



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

Friday, April 20, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

Faculty Senate Meeting

DSC Ledbetter B & C

MINUTES

Present: **CAHSS**— Amrhein, Anson, Clausen, Deiser, English, Estes, Finzer, Giammo, Kleine, Lopez-Ramirez, McAbee, Yoder. **CB**— Edison, Funk, Mitchell, Nickels, Watts. **CE**— Barrett, Burgin, Hayn, Nolen. **CEIT**— Babiceanu, Jovanovic, Tebbets, Tramel, Tschumi. **LAW—LIBRARY**— Russ. **CPS**— Barnes, Collier-Tenison, Golden, Rhodes, Smith-Olinde, Thombre. **CSM**— Benton, Cui, Douglas, McMillan, Prince, Sims, Yanoviak. **EX OFFICIO**— Anderson, Ford.

Guests Present: Daryl Rice, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success; Felecia Epps, Chair of Undergraduate Curriculum Review Task Force; Faculty members Rosalie Cheatham, Angela Hunter, JoAnne Matson

Absent: **CAHSS**— Bunch, Porter. **CB**—. **CE**— McAdams. **CEIT**— Anderson. **LAW**— Fitzhugh, Goldner. **CPS**—. **CSM**— Grant-Scott, Guellich, Tarasenko. **EX OFFICIO**— Robertson, Lewis, Patterson. Senate Counsel: Faust.

I. Welcome and roll call

President Smith-Olinde welcomed the senators, called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm and invited the secretary to call the roll. During roll call, a cacophony of voices and laughter from the Emeriti Luncheon next door infused our sound system, making it difficult to hear, so errors in the attendance list are possible. The problem was resolved quickly.

II. Review of minutes

Senators were invited to comment on the minutes of the April 20, 2012, meeting of the Senate as distributed and posted on the web site. It was moved (Prince) and seconded (Collier-Tenison) that the minutes be accepted. Motion passed on a voice vote.

III. Announcements

President Smith-Olinde announced that she had received an email from Vice Chancellor Adams stating that faculty leaving at the end of academic year will retain their health insurance through the summer.

Watts: Will that be put in writing somewhere?

President Smith-Olinde referred the question to Chancellor Anderson, who said that it will become a part of Board Policy. “So that’s a yes.”

Smith-Olinde: My second announcement is that, in recognition of our continuing work on undergraduate curriculum reform, I have taken the liberty of reserving a room for every second week after next fall’s Senate meetings so we can continue discussion.

Third, Robert’s Rules says that it’s up to the Presiding Officer to recognize or not recognize visitors. I will recognize non-Senators for today’s discussion.

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

Tschumi – I wish to bring to the attention of the Senate some concerns I’ve heard about getting exceptions to the 120 hours [for the baccalaureate degree]. There may be some confusion about licensure and accreditation; under the law, either will serve [to justify an exception], but some people have heard that you have to have both.

V. Reports

A. Chancellor Joel Anderson.

President Smith-Olinde invited the chancellor to the podium.

Chancellor Anderson: On the issue of accreditation: that may be a basis for an exception, but it’s not automatic.

There is good news about the summer benefits policy, you already know.

On the Conflict of Interest Policy – my early reaction is positive. It’s a good piece of work and a vast improvement over what we saw before. One item I will point out is having the routing go directly to a VC instead of going through a chair or dean. Once the forms are received in my office, it’s going to be rather routine. In January 2011 the Fayetteville campus took the position that those COI documents would be posted online. I have no interest in doing that but it must be kept in mind that the question could come up: Why is UALR not as transparent as Fayetteville? Not saying I want that, but it could become an issue.

Most of my time today will be spent on the proposed fall break. I am approving that; I have a letter here, which I would like to run through with you.

Paragraph 1: I want it understood that we will still have opening events before the start of the fall semester and those will be expected of all faculty. As background, paychecks for the nine-month period beginning August 15 [first paycheck August 31] and ending May 15 will continue. Sometimes opening events will be before August 15 just as commencement sometimes comes later than May 15. I would prefer not to have too much focus on this.

Paragraph 2: We need to understand that this is a fall break for students and that classes will be suspended but faculty and staff will be on duty. This can be a morale issue for staff, who see it as faculty getting a break but they don't. The Faculty Senate authority is over class schedules, not over when the university is open.

Last paragraph: I ask the Academic Calendar and Schedules Committee to evaluate carefully the educational value of the break and be prepared to alter it [based on the evidence]. It would have been helpful if someone had talked with me or the provost in advance. I feel better when policy changes are evidence-based, and the fact that other institutions do it is not necessarily a good reason. There are educational and learning issues there. The Fall Break applies beginning in the fall 2013 semester.

The chancellor invited questions. There were none.

B: Provost Robertson:

President Smith-Olinde reported that Provost Robertson was next door at the Emeriti Luncheon.

C. Graduate Council: Chair: Amanda Nolen

Nolen: This is my final report for the academic year. I wish to thank the faculty who served on grad council this year. They dealt with some difficult issues and I was honored to chair the group this year.

The Council approved 31 faculty for affiliate status and 17 for full graduate faculty status. We approved 45 curriculum changes and 17 changes to graduate programs. We expect full proposals in the fall. We are still working on revising the criteria for full graduate faculty status and will come to the senate with a proposal mid to late fall.

D. Undergraduate Council: Chair: Jeanette Clausen

Clausen reported that UGC had met only twice since the last Senate meeting and had dealt mostly with routine types of changes, including changes to bring the total number of hours for graduation down to 120 in a couple of programs. A new minor in sport management in the Department of Health Sciences was also approved.

VI. New Business

A. Legislation. FS# 2011-12_21. Faculty Senate Executive Committee. May and August Graduates. (No second required, majority vote at one meeting.)

Motion: That the Faculty Senate approve the May and August 2012 graduation of students who have met all the requirements of their respective programs and colleges.

Estes moved the motion on behalf of the Executive Committee. Smith-Olinde commented that we have received the names of all the graduates (“The Ford List”). There was no discussion. The motion passed on a voice vote.

A.1 Conflict of Interest (COI) (Attachment B). New motion, passed as amended. President Smith-Olinde recognized Senator Funk.

Funk: I would like to move that we suspend the rules so that we can discuss the Conflict Of Interest statement. Nickels seconded the motion.

President Smith-Olinde called for a vote on the motion to suspend. The motion passed.

Estes moved that we recommend the Conflict of Interest statement to the Chancellor. Someone asked about the word “revised” [hand-written on the document that was circulated]. President Smith-Olinde said Rosalie Cheatham had the latest revised version that the chancellor had been looking at and wanted to be sure that the senators saw that one.

Smith-Olinde: I remind you that this is a recommendation, not legislation.

Mitchell: A faculty member asked me to read this statement into the Senate minutes: “I am troubled by the definition of conflict of interest. According to the definition, the administration could declare a conflict of interest subjectively, according to a given situation. To me, it sounds like the administration is not sure what a conflict of interest is, but will know it when it sees it and take appropriate action. I am not comfortable with “A conflict of interest depends on the situation, and not on the character or actions of the individual.” Perhaps there is some truth to the statement “a precise and exhaustive definition of all possible relationships with the potential for conflict of interest is not possible.” However, the draft document as written leaves too much room for administrative interpretation and too little direction that might help us avoid conflicts in the first place. It would be prudent to provide better guidelines than appear in the draft, before considering a vote.” (Warren Stone)

English: Is it possible to get some interpretation of this?

Smith-Olinde: Do you have a question?

English – I would just like to have a general analysis – we are presented with something and don’t have a chance to absorb it.

President Smith-Olinde recognized Cheatham, who had put together the draft.

