each group has from 8 to 12 members; the biggest one may have 14. They are well populated.

Smith-Olinde -- The motion on the floor as amended is to postpone until May. Smith-Olinde called for a vote by show of hands. The motion carried. **We will postpone FS 2011-12_08 until May.**

F. Resolution: *FS # 2011-12_09*. To Extend Eligibility for the Trans-Flex Program to All UALR Students. Second needed; majority vote at one meeting.

Jovanovic moved, and Tramel seconded, “just the resolves” of FS **2011-12_09**. [In what follows, the omitted portions of the resolution on the agenda are indicated by ~~strikethrough~~ and new material is indicated by *italics*.]

~~**Whereas,** The UALR Faculty Senate approved a pilot program to facilitate acceptance of transfer coursework by allowing four departments to grant waivers of some degree requirements, including:~~

- ~~1. UALR core requirements~~
- ~~2. Major requirements~~
- ~~3. Minor requirements~~
- ~~4. Upper-division 45-hour requirement~~
- ~~5. Residency 30-hour requirement;~~

~~**Whereas,** Approximately one year ago, the UALR Faculty Senate extended the eligibility for the waivers in pilot program to transfer students in all UALR departments;~~

~~**Whereas,** Last summer, this university-wide program was implemented through promulgation of the policy document entitled *Departmental Authority to Modify Requirements for Transfer Students (Trans-Flex)*;~~

~~**Whereas,** UALR is legally obliged to accept core courses taken at other state institutions for transfer to UALR and apply those courses toward UALR core requirements;~~

~~**Whereas,** UALR cannot require a transfer student with an Associate of Arts, Associate of Arts in Teaching, or Associate of Science degree to take lower-division general education courses, except under certain circumstances enumerated in the Roger Phillips Transfer Act;~~

~~**Whereas,** The effect of these policies is to treat all transfer students the same with respect to general education requirements, regardless of whether they transfer from a two-year institution, a four-year institution, an in-state institution, an out-of-state institution, a public institution, or a private institution;~~

~~**Whereas,** The only students who cannot satisfy the UALR general education requirements with the ADHE State Minimum Core are non-transfer students, who have chosen UALR as their primary institution of higher education; and~~

~~**Whereas,** This violates a basic principle of fairness, in that a majority of students (transfer students) must complete one set of general education requirements (ADHE State Minimum Core), while a minority of students (non-transfer students) must complete a larger and less flexible set of general education requirements (UALR Core); now, therefore, be it~~

~~**Resolved,** That all UALR students, not just transfer students, are hereby eligible to participate in the Trans-Flex program and eligible to receive all of the same accommodations as transfer students.~~

~~**Brief Description:-**~~

~~Adoption of this resolution will allow departments to immediately start using the ADHE State Minimum Core, if they desire, by granting waivers to all students, not just transfer students, via the Trans-Flex program.~~

~~**Rationale:**~~

~~The primary rationale is fairness: all UALR students should be subject to the same general education requirements.~~

~~Secondarily, the Undergraduate Curriculum Revision Task Force is “rethinking” the entire baccalaureate degree, not just revising the general education (UALR core) requirements. The UCR Task Force has no deadline, and is likely to work for some time before making specific curriculum recommendations to the Faculty Senate. In the meantime, with every semester that goes by, students who chose UALR as their primary institution of higher education are saddled with general education requirements that are unnecessarily large and inflexible, while many (perhaps most) transfer students simply need to satisfy the ADHE State Minimum Core.~~

~~Extending eligibility for the Trans-Flex program to all UALR students will allow departments to grant waivers for UALR Core requirements, with the condition that the ADHE State Minimum Core is satisfied. This will effectively implement the ADHE State Minimum Core as the UALR general education requirement in those departments that choose to do so, which will allow all students to be treated fairly.~~

~~In addition, recent legislation has established a cap of 120 credit hours on baccalaureate degrees. While some waivers might be granted, this new requirement provides additional pressure to reduce general education requirements so as not to damage major programs and the ability of students to seek employment or attend graduate school in their chosen specialty.~~

Rationale: *As with Motion E [FS 2011-12_08], fairness and flexibility are the reasons for this motion. Adoption of this resolution will allow departments to immediately start using the ADHE State Minimum core, if they desire, by granting waivers to all students, not just transfer students, via the Trans-Flex program. Other waivers now available to transfer students, i.e., major and minor requirements, residency hour requirement, and upper level hours requirement, would also be available to non-transfer students. In other words, all students would be eligible for the same waivers.*

Respectfully Submitted by:

Nickolas S. Jovanovic
UALR Faculty Senator

President Smith-Olinde invited discussion.

Rice – I’ve been charged with monitoring this [Trans-Flex] since July 1. There are no limits on it. I’ve seen requests to reduce upper-level hours by as much as 19. Once you start backing off on the upper-level hours, I’m uncomfortable calling it a baccalaureate degree. It makes me nervous. This body needs to look at this legislation carefully. The chancellor wanted us to do this [Trans-Flex] three years ago; it was well-intended. If you do this [extend to all students], there is going to be a backlash. The legislation, even for transfer students, needs to be tightened up.

Tschumi – I fully agree with what Daryl said; I was uncomfortable at the beginning. I thought there were loopholes and what Daryl is telling us verifies those concerns. We put in requirements for our native students – to now say, we’re just going to toss out whatever requirements we want to, undermines the integrity of the degree.

