THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA

AGENDA
Core Curriculum Oversight Committee
10:15 to 11:45, November 6, 2015
NERC 1012

Agenda

1. Quick round-robin introductions (this is only the second meeting of the group for many of us)

    a. Attending: Joe Phelps, Jennifer Greer, Jacqueline Morgan, Ed Merrill, Kim Campbell, Jefrey Naidoo, Marysia Galbraith, Charlye Adams, Melondie Carter, Cynthia Sunal, Beth Todd, Carmen Mayer, Amanda Thompson, Ryan Earley, Peter Arvanitis, Hilary Jones, Jacki Combs, Wei Zhu, Brenda Hunder, Mary Ellen Hanna, Zarie Blackburn, Denny Savage, Lauren Bennett, David Cordes

2. Review of the DRAFT minutes from the last meeting – corrections? Approval?

    a. Should include people attending in the minutes

3. Status of the review process (as of 8am Thursday, Nov 5)
    a. Departments entering information into the system – started with 137 courses, now at 146
        i. Target deadline for all proposals was November 1
        ii. 131 courses are entered into the system (15 still waiting on departmental entry)

            1. Cordes will work with Jacob and contact those courses that have not yet been submitted to determine which will be submitted and which are not being renewed for core status.

    b. CCOC Review process
        i. Currently, 262 reviews are required (2 reviews for each of the 131 courses)
        ii. 66 reviews have taken place
        iii. 196 reviews are pending

            1. Goal – all reviews are complete between now and December 15
            2. Comments from people who have used the system
                a. Need a submit button (Denny said this was a top priority for the system)
                b. Would be nice to for the sub-committee chairs to see a concise listing of where things stand with that subcommittee (all the courses and their status)
                c. Several people commented that, after clicking the last answer for a given review, the page disappeared. The submit button could eliminate this issue. Just need a way to distinguish between button clicks and being "done" with the review.
                d. At least one person indicated that, after voting, the course still showed as needing a vote.
                e. We are currently using the honor system with respect to a number of questions asked during the review. Several people noted that there are some questions where it would be useful to provide supporting evidence for a claim, rather than just a simple "yes" or "no" answer.

f. People wanted to see prior course enrollment numbers for W courses. It was noted that our old review system did not have that originally but it was added after a few years. Many people felt that having these numbers would be useful.
g. Some questions, such as the cross-listed course question, would be better if they were split into a two-part question. That is, is the course cross-listed? If so, then give information. If not, then ignore the second part of the question. The current wording of this question can cause issues with interpretation.
h. A cleaner system of indicating exactly where a course goes when it is "rolled back" by a sub-committee chair would be useful.
i. The wording of our review answers (a simple "yes" or "no") could probably be improved. It was suggested that the "yes"/"no" be replaced by an "approve"/"disapprove" (or something along those lines).

c. CCOC Voting process
   i. Three courses are currently ready for voting (AMS 151, REL 101, REL 241)
   ii. Reminder to sub-committee chairs about approvals (goes immediately to vote)

1. A question was asked regarding what happens when a reviewer answers "no" to a question. In this case, the sub-committee chair will look at the reviews, possibly contact one (or both) reviewers, possibly talk with the chair submitting the review, and then either send the course forward for a CCOC vote or roll it back to the department for further clarification.
2. As an observation related to the item above, if you answer "no" to a given review question, then please add a comment explaining why you said no. These comments can really help the sub-committee chair determine how to proceed.

4. Making sure that everyone understands how the core curriculum works at Alabama

a. A draft memo from the Provost was distributed for discussion. A copy is attached at the end of these minutes.
b. Background on the memo
   i. When UA adopted the general studies curriculum proposed by the Articulation and General Studies Committee (AGSC) in 1997, it agreed to accept – as part of our core – a number of core courses that are taught at other institutions in the state (freshman composition, math, science, history, humanities, literature, fine arts, social & behavioral sciences).
   ii. We've been accepting these transfer courses for many years and giving them core credit.
   iii. We've also offered, for many years, other courses – unique to UA – that count towards the core. For example, our EN 103 course gives students six hours of freshman composition credit at UA but this is not recognized statewide. There are also other places where UA has the expertise to offer additional core courses beyond the minimum set of core courses defined statewide.
   iv. This memo clarifies that UA is not limited in its offering of core courses by the statewide agreement.
   v. After an initial presentation of the memo by David Cordes and Jennifer Greer, discussion followed. There were no objections raised during the discussion. A suggestion was made to create a short preamble to the memo that succinctly explained its purpose at the start. It was felt that this would help people who were reading this memo for the first time without a bit of background context to help explain its purpose.
   vi. If you have any feedback on the memo, then please get it to either David Cordes or Jennifer Greer before the next meeting.

5. Questions and answers regarding the review system

    a. Many questions were addressed earlier when discussing the review process. Denny and Zarie and Lauren worked with people individually after the meeting regarding specific issues that they were having when using the system.

6. Next Meeting – Friday, December 4 ~~6~~

    a. The next CCOC meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 4 (same time – 10:15 until 11:30 and same room – NERC 1012).

2015-16 CCOC Tentative Timeline

November

- November 1: Due date for departmental submissions
- CCOC members work to complete course reviews (when notified by the new system)

December:

- December 4: Third meeting of the CCOC
- Goal: committee voting completed on all courses that did not have issues by December 15

Spring 2016

- Complete review of courses still under review
- Discussion of various topics related to core courses
- Evaluation/enhancement discussions regarding the revised review process

DRAFT

DRAFT MEMORANDUM

TO: All Faculty

FROM: Kevin Whitaker, Interim Provost

SUBJECT: Core Curriculum Clarification

In the 1994-97 time frame, the state's Articulation and General Studies Committee (AGSC) was formed pursuant to Legislative Act 94-202 and charged with developing (1) a statewide freshman- and sophomore-level general studies curriculum, and (2) a statewide articulation agreement for the freshman and sophomore years addressing the transfer of credit among all public institutions of higher education in Alabama. The core areas developed by the AGSC general studies curriculum were: written composition, humanities and fine arts, natural sciences and mathematics, and history, social and behavioral sciences.

In November 1997, UA faculty voted to add requirements to the AGSC-developed general studies curriculum for UA students. The items approved by that vote were:

- Students complete either two semesters in foreign language above those specified by the AGSC curriculum (the FL designation) or six semester hours that substantially integrate software applications or require writing computer programs (the C designation).
- Students complete a six semester hour writing requirement, preferably in the major (the W designation).

However, an assumption stated on the 1997 ballot was that "Only courses approved by the State General Studies and Articulation Committee [*sic*] will meet these requirements," those requirements referenced being the AGSC-approved core areas.

Since 1997, interpretation of the law creating the AGSC has changed. Although UA must accept for core credit those courses approved by the AGSC, UA is not prevented from offering additional core-designated courses for its native students. As a result of conversations with the Core Curriculum Oversight Committee and the Academic Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, this memorandum seeks to clarify misunderstanding stemming from the 1997 ballot assumption and officially adopts the policy for UA that our core curriculum is not limited to courses approved by the state's Articulation and General Studies Committee. Furthermore, since courses not approved by the state's AGSC have been approved for the UA core curriculum by either the UA Core Curriculum Oversight Committee or the Office for Academic Affairs for over 15 years, all such designation approvals are hereby retroactively made official.

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