Cheatham: The Board of Trustees policy is short and to the point. It does not come up with a list of things that are COI. They are situation-based. There were specific concerns voiced by the [System Relations] Committee. The most significant may respond to Senator English’s concern – we don’t want this implemented in a capricious manner. That is why it goes to the Vice Chancellor/Provost, so that it is always the same couple of people who review [the statements], and so that there will be consistency. An example of a specific situation would be that faculty should not teach elsewhere while employed at UALR. There are other state policies that members of the committee strongly felt had to be subsumed under this. People felt there would be relatively few conflicts of interest

with normal faculty responsibilities. We believe the document that you have before you conforms to the requirements of Board Policy and we took a page from the Chancellor's book: the Board has mandated that we have to have a policy in place. I urge you to approve the policy and share your concerns directly with the chancellor.

Ford: It says, if you violate the provisions of this policy, you may be subject to discipline – did you consider this?

Cheatham: I think this is language that the Board Policy references. Presumably the punishment would fit the crime.

Smith-Olinde. Thank you, Rosalie. Senators, let me remind you of the history. Several months ago, we were presented with a multi-page document; this one is two pages. Remember also that this policy affects everyone, all campus employees. We requested that the chancellor postpone the signing date and he gave us until May 18, the signing date, to get a response to him.

Jovanovic – Do we have an attorney to tell us how it protects us? It seems to me it protects the administration. What is our interest in approving it?

Ford: Your point is well taken, but remember we had that earlier document. This one may not be the best. But it's better.

Anson – Can I have a definition of “interfere or compete with one another or with that individual's relationship to the University”?

Cheatham – That comes from a distillation of several policies that were shared with us. People did not want a laundry list so the overarching principle was: reasonable people doing reasonable work.

Anson: It would be very hard for me to determine who has “no conflict or potential conflict of interest.”

Cheatham: This was the best we could come up with. Everyone is welcome to make suggestions and send them to the chancellor.

Smith-Olinde: You can offer an amendment now if you want to.

Giammo: I move to delete the words “or interfere inappropriately with the preservation, generation, or public dissemination of knowledge such that an independent observer might reasonably question whether the individual's professional actions or decisions are influenced by considerations of personal gain, financial or otherwise” from the first paragraph under the heading “What is a conflict of interest?” McMillan seconded the motion.

Barnes – That may solve one problem but what about the language that says “conflicts of interest are not always avoidable”?

Cheatham: That comes from language in the Fayetteville policy or Board Policy. We are better served to leave it somewhat open to interpretation rather than defining it in ways that exclude some situations .

President Smith-Olinde read the first paragraph of the draft document with Giammo's amendment and called for a vote. The motion passed on a voice vote.

Watts: Can we add the language that Rosalie said, about normal activities.

Cheatham: What we said was activities that are normally part of faculty responsibilities.

Yoder: I would recommend a more positive statement: "Conflicts of interest may in some instances be warranted, legal, ethical or unavoidable. In those instances, the conflict must still be reported." Sims seconded the motion. President Smith-Olinde called for a vote. The motion to amend passed on a voice vote.

President Smith-Olinde then called for a vote on the document as amended. It passed unanimously on a voice vote.

B. LEGISLATION. FS# 2011-12_22. Faculty Senate Executive Committee. (No second required, majority vote at one meeting.) Motion passed as amended [added text is underlined].

Motion: That the Faculty Senate recognize the Herculean efforts of the Undergraduate Curriculum Review Task Force and accept their report. [Attachment C]

Commentary: Accepting this report does not make it policy. The report will be revisited in the fall. The revisitation will involve open faculty discussion of the report, with an open comment period. The Senate will use the UCR report as a starting point for further discussion of the undergraduate requirements with a tentative target deadline for legislation of Thanksgiving 2012.

Ford: I want to give you some thoughts to frame this. I ask you to recall again the Senate's work on the Promotion & Tenure document, which resulted in a document that we had to then revise. We had a Task Force on the Undergraduate Curriculum and they have put their heart and soul into their work. We had a lot of discussion two weeks ago – I myself went into the meeting thinking I disagreed with some things but after hearing the discussion, I decided it had merit. I think we need to take the document, receive it, and use it to move forward. The discussion was good but it concluded before many senators had had a chance to express their opinions. What I suggest is that we receive (not accept) the report with the understanding that this whole topic is on our plate and we can move forward. Our president has already scheduled extra meetings for the fall semester, so that we have two meetings per month. If we pass this, I urge the other senators who have motions that conflict with this one to consider withdrawing them.

After these comments, Ford moved the motion on behalf of the Executive Committee.

Anson: I want to make sure which report is being received. As amended, Fine Arts and Humanities are two separate categories, with three hours required in each category.

Giammo – The revision also involved changing the Upper Level required courses, which now specify 3 hours in Humanities or Fine Arts, and we also took out the dates [in the implementation section].

Edison: I agree with Ford; I think we should discuss it in the fall.

JoAnne Matson: Some of you saw my email earlier. I'm glad that the Senate does have a plan. I agree wholeheartedly that there must be a plan. I feel uncomfortable with the vagueness of the plan. I feel that there should be a commitment to receiving input from all faculty, not just the Senate, and there should be some overt commitment to deadlines. We could go on debating for a very long time and in the meantime there is much that has to be resolved. There needs to be an endpoint. People didn't know they were going to be committed to meeting twice a month [President Smith-Olinde – No, not committed, but the possibility is there.]

Ford: I agree that deadlines are a good idea but am reluctant to commit the Senate – remember there are elections and the Senate will be different in the fall. The bigger issue is: are we going to do this now and move ahead without full discussion, or are we going to commit ourselves to the fall, with Thanksgiving as a reasonable deadline?

Mitchell – I'm concerned that quick action may undo all the work that has been done; it's too fast to commit to any kind of action.

Barrett: Ford said “receive” rather than “accept”? [Smith-Olinde: Yes.]

Kleine: What about having input from all faculty, not just senators? – if we had meetings every two weeks and everyone can attend and we welcome faculty to speak. The intent will be in the minutes.

Matson: Can we consider an open comment period. There has been no opportunity for open feedback from faculty. I don't see the harm in being a little more specific in what you want to do. I think the Senate needs to make a concrete specific plan of what to do.

Anson: Call for the question. [Voices: Move the previous question – that is a motion to stop debate, and requires a two-thirds majority.] Sims seconded the motion to close debate.

President Smith-Olinde called for a vote. The motion to close debate failed to get 2/3 by a show of hands.

Kleine: I wish to offer an amendment: the revisitation [of the report] will involve a period of open discussion. Ford accepted this amendment as friendly.

Douglas: What is the motion? – all we are doing is voting to receive the report, with the addition of Senator Kleine's statement.

Matson: But the motion doesn't have any plan. I would like to move that there be a plan.

Jovanovic: Just to be clear – the later motions on the agenda are from individuals, not from the Senate. Here's what I think will happen: If we don't do it today, I think individual departments will propose their own cores, we'll have a fragmented core, so as you're voting, keep in mind that if we don't do state minimum core today, departments will do it on their own.

Giammo: But if departments do that, it has to come to UGC and it can come to the Senate.

Yoder: (to Ford) you actually did articulate a plan but it was not specific.

Ford: I wasn't specific because I don't know what we need. I'm not at this time prepared to lay out a plan that will commit everyone to a specific course of action. What I strongly suggest is that we take the work that this committee has given us, and use it as a basis, rather than these recommendations from individual senators, which haven't been discussed, haven't been debated. Does that answer your question?

Yoder: Yes and no. The sticking point of your motion is: I agree with the open-endedness and ad-hoc-ness but that's not stated there.