Rice – The Senate will get a fuller report.

Jovanovic – This legislation would only extend Trans-Flex to all students; it would allow all departments to treat all students the same.

Smith-Olinde – My recollection was that the reason was to help students who transfer in large numbers of hours. How does this relate to our native students?

Jovanovic – As long as they don’t violate the state minimum core . . .

Smith-Olinde – So your concern is with core requirements?

Rice – The idea that transfer students don’t face the same requirements as native students is just wrong – most transfer students bring in more than 35 hours [of core], and our core doesn’t have a blessed thing to do with the excess hours that transfer students bring in. Trans Flex has been invoked 20 times (see my email, first sent on 17 November 2011, for factual information about how this program has been used). There are many reasons why students bring in excess hours.

Watts – I have a question about Trans-Flex: The decision is made by the chairs, is that correct?

Smith-Olinde – I am the one who does it in our department.

Jovanovic – How you run your departments is up to you; it’s a faculty decision, but if you let the chair do it . . . if departments aren’t doing oversight of their chair . . .

Angela Hunter – Without even knowing the numbers that Daryl reported, I had grave concerns about Trans-Flex; it just shifted the responsibility. If we would do that with all students – I feel that we must ask: Are we a university? If we give this power to basically design degrees, we are basically a very loose federation. I want oversight by the faculty.

Smith-Olinde – Does anyone want to speak in favor of the motion?

Jovanovic – If you're opposed to Trans-Flex, my motion is not the issue. If you vote this down, you're saying you approve treating students unfairly.

Giammo – I disagree with that. I think you're making an assumption that treating every student exactly the same is fairness, but there are reasons to treat students differently under different circumstances.

Rice – Thus spake Aristotle.

Giammo – But I go by Joe.

Tramel – We [in Construction Management] sit down as a faculty to discuss our decisions; as chair, I go through the records– and I did three of my native students thinking they were transfer students. Our policy was, if they had taken a course elsewhere and it was a core course there, it could be counted here.

Smith-Olinde – I've had a student who retook a course and wanted me to refund their money.

Sims – If you didn't like interleague play in major league baseball, you wouldn't vote to expand interleague baseball.

Tschumi -- When Joel first was proposing this, he felt there was a lot of similarity across universities. What our students need is a solid core, a standard it can be based on.

Giammo – There's a difference between students with 90 transfer hours and students with 12 transfer hours.

Douglas -- When will we get a report?

Rice – I can give you one whenever you want one.

Jovanovic – Our core is 44 and the state minimum is 35, so the maximum we are talking about is 9 hours (the EIT core is 41 hours).

Tramel – We have to meet ABET requirements.

Smith-Olinde – But ABET specifies competencies.

Benton moved, and Douglas seconded, to postpone voting on FS 2011-12_09 until the Senate has received a report from Rice. The motion passed on a voice vote.

VII. Open Forum

No discussion topics were proposed.

VII. Adjourned at 3:10pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Clausen, Secretary

Academic Calendar 2014-2015

Academic Calendar Draft

August 14						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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September 14						
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October 14						
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December 14						
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January 15						
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August

18 Fall classes begin

23 Saturday Classes Begin

September

1 Labor Day Holiday

October

13 Fall break; no classes

14 Fall break; no classes

November

13 Last day to drop an individual class with a grade of W, 5 pm

26 No classes

27 Thanksgiving Holiday, no classes

28 Thanksgiving Holiday, no classes

29 Thanksgiving Holiday, no classes

30 Thanksgiving Holiday, no classes

December

1 Classes Resume

8 Last day of classes; last day to withdraw, 5 p.m.

9 Consultation day; finals begin

16 Last final exam

18 Commencement - TBD

19 Grades due, 12 noon

February 15						
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April 15						
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June 15						
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July 15						
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2014-2015 Academic Calendar Draft

Page 2

January						
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January

- 12 Spring classes begin
- 17 Saturday classes begin
- 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

February						
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March

- 18 Incomplete deadline for Fall 2014
- 23 Spring Break - to be determined

March						
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April

- 10 Last day to drop an individual class with a grade of W, 5pm

April						
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May

- 4 Last day of class; last day to withdraw from all classes, 5pm
- 5 Consultation Day; finals begin
- 12 Last Day of finals

May						
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- 15 Spring grades due by noon

- 16 Commencement- Tentative - TBD

- 25 Memorial Day Holiday

- 26 Summer 1 and 2 classes begin

June

- 22 Summer 2 last day to drop an individual class with a grade of W, 5pm

- 26 Summer 2 last day to withdraw from all classes, 5pm

- 29 Summer 2 last day of class; final exams

June						
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July

- 1 Summer 2 grades due by 12 noon

July

- 3 Independence Day observed
- 6 Summer 4 classes begin
- 24 Summer 1 last day to drop an individual class with a grade of W

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August

- 3 Summer 1 last day to withdraw from all classes
- 4 Summer 1 last day of class; final exams
- 6 Summer 1 grades are due by 12 noon; Summer 4 last day to withdraw from all classes, 5pm
- 7 Summer 4 last day of class; final exams
- 11 Summer 4 grades due by noon
- 13 Incomplete deadline for Spring 2015

August						
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