THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA

MINUTES
Core Curriculum Oversight Committee
NERC 1012
8:00 to 9:30, October 5, 2017

Attending Daniel Strickland, Amanda Thompson, Catherine Buhai, Rainer Schad, Cynthia Sunal, Liza Wilson, Jef Naidoo, Thomas Robinson, Martin Evans, Millie Jackson, Cory Armstrong, Reagan Locke, Ross D'Entremont, Luke Niiler, Charlie Steinmetz, Marysia Galbraith, Mary Ellen Hanna, Ginger Bishop, Luoheng Han, Dixie MacNeil, Jessica Aguilar, Amelia Rizzardi, Wei Zhu, Derek Williamson, David Cordes

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions (round robin)
   Name / Department / what you do for fun (outside of work)

2. What does the CCOC do? We review/approve courses for core designation (*Handout*)

   The committee reviews all core designated courses on a regular (five year) basis. Each year, all the courses in a given set of departments are reviewed. A normal review year involves the review of approximately 150 existing courses plus new any new courses proposed for a core designation.

   It was noted that the description for freshman composition (FC) courses appeared to be incorrect in the review system. No FC courses are under review this year, but that will be investigate.

   It was noted that the handout describing the core did not appear to match with what was on the Provost's web site. Since there are several web sites where a listing of the core exists (Provost's site, Registrar's site, etc.), these sites will be reviewed to ensure consistency.

3. An overview of the review process
   a. Timeline
      i. Departments submit course reviews in early October (hopefully)
      ii. Goal is to have our reviews complete by the end of the Fall (some drag to Spring)
   b. Process
      i. Departmental submission
      ii. System assigns to two reviewers – each reviewer completes an independent review
      iii. Sub-committee chair evaluates these reviews
         1. Obvious problems – send back to department for information/clarification
         2. Obvious accept – send forward to entire committee for electronic vote
         3. Not sure – hold the course for discussion at our next CCOC meeting
      iv. Entire committee votes on each course (electronic voting) – need 51% to pass

   Three important items to remember with the review process:

   - You should be getting emails regarding your pending reviews. However, please check the "Core Curriculum Committee" link on the "Faculty" tab in myBama on a regular basis to make sure you have no outstanding reviews.

- Sub-committee chairs – If you have a course that needs discussion, please let David Cordes know so that we can get in on our next meeting's agenda. Also, if you roll a course back, make sure you roll it back to the department.
- SGA members of the committee – please work with Daniel Strickland if you are having any issues with access, since you cannot use the normal access links that faculty use.

4. Daniel Strickland – demonstration of the review system

   If you have questions about the review system, please contact Daniel Strickland at daniel@ua.edu

5. Structure versus operational mode of CCOC (*Handout*)
   a. Our group is operational – keeps the core running
   b. Structural changes to core addressed on regular basis – started a process last year (*Handout*)

   Our committee's task is a regular review of all core courses. In the past two years, we have had additional activities:
   - Two years ago – introduced a new review system, which involved a learning curve as all members of the committee migrated to the new review system
   - Last year – we performed an initial review of the structure of the core curriculum and made a recommendation to the Provost regarding potential paths forward with the core.

6. A Structural Review of the Core – Luoheng Han (*Handout*)

   Dr. Han announced that the Provost's Office will be forming a task force to consider possible structural changes to the core. This task force will look at issues such as how we can assess whether or not the core is meeting its desired purpose and whether the various components of the core should be adjusted, taking into account the skills and abilities of today's students.

   Dr. Han is looking for input regarding the best way to organize and populate this committee, so please provide him any feedback that you have. Given our background with the core in general, and our activities of the past year, the members of this committee have a solid understanding of the core and its role in UA. This is probably a better understanding than exists among the general faculty population

   Finally, the committee noted that this review would not be a trivial task, and that the Provost's Office should consider some sort of compensation or release time for the members of the task force that is created.

7. Feedback on request from the College of Engineering regarding the core curriculum

   > *In conclusion, the College requests a review of the current requirement that all C-designated courses have a computer-based pre-requisite and whether CS 102 is still needed as a broadly required computer literacy course.*

   The committee discussed a memo from the College of Engineering wondering whether or not the requirement of a pre-requisite course for C-designated courses in the core was still needed. The discussion included a review of the history behind the C/FL designation. Several comments were made regarding this proposal:
   - First, there was a question of implementation. Would this mean that the C requirement could be fulfilled with only six hours or would you increase the number of C-designated courses to three (nine hours) to maintain the spirit of the original C/FL compromise?

- Second, it was noted that a task force is being formed to consider structural changes to the core. There was concern about rolling out one change at a time, especially when more substantial changes were being considered in the near future. Tackling individual items seemed to be inappropriate when a broader review/reform effort was being launched.
- Third, it was noted that accepting individual changes might lead to a situation where a multitude of changes are submitted from a number of sources. There was a risk of "opening the floodgates" with a wide range of proposed changes to the core.

After discussion, there was a consensus that this request should be forwarded to the Provost's task force on restructuring the core curriculum. It was not appropriate for our committee to address this issue ourselves.