Kleine: Professor Matson had prepared some language [he hands around a document].

President Smith-Olinde asked Yoder to draft some language.

Yoder: The revisitation will involve open faculty discussion of the report, with an open comment period. The Senate will use the UCR report as a starting point for further discussion of the undergraduate requirements with a tentative target deadline for legislation of Thanksgiving 2012.

Sandra Robertson: I had said before; if you're going to meet every two weeks I would provide cookies and brownies but it's now scotch [raucous laughter and approval].

Ford accepted Yoder's language as a friendly amendment.

President Smith-Olinde called for a vote on the motion as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Five minute break for cookies and restroom.

C. LEGISLATION. FS#2011-12_23. Senator Jovanovic. UALR Minimum General Education Requirements. (Second required; majority vote at one meeting.) The motion was postponed indefinitely.

Motion: A major is required. Minors and additional majors are optional. General education requirements can be satisfied with lower-division or upper-division course work.

(a) English/Communication Skills

[WRIT] English Composition Skills (6 credit hours): RHET 1311, RHET 1312, or any other courses designated as "writing intensive" by the UGC. The designation of "writing intensive" would require at least 2000 words of writing per credit hour. Instructors of such courses are required to maintain collections of assignments and examinations, as well as examples of student work, in order to document that their courses satisfy these requirements. Writing intensive courses, including RHET 1311 and RHET 1312, will be designated as [WRIT] in the UALR Undergraduate Catalog and other places where course information is provided.

[ORAL] Speech Communication Skills (3 credit hours): SPCH 1300 or any other courses designated as "oral presentation intensive" by the UGC. The designation of "oral presentation intensive" would require at least twenty minutes of oral presentation per credit hour. Instructors of oral presentation intensive courses are required to announce the dates and times of student oral presentations to the campus community and keep records of such announcements, in order to document that their courses satisfy these requirements. Oral presentation intensive courses, including SPCH 1300, will be designated as [ORAL] in the UALR Undergraduate Catalog and other places where course information is provided.

(b) [QUAN] Mathematics/Quantitative Skills (3 credit hours): MATH 1302, or any other MATH or STAT courses that have a course number higher than 1302, or any other courses designated as "quantitative" by the UGC. The designation of "quantitative" would require that mathematical or statistical theory or methods be the primary content of the course. In order to satisfy ADHE requirements, all quantitative courses need to be certified by ADHE as being "at least as sophisticated as College Algebra." Quantitative courses will be

designated as [QUAN] in the UALR Undergraduate Catalog and other places where course information is provided.

(c) Science (8 credit hours): Any ASTR, BIOL, CHEM, ENHS, ERSC, or PHYS courses that have a lab component. The courses can be integrated 4-hour lecture/lab courses, or 3-hour lecture courses with separate, but associated, 1-hour lab courses.

(d) Fine Arts/Humanities: (6 credit hours): Any ARHA, ENGL, HIST, MUHL, MUTH, PHIL, RHET, SPCH, or THEA courses, or any upper-division CLNG, FREN, GERM, INTR, or SPAN courses.

(e) Social Sciences

U.S. History/Government (3 credit hours): HIST 2311, HIST 2312, or POLS 1310.

Other Social Sciences (6 credit hours): Any ANTH, CRJU, ECON, GEOG, GERO, GNST, HIST, INTS, MCOM, POLS, PSYC, RELS, SOCI, or URST courses.

TOTAL: 35 credit hours

Commentary:

- 1) Entirely for practical reasons, I propose that UALR adopt the ADHE State Minimum Core as the framework for the UALR general education requirements. Thus, a minimum of 35 hours of general education would be required. Colleges or individual degree programs could require additional general education.
- 2) Since UALR is a large university with many different kinds of students, and many different kinds of degree programs, I propose that students be given many options for how to satisfy the general education requirements. Departments could easily dissuade general education students from taking specific courses by setting prerequisites, or they could prevent general education students from taking specific courses by restricting enrollment to specific majors.
- 3) To make college more appealing, I propose that the UALR general education requirements should not look like a repetition of high school. Students should be able to follow their interests and curiosity to explore courses created and taught by experts in their disciplines. Instructors and professors should be able to teach the courses in which they have both great interest and great expertise. Large classes (more than 20 students) and large numbers of course sections (more than 4) should be discouraged.

- 4) No department should have a monopoly on any portion of the general education requirements, and no department should be prevented from offering courses that satisfy the general education requirements.
- 5) It is my opinion that adding upper level general education requirements will make students, parents, and legislators angry. The legislative intent has been made clear: when students come to us from other schools, having completed their general education requirements, all they should need to do is complete their major requirements. If we try to exploit a loophole in Act 747, we invite further micromanagement from the legislature and we discourage the legislature from providing funding to us. However, if they so choose, students should be able to take upper-division courses to satisfy the general education requirements.
- 6) It should be possible to implement the new general education requirements immediately, without the need to create new courses. However, new general education courses could be created over time.

Jovanovic: I don't know how many faculty want state minimum core but I know there are many who do and I want them to have the opportunity to consider it. In the commentary I explain that I propose this entirely for practical reasons [reading that section of the above commentary]. I believe there should be many options for satisfying the general education requirements. When transfer students come in right now, whether they have an associate degree or not, we have to accept their courses . . . and we don't give the same options to our native students. Furthermore, no department should have a monopoly – there should be flexibility, so that all departments are on an equal footing. I'm opposed to the idea of additional Upper Level requirements – I think it invites the legislature to come after us. I think gen ed should be completely self-contained [as stated in this proposal]. UGC could establish whatever criteria they wanted for [courses that count here].

Jovanovic: I move FS# 2011-12_23, as listed in the agenda. Tramel seconded the motion.

Ford: I move to postpone indefinitely. The motion was seconded by English.

Yanoviak: A motion to postpone is open for debate. A majority vote will carry the day.

President Smith-Olinde called for a vote. “If you vote yes, you are voting to indefinitely postpone.” The motion to postpone passed on a voice vote.

D. Legislation. FS# 2011-12_24. Senator Douglas. (Second required; majority vote at one meeting). Amend “Motion on Departmental Authority to Modify Requirements for Transfer Students” (aka ‘Transflex’; passed by the Faculty Senate in January 2011.) Motion approved with changes as indicated below [changes are underlined in plain font, not italics].

Motion: That the Faculty Senate amend the current Transflex policy (relevant portions only presented below):

“In order to facilitate the progress of transfer students within their majors toward a baccalaureate degree, departments offering undergraduate degrees are hereby authorized to revise graduation requirements for transfer students within the constraints described below.

1. The following graduation requirements will continue to apply:

- Minimum hours (124) and GPA (2.00) required for graduation*
- Minimum hours and GPA required for majors and minors*
- Foreign language competence for BA majors*
- Mathematics & U.S. History/Government*

2. Flexibility will be permitted on the following requirements provided that the intentions of these requirements are kept in mind and honored:

- 45 upper-level hours*
- 30 hours in residence*
- core requirements**
- major requirements*
- minor requirements... ”*

to read as follows (strikeouts indicate language to be deleted, inserted text is underlined):

“In order to facilitate the progress of transfer students within their majors toward a baccalaureate degree, departments offering undergraduate degrees are hereby authorized to revise graduation requirements for transfer students within the constraints described below.

1. To be eligible for a Transflex modification, a student must transfer in to UALR at least ~~60~~ 12 college-level credits.

