

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
University Committee on Undergraduate Education
DRAFT MINUTES

Thursday, October 8, 2015

10:15 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

Board Room, 4th Floor Administration Building

Attending: Eva Almenar, Wayne Askew, Rich Bellon, Giles Brereton, Andrew Corner, Jan Eberle, Doug Estry, Kathy Forrest, Michael Giles, Gary Hoppenstand, Peter Magyar, Richard Miksicek, Helene Pazak, Fred Rodammer, Lorenzo Santavicca, Jessica Sender, Cassandra Shavrnock, Emily Tabuteau, Colleen Tremonte

Absent: Walter Buhro, Austin Jackson, John Merrill, Matt Pontifex

The agenda was approved.

The minutes were approved from September 24, 2015.

Comments from the Chairperson

Chairperson Hoppenstand updated UCUE members regarding the October 6th Steering Committee meeting. President Simon shared remarks on the University's budgetary issues and the growing tendency to recruit out of state students. Provost Youatt commented that there will be five dean searches this year.

Comments from the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education

Associate Provost Estry distributed a chart illustrating the number of credits required to obtain a minor. This is in response to a question from the September 24th UCUE meeting regarding what constitutes a minor.

Request to Change the Tier 1 Writing Requirement for Students Who are Enrolled in Residential College in the Arts and Humanities (Action Item)

Carolyn Loeb, Associate Dean, Residential College in the Arts & Humanities

The committee unanimously granted voice to Associate Dean Loeb.

Associate Dean Loeb stated that the reason for this request is two-fold. First, in order to align the credit hours needed for the curriculum that is taught in RCAH 111 and 112, the College is requesting the credits change from 3 to 4 for both RCAH 111 and 112. As programs have evolved, RCAH has been adjusting the curriculum to meet the needs of the students. Faculty have expressed concern that they need more class time to teach the content that has been developed for the research and writing skills that will serve the students throughout their undergraduate career. Faculty also expressed a need for additional class time in order to introduce freshman to new vocabulary and a new set of perspectives that is foundational to the courses throughout their RCAH career.

Second, the department is requesting that the completion of RCAH 111 will satisfy the University's Tier 1 writing requirement. This request will accommodate students who transfer into RCAH in the spring of their freshman year. Many transfer students arrive at MSU already having met the Tier 1 writing requirement and are therefore unable to join their cohort.

One UCUE member commented that James Madison College operates under a similar structure for their writing requirement.

Voice was withdrawn from Associate Dean Loeb.

The following motion passed unanimously.

The University Committee on Undergraduate Education duly considered and endorsed the request to change the Tier 1 Writing Requirement for students who are enrolled in Residential College in the Arts and Humanities.

Request to Change the University's Graduation Requirements – Writing Requirement (Action Item)

Julie Lindquist, Professor, Dept. of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures, College of Arts & Letters

Bump Halbritter, Associate Professor and Director, First Year Writing Program, Dept. of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures, College of Arts & Letters

The committee unanimously granted voice to Professor Lindquist and Associate Professor Halbritter.

Professor Lindquist stated the reason for this request is to eliminate numerous separate Tier 1 writing courses with different content and replace them with one writing course called "Writing as Inquiry (WRA 101)." Currently, all Tier 1 writing courses offered by WRAC focus more on studying writing directly and less on studying the course topic related to American cultures using writing. Also, students think the courses are more topic driven than they actually are, and often they are pre enrolled in a course prior to AOP or because it fits into their schedule.

This change is being proposed based on survey data that has been collected from teachers and advisors. The switch to WRA 101 corresponds to the University's learning goals. An outcome of WRA 101 is for the students to develop transferable knowledge that will serve them throughout their academic career. In addition, having one course number to enroll in will simplify the scheduling process.

UCUE members voiced concerns about the need for diversity among students in each class and questioned how topics would be determined for WRA 101. Professor Lindquist stated that the topic is up to the instructor and students will be encouraged to suggest topics but regardless of topic, all courses will focus on the accompanying learning outcomes. The First Year Writing (FYW) curriculum includes five projects that will allow students to follow a general curriculum based on their past experiences and prior knowledge.

A brief discussion took place regarding the work load in various departments as well as how to assess the course change. Dr. Halbritter stated that the Eli Review System will be used which empowers instructors and peers to coach students with feedback and revision and promotes critical thinking and better writing.

Dr. Halbritter stated that approximately 125 sections of the first year writing course are taught each semester and the goal is not to prepare students for every writing assignment they will encounter, but to help students develop transferable knowledge about writing.

Professor Lindquist and Associate Professor Halbritter stated they have visited departments and worked with curriculum committees to discuss this proposed change and they have received positive feedback.

Voice was withdrawn from Professor Lindquist and Associate Professor Halbritter.

The following motion passed unanimously.

The Committee on Undergraduate Education duly considered and endorsed the request to change the University's graduation requirements – Writing Requirement.

Institutional Honor Code (Information Item)

Lorenzo Santavicca, Vice President, Academic Affairs, ASMSU

Lorenzo reported on the importance of having an institutional honor statement for students to follow and requested feedback from UCUE regarding next steps to move the honor statement forward. The rationale for this is because there are newer methods being used for cheating and an honor statement can serve as an opportunity to better educate students on academic integrity. Also, ASMSU feels the honor statement will add value to the MSU degree. ASMSU has created a draft of an institutional honor statement and when approved, would like to see it published in Article 1 of the *Student Rights and Responsibilities*. Lorenzo also stated this would be useful for faculty to include in their syllabi.

UCUE members pointed out additional colleges beyond those listed have their own honor code such as Nursing, Veterinary Medicine, Broad Business, Lyman Briggs, and Social Science. One UCUE member stated some majors must already adhere to a professional standard of ethics for their program. UCUE members suggested that the statement be shortened and language be clarified to make certain points clearer.

Lorenzo reported that a survey will go out on behalf of the Ombudsperson and data will be drawn to determine next steps. The overall idea of the Institutional Honor Statement is to make it an educational campaign.

Mid-Semester Feedback (Information Item)

Lorenzo Santavicca, Vice President, Academic Affairs, ASMSU

Lorenzo reported that students feel the need for mid-semester feedback to faculty. Teresa Bitner, past Vice President of Academic Affairs of ASMSU worked on a mid-semester feedback option last academic year. Two surveys were sent out and the response rate was disappointing. Last year's subcommittee concluded that the use of formative feedback early in the semester is beneficial for both instructors and students, and although faculty would be supportive, they did not want a standardized model imposed upon them. A subcommittee that includes Lorenzo Santavicca, Fred Rodammer, Richard Miksicek, and Andrew Corner was formed to look into the possibility of implementing a mid-semester feedback system. A UCUE member suggested working with Faculty & Organizational Development (F & OD) about best practice for the evaluation.

Roundtable

There were no items reported at Roundtable.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 am.

Respectfully submitted by Lynne Frechen.