2. The following graduation requirements will continue to apply:

- Minimum hours (~~124~~ 120) and GPA (2.00) required for graduation*
- Minimum hours and GPA required for majors and minors*
- Foreign language competence for BA majors*
- Mathematics & U.S. History/Government*
- 45 upper level hours*
- 30 hours in residence*

3. Flexibility will be permitted on the following requirements provided that the intentions of these requirements are kept in mind and honored:

~~--45 upper-level hours~~ [deleted from this section]

~~--core requirements*~~

~~--major requirements~~

~~--minor requirements...~~ the requirement to complete a minor

Douglas moved the motion as stated, seconded by Tschumi.

Douglas: At our last meeting, we heard from Daryl Rice, so I began to think we were getting to be too loose with the upper level hours.

Jovanovic – I move to change 60 to 12. Tramel seconded.

Rice: Most transfer students that benefited from Transflex had more than 60 hours but there were some that had less.

Jovanovic: My motion is to amend this so that it doesn't change the current policy [on the definition of a transfer student].

Tramel: As one of the original programs that was involved [in the Pilot that led to Transflex], I support Nick's motion. If you change it so it has to be 60, you might as well [exact wording lost here]. The average number of hours the transfer students bring into my program is 35-40. The majority of my students coming from Pulaski Tech have already taken many of their core classes. If we make them take 35 hours of core, it will cripple my program.

Ford – With the amendment on the floor, we're leaving transfer at 12 hours as defined by the university.

Jovanovic – Just to clarify, I don't have any problem with restricting the ability to adjust the upper level hours.

Giammo – What about changing it to 30 instead of 60? If students come in with only 12 hours, we have flexibility where it's not really needed.

Douglas cited parts of Rice's report from the April meeting.

Tramel – My data is for almost 4 years; that data is only for one semester.

Sims: What do you think about 30 hours?

Tramel: I think it's still too high. I can live with 30 better than I can with 60. I did see abuse being done [based on Rice's report] but it was with the Upper Level hours. I'm uncomfortable.

Yoder: Why 12 hours?

Jovanovic: 12 is the official definition of a transfer student.

Yoder: what about 24 hours, as two full-time semesters. 30 technically could be more than 2 semesters.

Tramel – If they're coming from Pulaski Tech, there's a good chance they've already had Business Communication, which is a course we [CNMG] accept for core.

Tschumi – The 12 hours is for a full semester; if you have less than that, you are treated as if you had never attended college – that's where the 12 hours come from.

Ford – I will speak in support of Nick – but, you have to remember what's all behind this – we are still relying on the department chair's integrity and good judgment on what to allow. I think most people who are implementing this do use good judgment.

English: I seldom agree with Ford but in this case I do.

President Smith-Olinde called for a vote on the amendment to change 60 to 12. The motion to amend passed on a voice vote.

Golden: I've got an issue with the 45 hours – let me give you some background. Every Tom, Dick and Harry offers a CRJ degree – and in this state, a majority of students coming to us have as many as 90 hours because they took as much as they could at the 2-year institution. Sometimes we have to waive some upper-level hours – we are not doing it willy-nilly. If we can't accept those transfer courses, we have to make our students take them again, even if it's the same textbook, and the same course that they took at the 2000 level at the 2-year institution. That's my issue here.

Douglas – Who's better serving those students?

Golden: But I can't stop it – I don't have the legislative authority to do that – and I don't want to burden those students with excess hours, which can get them somewhere near 160 hours [before they can graduate].

Douglas: Where is the disservice?

Golden – I agree that the disservice is at the two-year institutions.

Giammo – With the new [state] legislation, two-year colleges can't require more than 60 hours. There's a big disconnect there. I support the 45 hours – and I can be supportive of waiving 3 or 6 hours.

Sims: What does the 120 hours mean? If a student starts here, we have to give them a degree in 120 hours?

Yoder – The 160 hours is a red herring here. Even with students who bring in 90 hours, we are up to 135 hours, not 160.

Smith-Olinde [to Golden] – What about students retaking courses? Can you clarify?

Golden – If a student comes in [to our program] – they are going to take all those core requirements [for the major] from us. Now what happens is, the student may have their associate degree but they finish out a lot of other courses that they are interested in [at the two-year institution], because their advisors tell them they can take this course, that course, etc. that they can pick up there.

Smith-Olinde: – Can you clarify?

Golden – There are some courses that count as upper level electives [in the major] that students are taking at the two-year institutions.

Angela Hunter – Why not work to change the abuses rather than accommodating to them? Why not get the legislators to support change at the two-year level?

Giammo – Another problem, one that I've dealt with, is the 30 hour residency requirement. – I propose that that we move the 30 hours in residence to the section on requirements that will continue to apply. I have had to deal with it and would love to have this power taken out of my hands. Would prefer to be able to tell students: No, I can't change that.

Douglas did not accept Giammo's suggestion as a friendly amendment.

Anson seconded Giammo's motion. Several senators asked for clarification.

Smith-Olinde: Page 5, number 3: Take "30 hours in residence" out from # 3 and place it under #2, essentially saying that you cannot change the residency requirement.

Douglas – I was just going by the data Daryl gave us.

Giammo – It would make my life easier as a chair if [adjusting the 30 hours] wasn't a possibility.

Ford: What about 24?

Giammo: I would like to say that at least a quarter [of the 120 hours for a baccalaureate degree] must be at UALR.

President Smith-Olinde called for a vote on the motion to remove the 30 hours in residence as being eligible for Transflex. The motion passed unanimously.

Tramel – So what is Transflex now? – So all we have left [that can be adjusted] is core and major?

Rice – Let me give a fuller answer to some questions. – Mike [Tramel] noted already that he doesn't like UL hours. When I met with chairs [in EIT, Business, and COE], I learned that their accreditation prevents waiving Upper Level hours. If you strike 45 UL and 30 Res [from the requirements that can have flexibility], it only confuses things, because departments already have authority to make adjustments to the major, but with the minor – do you as chair of English, have authority to make changes to the POLS minor? – No. What this boils down to is the authority to waive the requirement to complete a minor – for example, the English department can waive the requirement for a minor altogether. So as written now, it's redundant – it purports to give people something they already have. If you're going to do something make it clear what it is.

Douglas – I can change the wording: the program has the ability to waive the requirement for a minor.

Rice – I would also strike the reference to major requirements, because departments have always had that authority.

[Someone asked what the asterisk is. President Smith-Olinde explained the reference, which is from the document to extend Transflex to all departments: “*While students entering UALR with a high number of semester credit hours (75 or more) in transfer should be given the benefit of a broad interpretation regarding satisfaction of core requirements, the state specified 35-hour core is still applicable.*”]

Question: What's left [of Transflex]?

Douglas: There are 5 changes: 124 is changed to 120; the number of transfer hours is changed from 60 to 12; the 45 Upper Level hours and the 30 hours of residency have been moved from category 3 to category 2, and we scratched major requirements.

Smith-Olinde: Well all righty then. I call for a vote on the motion as amended. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

E. Legislation. FS# 2011-12_25. Senator Tschumi. UALR Degree Requirements. (Second required; majority vote at one meeting.) Motion withdrawn by Tschumi.

Motion: That the following requirements be approved with an implementation date of the Fall, 2014.

Core Requirements

The core requirement shall consist of 35 hours of approved courses from the distribution shown below

- *6 hours of English composition*
- *0-3 hours of speech communication*
- *3 hours of college algebra or college mathematics*
- *8 hours of lab science*
- *6-9 hours of arts and humanities*
- *3 hours of U.S. history or U.S. government*
- *6-9 hours of social science*

To be an approved core course, a course must be certified as meeting the criteria for category for which it will be used by the General Education Council first and then the Undergraduate Council. The criteria shall be developed by the General Education Council and then sent to the Faculty Senate for approval. As a whole, the core is expected to build a foundation in critical thinking and communication skills plus domain specific abilities.

Unique cores such as for the Donaghey Scholars or EIT are not affected by this legislation.

The two for one substitution for four hours of lab science is eliminated.

Upper-Level Degree Requirements

The upper level degree requirement includes 45 hours of upper level courses (3000 level or above) to include 6 hours of approved in-depth courses from the distribution shown below

- *Students with major in CAHSS*
 - *3-6 hours in CSAM*
 - *0-3 hours in EIT*
- *Students with major in COB*
 - *3 hours each in two of the following: CAHSS, CSAM, and CPS*
- *Students with major in COE*
 - *3 hours each in two of the following: CAHSS, CSAM, CPS, and Economics*
- *Students with major in CPS*
 - *3 hours each in two of the following: CAHSS, CSAM, and Economics*

- *Students with major in CSAM*
 - *3-6 hours in CAHSS*
 - *0-3 hours in CPS or Economics*

To be an approved upper-level requirement course, a course must be certified as meeting the criteria for category for which it will be used by the General Education Council first and then the Undergraduate Council. The criteria shall be developed by the General Education Council and then sent to the Faculty Senate for approval. As a whole, the upper-level requirement is expected to develop high level critical thinking and communication skills. In particular, it is expected that students need to understand the frameworks used in disciplines that are quite different from those used in their major; also the ways of knowing, and the modes of discourse.

General Education Council Responsibilities

The General Education Council is responsible for creating the criteria for each type of course in the core and upper-level degree requirements. These criteria are recommended to the Faculty Senate for approval. It is responsible for certifying and recertifying a course as meeting the criteria for a type of course. Certifications are valid for six years. The Council is to ensure that assessment of the courses is occurring and that each course meets the expectations specified in the criteria. The Council may adjust the timing of the certification of courses to even the workload on the council.

Minor Requirement

The minor requirement may be met by one of the following methods.

- *Programs may opt out of the requirement if they meet certain conditions, for example:*
 - *The major requires a large number of required hours, or*
 - *The major already requires a significant amount of interdisciplinary work.*
- *Programs can require 2 or more cognate areas in lieu of a minor;*
- *Programs may require traditional minors;*
- *A student and adviser may design an appropriate minor. These minors must include at least 12 hours of upper level classes.*

Second Language Proficiency

Programs are encouraged to include a foreign language requirement in their program requirements.

Other Requirements

Any other existing requirements remain in effect if they are not specifically address in this legislation.

Commentary (Please see Attachment A for additional Commentary): The implementation date is set for Fall 2014 for three reasons. State law requires the universities to meet the new degree requirements by the start of that semester. Plus, to implement the various aspects of the new requirements will take some time to establish. Finally, departments will be able to plan how they will meet the 120 hour requirement and take appropriate action.

A 35 hour core matches the state minimum core and once the criteria for each type is approved should allow for a broader selection of courses in each category while still ensuring that courses meet the expectations for the core.

The need for an upper-level degree requirement was recognized shortly after the implementation of the blue ribbon core curriculum in order to really accomplish the levels of critical thinking that was desired for baccalaureate graduates. Critical thinking needs to be recognized as a long-term developmental process. One can lay a foundation of basic critical thinking skills in the lower level core courses but generally not the higher levels. In our majors, we do develop high level critical thinking skills but students typically revert back to the lower levels if they are faced with questions or problems in areas that are different from the knowledge domain where they have developed their higher level skills. In order to graduate students who can broadly apply their critical thinking skills, it is necessary to help students see how the high level critical thinking skills they develop in their majors can relate to very different domains. They need practice in exercising high level critical thinking skills in disparate domains.

Under the new state law, the state is making a clear distinction between lower level courses taken in the first 60 hours, which may be taken at two year colleges, and the additional 60 hours expected to earn a baccalaureate degree. While the first 60 hours are constrained the second 60 hours are flexible and left to the universities. The real concern of the law is that four-year universities not “require additional lower-division credits for the transfer student if the additional course is considered a general education lower-division course.” The law does say that an upper-division course “shall be characterized by a need for advanced academic preparation and skills that a student would be unlikely to achieve without significant prior coursework.” Within the already existing requirement of 45 upper level hours, there are hours available after meeting major’s upper level hour requirements that can be used to meet the new six hour requirement. The additional upper-level hour requirement takes a few of those hours to meet an important educational goal.

The minor requirement is retained but with additional flexibility beyond the current requirements of either a traditional minor or major/minor combined.

Tschumi – I didn’t agree with Nick’s motion but wanted to counter him. I will withdraw both my motions, but want to take this opportunity to comment. The idea of the Upper Level requirement: The state wants students transferring from 2-year colleges to get full credit for their work at the 2-year. The UL courses are where we make a baccalaureate degree distinctive from an associate degree. I think it’s a mistake to say (what the arguments boil down to) that we can’t add any UL requirements; it undermines what a baccalaureate degree is. We can’t give in to fear-mongering. We need to think in terms of what it takes to really accomplish what a baccalaureate degree is supposed to be – in the process of developing higher-level critical thinking. When you get to the majors, I think probably every one of us does a fine job with developing the higher-level skills – but when you take the students to a different discipline they revert back to the lower levels. We see this also in terms of writing. One of the key concepts that came out of the Critical Thinking Task group was to give students the opportunity to practice their critical thinking skills outside their major, get out of their comfort level, so they are exposed to different modes of discourse. To my way of thinking, that idea got hijacked, which undermines what the Critical Thinking task group was trying to do. I actually do agree that we need a lot more discussion. My thinking was we would take all fall to do it. I’m happy that we’re going to have more discussion – therefore I move to postpone motion E and motion F until the motions come forward to change the curriculum.

[There followed some discussion back and forth as to whether this is allowed.]

Giammo – If you withdraw the motions now, is there any reason why you can't bring them back in the fall?

Tschumi – Good point. I withdraw motion E and motion F.

F. Legislation. FS# 2011-12_26. Senator Tschumi. (Second required; three-fifths vote at two meetings.) Motion withdrawn by Tschumi.

Motion: That a General Education Council be added to the Constitution of the University Assembly of UALR as shown below:

General Education Council: *On behalf of the Faculty Senate, and subject to that body's authority, the UALR General Education Council shall create criteria for approval of courses in each category of core courses and for courses meeting the upper-level degree requirement. These criteria are referred to the Faculty Senate for approval. It shall be responsible for approving courses to meet the core and the upper-level degree requirements before sending the courses on to the Undergraduate Council for approval.*

Once courses are approved to meet a core or upper-level requirement, the council is responsible for coordinating assessment of the courses to ensure they meet the expectations for that category of course. The council is responsible for evaluating the courses every six years for the purpose of recertifying the course for its category.

Before reaching the council, all courses shall follow the routing process used for normal curriculum proposals before reaching the Undergraduate Council.

The General Education Council shall be composed of one representative from the Ottenheimer Library faculty, two full-time faculty members elected by the full-time faculty from each college or school offering undergraduate work and represented in the Faculty Senate. The elected representatives shall serve staggered two-year terms. A representative from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost and a representative from the Office of Records and Registration shall be ex officio members without vote.

VII. Old Business

- A. **Resolution: FS # 2011-12_08. To Adopt the ADHE State Minimum Core as the Framework for the UALR General Education Requirements. Senator Nickolas S. Jovanovic; Second needed (and obtained 11-18-11); majority vote at one meeting.** Withdrawn by Jovanovic.

Note: this motion was moved and seconded at the November 18, 2011 meeting and was subsequently postponed until the May, 2012 meeting.

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.

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.

Jovanovic – I only want to move the first paragraph – to adopt the ADHE state minimum core as a framework for the UALR gen ed requirements. This would have the advantage of allowing every program on campus to set their requirements. English seconded the motion.

Ford: I move to postpone indefinitely. Tschumi seconded.

President Smith-Olinde: Is there discussion? All in favor please say aye. The motion carries.

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

Note: this motion was moved and seconded at the November 18, 2011 meeting and was subsequently postponed until the May, 2012 meeting.

Resolved, That all UALR students, not just transfer students, are hereby eligible to participate in the Trans-Flex program.

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.

Jovanovic: I withdraw the motions.

Douglas – What about items on the last meeting’s agenda that we didn’t work on. [Several voices reminded those present that we didn’t want to vote on the calendars until the chancellor had made up his mind.]

Cheatham: The problem is that his memo approves the fall break in the 2013-14 calendar, but the break wasn’t in there. The Senate approved the 2014-15 calendar with a fall break.

Douglas moved to suspend the rules to vote on the 2013-14 calendar with a fall break, and Tramel seconded. The vote to suspend was approved.

President Smith-Olinde called for vote on the calendar. The motion carried.

VIII. Open Forum

Sims – I would like to ask everyone to watch their language – when you use “core” use it to refer to the core we have now - use language that everyone can understand.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Clausen, Secretary

Attachments:

Attachment A Tschumi Proposed Degree

Attachment B Conflict of Interest (as approved on May 4, 2012)

Attachment C Revised Undergraduate Curriculum Report

Attachment D 2013-14 Calendar

Commentary on Proposed Degree Changes

The commentary included with the proposed motion attempts to limit discussion to the motion within itself without referring to other proposals. This document expands the commentary to other issues from the various other proposals.

Upper-Level Degree Requirements

Two task forces recommended the inclusion of an upper level requirement, the Humanities Task Force and the Critical Thinking Task Force. The Social Science Task Force did not make such a recommendation. The Undergraduate Curriculum Revision Task Force chose to ignore the Critical Thinking Task Force's recommendation and of critical importance the reason for recommending 6 hours of upper level courses. Instead it included 3 hours of upper level social sciences. While having 3 hours of social sciences is no doubt valuable, there are many courses that it would be valuable to include but for which there is not enough time available in the curriculum. Singling out this one area over the other possibilities is not justified. Plus it fails to expose students to high levels of critical thinking in domains far removed from the thinking within their major, an important goal from the Critical Thinking Task Force. My motion implements the recommendation of the Critical Thinking Task Force and opens the offering of courses to departments in multiple colleges across a range of disciplines.

Arguments have been offered indicating that the upper-level requirement is an attempt to do an end run around the state law and will cause the university problems. Both aspects of this argument are incorrect. As indicated in the commentary with the motion, the need for the upper-level requirement was recognized decades before the current law was passed. Information collected about expectations for graduates clearly indicates a need for well developed critical thinking skills. This requirement is important for fulfilling such expectations. Instead of this requirement causing trouble for the university, the failure to implement such a requirement will continue to leave the university open to criticism that it is not producing the graduates needed. There are existing upper-level requirements in EIT that have not generated complaints.

Second Language Proficiency

The attempt to extend the second language requirement has two problems. The second one is a legal problem and is more serious than the first. The first problem lies in the way the argument attempts to expand the requirement beyond the current requirement by including mathematics and computer languages. A significant argument in favor of foreign languages is the opportunity to see a different culture/society. The attempt to expand second language to mathematics and computer languages undermines this argument. This extension attempts to on one hand expand the requirement to more degrees while simultaneously writing the policy so no real change need occur. This game playing serves no one well. It is better to leave the policy as is with a meaningful second language requirement even if it is limited in terms of who must fulfill it.

The second legal problem could potentially have a significant negative impact on the number of students required to take a second language. Our current policy divides who has to meet the second language

requirement based on the type of degree, i.e. B.A. or B.S. State law prevents the university from requiring additional lower level hours beyond the core for students with a transferable degree, mainly A.A. and A.S. As a result, A.D.H.E. told the university that we could not require these transfer students to take a second language. In order to continue enforcing the requirement, our contacts with A.D.H.E. told them that really our requirement was a major requirement not a degree requirement. As the Faculty Senate has never actually changed our policy and those A.D.H.E. contacts actually had no authority to change the policy, we are on thin ice in our current state. We need to make it official policy that it is the prerogative of the programs to decide whether or not to require a second language. If we were to adopt the proposed requirement, it would negate the arguments to A.D.H.E. and leave the university able to require a second language of native students but not transfer students. Since most of the programs that would have to add the second language requirement would meet the requirement via one of the alternates, the net result would be a reduction in the number of students taking foreign languages.

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Conflict of Interest Policy

This UALR Conflict of Interest Policy is established pursuant to Section IV of University of Arkansas Board of Trustees Policy 330.1 [330.1 Employee and Contractor Conflict of Interest](#) which provides that “each campus of the University [shall] . . . establish conflict of interest policies applicable to employees at the campus.” It is intended to assure adequate disclosure of conflicts of interest and to provide a method for resolving such conflicts.

What is a conflict of interest?

Conflicts of interest are situations in which University employees may have the opportunity to influence University administrative, business, or academic decisions in ways that could lead to personal gain, or give improper advantage to self or others, ~~or interfere inappropriately with the preservation, generation, or public dissemination of knowledge such that an independent observer might reasonably question whether the individual's professional actions or decisions are influenced by considerations of personal gain, financial or otherwise.~~ A conflict of interest depends on the situation, and not on the character or actions of the individual.

All employees are required to disclose any relationships or activities that might give rise to conflicts, or the appearance thereof, with their duties, responsibilities or obligations to the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

A potential conflict of interest may arise when a University employee’s extracurricular relationships interfere or compete with one another or with that individual’s relationship to the University. However, the nature of possible employee relationships outside the University varies widely. Therefore, a precise and exhaustive definition of all possible relationships with the potential for conflict of interest is not possible.

~~Conflicts of interest are not necessarily unwarranted, unethical, or illegal. Furthermore, conflicts of interest are not always avoidable. Conflicts of interest may in some instances be warranted, legal, ethical, or unavoidable. In those instances, the conflict must still be reported.~~

Disclosures should be made as early as possible to enable those reviewing them to consider what action, if any, needs to be taken regarding any potential conflicts of interest. The failure to disclose situations that have the potential for or involve actual conflicts of interest, however, may be unethical and/or illegal.

Additional relevant policies include the guidelines for ethical conduct of the State Ethics Commission, University of Arkansas Board of Trustees policies related to nepotism [410.1 Nepotism](#) and outside employment [450.1 Outside Employment of Faculty and Staff Members for Compensation](#) and the UALR policy on conflict of interest pertaining to textbooks <http://ualr.edu/policy/index.php/40420/>.

Policy implementation

Every UALR employee who has no conflict or potential conflict of interest to report shall read, sign, and retain a copy of the [University of Arkansas at Little Rock Conflict of Interest Statement](#). Initially, no later than September 30, 2012, all employees affirming no Conflict of Interest must submit the form to the Vice Chancellor of the employee’s area of employment (e. g. Academic Affairs, Finance) or that person’s designee. Subsequently, on or before October 1 each year, the Chancellor or designee shall distribute the Conflict of Interest Policy to all employees with a request that each employee reread the policy and report any changes in relationships that may lead to the need to disclose a potential conflict of interest. No additional action may be required.

However, any change in relationships resulting in a potential Conflict of Interest must be filed with the appropriate Vice Chancellor no later than October 31 annually.

Disclosing potential conflicts of interest

It is the responsibility of the individual who has entered into potentially conflicting relationships to disclose the nature and degree of such relationships. Therefore, situations that have the appearance of, potential for or involve actual conflicts of interest must be reported, in writing, to the employee's Vice Chancellor or designee. A written disclosure, as entered on the [Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement](#) form, should be made prior to any arrangements, whether verbal or written, are agreed upon concerning the potential conflict. At the time of filing this disclosure statement, an amended Conflict of Interest statement, the [University of Arkansas at Little Rock Conflict of Interest Statement](#), shall also be filed.

This disclosure policy provides a mechanism for:

1. Identifying conflicting non-University relationships.
2. Informing those with a need to know about conflicting relationships through disclosure.
3. Taking remedial steps to protect the interests of all concerned.

In the event that disclosure reveals a situation in which the objectivity of an employee could reasonably be questioned, the Vice Chancellor's designee shall review the facts and attempt to resolve the matter informally with the employee.

If the situation remains unresolved following this review, the situation may be referred to the Vice Chancellor for consideration and recommendation. The Vice Chancellor may accept, reject or modify the previous recommendations.

At any point when the employee feels dissatisfied with the recommendation or proposed resolution, the employee may appeal to the Faculty/Staff Appeals Committee. This committee shall consider the recommendation(s), proposed resolution and employee's continuing concerns, and recommend steps to resolve the matter. If both the employee and the Vice Chancellor agree to and implement the recommendation of the committee, no further action is required. If the matter is not resolved, the matter is referred with all relevant concerns and recommendations attached to the Chancellor.

The decision of the Chancellor as to the resolution of the matter shall be final.

An employee who fails to make disclosures required by this policy, or who otherwise violates any of the provisions in this policy, may be subject to discipline.

Maintenance of Records

All conflict disclosures and records of actions taken by UALR with respect to each conflict shall be maintained for at least three (3) years from the date the disclosure form is filed or the date of any document resolving the conflict, whichever is later.

[Approved by the UALR Faculty Senate, May 4, 2012](#)

Undergraduate Curriculum Revision Task Force

Revised Report and Recommendations

April 25, 2012

Overview

The Undergraduate Curriculum Revision Task Force (UCR) was created in the Spring of 2010 by the UALR Faculty Senate and the Office of the Provost. The charge was to review the undergraduate curriculum and degree requirements and to suggest changes. The general education curriculum had last been reviewed over 20 years ago. The task force was also charged to review the issues of required minors, total hours required for degrees, and residency requirements to confer a UALR degree.

The UCR was chaired by Felecia Epps, Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the William H. Bowen School of Law. Members included Ed Anson, History; Angela Brenton, College of Professional Studies; Carol Macheak, Ottenheimer Library, Joe Felan, Management; Kamran Iqbal, Systems Engineering; Anne Lindsay, Teacher Education; Beth McMillan, Earth Science; Tom McMillan, Mathematics; Stacy Moak, Criminal Justice; and Stacy Pendergraft, Theater Arts/Dance. Daryl Rice was also a member of the UCR prior to assuming the role of Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success. His place was assumed by Joe Giammo, Political Science during the second year of the committee.

Process

Over the course of the two years, the UCR conducted multiple focus groups with Board of Visitors members, alumni, employers, and faculty about competencies that should characterize a graduate of UALR. Each member also conducted open meetings in his/her college to hear the views of faculty members and departments about what they would like to see as requirements in the general education curriculum.

UCR members reviewed general education requirements of about 40 other universities. These were benchmark peer institutions of UALR, as well as institutions that had been identified in national reviews as having excellent general education programs. We also read a number of national publications, including *College Learning for the New Global Century* produced by the National Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) and *The Study of Undergraduate Education at Stanford University*. We also reviewed all relevant legislation including the Roger Phillips Act, which required four year institutions to accept the state minimum core as satisfying general education requirement for students transferring to four year institutions with an A.A. or A.A.S degree from a two year institution, and the more recent Act 747 which required baccalaureate degrees to require no more than 120 hours and associate degrees to require no more than 60 hours.

The UCR also reviewed syllabi for every section of every course included as an option in the current general education curriculum at UALR to see what competencies were taught and how they were measured. We found broad variation across these courses and sections.

The UCR developed a proposed Philosophical Statement of Purpose of General Education and Educational Outcomes over a several month period. We sent both out to the campus as a whole for review and feedback, and also submitted them to Faculty Senate for review. The senate approved them in principle. The UCR revised the outcomes on the basis of faculty and senate input.

Philosophical Statement of Purpose of General Education

General education nurtures in students the knowledge, skills, habits of mind, and values that provide a foundation for their baccalaureate program and for lifelong learning. General education fosters intellectual breadth, serves as a context for more specialized study, and is essential to the full development of persons who wish to participate meaningfully in the various communities of which they are a part.

Educational Outcomes

Skills:

1. Communication (oral, written, visual, second language, professional self-presentation).
2. Critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and solving problems individually and collaboratively.
3. Information technology (locating, retrieving, evaluating, synthesizing).

Knowledge:

1. The concepts, methodologies, findings, and applications of mathematics and the social and natural sciences, engineering and technology.
2. Concepts, methodologies, and the global cultural heritage of the arts and humanities.

Values:

1. Commitment to ethical behavior.
2. Civic and personal responsibility.
3. Global perspective and cultural sensitivity.
4. Appreciating diversity.

Faculty Task Groups

The UCR then created a faculty workgroup for each Educational Outcome. Each group was asked to recommend how the assigned outcome could be developed in the general education curriculum at UALR. The faculty workgroups submitted their written reports on March 15 and made oral reports to the UCR on March 28. The Task Force then met in a day-long retreat on April 6 to consider all the recommendations of the faculty workgroups and to craft from them a recommendation for General Education. The current document is a result of this long and arduous process.

Background Climate

Over the two years of the general education curriculum review process, there were a number of national and state movements that framed the deliberation. President Obama issued a call for doubling the number of college graduates to make America more competitive. Governor Beebe committed the State of Arkansas to the goals of Complete College America, which also had a goal of dramatically increasing the number of graduates. The State of Arkansas adopted new performance funding incentives which will take effect in 2014. These incentives will gradually increase the percentage of institutional state funding to 25%. Funding will be based on performance criteria such as increasing the number of graduates, increasing retention rates, increasing the number of students in STEM disciplines, and other similar measures. The state legislature passed Act 747 which mandated that baccalaureate degrees require no more than 120 hours and associate degree require no more than 60 hours. The pressure to increase graduation and to reduce the number of hours required by most programs to graduate placed pressure on decisions regarding general education requirements.

While pressures mounted for increasing graduation rates and reducing requirements for college degrees, other influential studies documented the lack of achievements of most college graduates. The LEAP report stated, “Stunningly, however, American society has yet to confront the most basic and far-reaching question of all. Across all the work on access, readiness, costs, and even accountability, there has been a near-total public silence about what contemporary college graduates need to know and be able to do.” Former Harvard University President Derek Bok summarized a wealth of longitudinal research in his 2006 book, *Our Underachieving Colleges*. He reported that college students are under-performing in virtually every area of academic endeavor from essential intellectual skills such as critical thinking, writing and quantitative reasoning to public purposes such as civic engagement and ethical learning. Other research concludes that less than 10 percent of today’s college graduates have the knowledge and experience to make them globally prepared. Another survey found that less than 25 percent of human resource professionals report that the recent college graduates they employ are well prepared for the workforce. In fact, our own focus groups conducted with alumni, employers, and university board members revealed that our students do not have the writing, speaking, teamwork and problem-solving skills expected by their employers.

The work of the Task Force, then, was conducted in the milieu of the perfect storm, with strong pressures to increase graduation rates and to reduce requirements at the same time that external constituents were calling for increased competencies and performance from college graduates.

Guiding Principles

A number of values and principles guided our final recommendations in this report:

1. A liberal arts approach to undergraduate education is more relevant than ever at a time when many of our students need flexible and adaptable skills to adjust to career changes, technology developments, and globalization.
2. General education should encompass the entire undergraduate degree, not only “core” courses at the freshman and sophomore levels. If we want students to develop competencies like writing, for example, we must scaffold instruction and skills and reinforce them throughout the core and major. It is especially important for students to master the type of writing skills needed in different disciplines. We believe that basic skills such as writing, speaking, and critical thinking need foundational instruction, but can be developed and refined in a number of disciplines.

The Study of Undergraduate Education at Stanford University captured this idea well in their final report: “Reviewing the history of ‘general education’ reform at Stanford and other institutions also reveals a besetting tendency to narrow the terms of discussion. Rather than thinking broadly about the nature and purposes of undergraduate education, discussion tends quickly to devolve onto the issue of curricular requirements, which often gets further reduced to freshman-year requirements. This narrowed, education reform becomes the proverbial argument over rearranging deck chairs rather than a thoughtful discussion of the vessel’s course.”

3. Planning of the undergraduate curriculum should help students make connections among areas of learning, such as how general education relates to their professions, how theory relates to practice and how education prepares them for engaged citizenship. The result of general education should form a coherent whole rather than a series of disjointed pieces and activities.
4. General education should be a mix of common elements and individual choice. We believe that all students of the university should have some common experiences and requirements that create consistency in the quality of our graduates. However, students should also have choices to experiment and explore personal interests.
5. The general education program must be transfer friendly. 70% of our students transfer at least some hours to UALR, or take courses at other universities and colleges simultaneously while taking coursework at UALR. According to data provided by Daryl Rice, only 335 transfer students to UALR transfer with associate degrees that would make them eligible under the Roger

Phillips Act to have the state minimum core satisfy all their core requirements at UALR. And many of those 335 students completed up to 47 general education hours as part of their associate degree. Designing a general education program with flexible requirements at upper division levels would benefit both transfer and native UALR students.

6. The proposals here do not replace all the unique cores that have already been approved for specific programs. For example, the Donaghey Scholars program has a core different from the University Core. Programs in Engineering and Nursing have had approved different cores. While we would love to have one set of general education requirements that unite all programs at UALR, we came to see it as impractical. Therefore the general education requirements we propose in this document apply to the programs currently under the UALR General Education program and will not supplant the currently approved unique cores.

7. The general education system must be relatively simple to administer to be sustainable. For example, different faculty work groups proposed over 10 “competency-intensive designations” such as writing-intensive, global-intensive, service-intensive, etc. We simplified that to a smaller number of categories to make the program easier to administer. We also think that assessment, course approval, and monitoring/oversight need to be as simple as possible.

Recommendations

I. General Education

- A. The UALR Core Curriculum should be reduced from 44 hours to 35 hours. This is the minimum core. Some departments or programs may have additional requirements. General Education should consist of the following:

English/Communication - 9 hours

Speech 1300

Rhetoric 1311 (Comp I)

Rhetoric 2312 (proposed Comp II)

Math -3 hours

Math 1302 College Algebra, or

Math 1321 Quantitative and Mathematical Reasoning (non STEM majors)

Science – 8 hours of science lab courses that produce the following skills; data collection, analysis, interpretation and presentation, application of the scientific method, critical thinking, and experimental design.

The 2 for 1 substitution for 4 hours of lab science should be eliminated.

Fine Arts– 3 hours

Intro to Music MUHL 2305
Intro to Art ARHA 2305
Intro to Theatre and Dance THEA 2305
Intro to Theatrical Design THEA 1310

Humanities – 3 hours

World Literature ENGL 2337
World Literature Themes ENGL 2338
Ethics and Society PHIL 2320

Social Sciences - 6 hours

Introduction to Social Science—3 hours
This new course will be taught in a variety of departments and will emphasize social science methodology.
History 1311, or
History 1312 (World Civ I or II)

U.S. Traditions --American History or National Government – 3 hours

POLS 1310, or
History 2311, or
History 2312 (3 hrs)

B. Additional Graduation Requirements

1. 3 hour upper level social science approved course (Department, or home department for an interdisciplinary program, must offer Intro to Social Sciences course in order for upper level course to be approved.)
2. 3 hour upper level approved humanities or fine arts course
3. Second Language proficiency or completion of a 2000 level course requirement for all majors. Programs may choose which proficiency or proficiencies (foreign language, mathematics, computer science, or ASL) satisfy this requirement for their students. Programs may seek an exemption. This proficiency does not replace the current BA requirement of 9 hours of languages.

C. Competencies Throughout the Curriculum (beyond core requirements)

1. Communication Intensive Courses (3, at least 1 in major, 2 upper division) that meet the following criteria:
 - a. Writing and speaking instruction and assignments.
 - b. Multiple communication assignments with feedback (not just one final paper)
 - c. At least 40% of the grade in the course comes from the communication requirements in the course.

2. Technology Intensive Course (at least one course in the major) that meet the following criteria:
 - a. Instruction and practice in using contemporary technologies effectively within individual disciplines including the ability to design, solve problems, and innovate.
 - b. At least 20% of the grade in the course must be derived from the use of technology.

Note: Simply taking a course online does not satisfy the technology intensive requirement. This goes beyond using email and basic word processing.

3. Critical Thinking Intensive Course (3, at least 1 in major, 2 upper division) that meet the following criteria:
 - a. Instruction and assignments using problem solving and analysis based on application of material in the course.
 - b. Awareness or analysis of one's own learning or thinking processes.
 - c. Multiple critical thinking exercises with feedback.
 - d. At least 40% of the grade in the course is derived from critical thinking assignments.
4. Values Intensive Courses (2, at least 1 in major) that meet the following criteria:
 - a. Explicit discussion of globalism, ethics, civic and personal responsibility, or diversity.
 - b. These can be augmented by service learning opportunities, study abroad, internships, and research projects.
 - c. At least 20% of the grade in the course is derived from values related activities or assignments. Examples might be reflection papers on service learning, papers on values throughout history or across cultures, or completing research ethics training.

(Note: These competency across the curriculum classes do not add any additional hours to graduation requirements. It is assumed that current courses used for the major and electives can be used to satisfy these requirements. One course can be designed to satisfy more than one of these competency areas. For example, a single course might be communication, critical thinking and values intensive and could count for all three categories).

II. Minor Requirement - The university requirement of a minor should be retained but the minor should be more flexible. Flexibility includes the following:

- A. Programs may opt out of the requirement if they meet certain conditions, for example:
 1. the major requires a large number of required hours, or
 2. the major already requires a significant amount of interdisciplinary work.

- B. Departments can require 2 or more cognate areas in lieu of a minor,
- C. Departments may require traditional minors,
- D. A student and adviser may design an appropriate minor. These minors must include at least 12 hours of upper level classes.

III. Residency Requirement – At least 30 upper level hours of the undergraduate degree must be taken at UALR.

IV. Upper Level Requirement – The requirement for completion of at least 45 upper level hours will remain unchanged.

V. Implementation

- A. A General Education Committee, a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, will be responsible for:
 - 1. Approving courses for upper level fine arts, humanities and social science and competency intensive courses and approving any other courses that are added to general education options,
 - 2. Developing a plan to assess general education competencies,
 - 3. Coordinating faculty development in areas such as communication, critical thinking, and others.
- B. The General Education Committee will consist of at least one representative from each college. Some UCR members will serve on the Committee for the first 6 months to a year to provide continuity. Afterwards, members will be elected by procedures developed by Faculty Senate.