

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM (UCOC)

MINUTES

December 3, 2014

2:00-3:30 pm

****HOH 706****

I. UCOC NOVEMBER Minutes

- *Attachment: UCOC November 5 Minutes*

→**APPROVED**

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Should Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts Degrees be Conferred Outside of the College and Graduate School? (Robert Morley and Matt Bemis, Associate Registrars)

NOVEMBER 5, Robert Morley said that the Bachelor of Arts (BA) has typically been owned by the school itself and conferred by the College; the Master of Arts (MA) has been owned by the school and conferred by the Graduate School. The foreign language requirement has differentiated these degrees. If professional schools have a foreign language requirement for the BA or the MA, must the degree be conferred by the College or the Graduate School respectively? This is how the programs have traditionally been designated. Should this practice continue?

DECEMBER 3, Robert Morley said that the issue arose when Annenberg students were assessed a technology fee. The issue could simply be addressed by pointing data to the owning unit; however, the question came up: why are the professional schools the owning units, and Dornsife or the Graduate School, the conferring unit for the BA and MA respectively? Diplomas are printed with the name of the owning unit, not the conferring unit. Is the tradition of marking the Bachelor of Arts (BA), owned by a professional school, as conferred by the Dornsife (the College) outdated? Is the tradition of marking the Master of Arts (MA), owned by a professional school, as conferred by the Graduate School outdated? Could the professional school not offer the foreign language component as well to satisfy the BA or MA requirement?

Morley referred to an email from Jane Cody to whom he asked the same question. She responded that the degree conferred by the College ensures a true liberal arts education, not always awarded by a professional school alone. Matt Bemis said that all programs conferred by Dornsife have a foreign language component. For other schools, it is optional. When Computer Science moved out of Dornsife, the foreign language requirement of the program was dropped. Historically, all programs originated in the College and then many broke off on their own.

UCOC members felt that the “owning unit” should be printed on the diploma not the “conferring unit.” A student who receives a BA from Thornton, should have Thornton printed on the diploma, not the conferring unit of Dornsife. The issue is revenue neutral. All schools take Dornsife’s lead in following the General Education requirements.

Cummings requested that Morley draft a recommendation for UCOC's vote online or at the next meeting.

The Master of Arts (M.A.), conferred by the Graduate School, requires a thesis, or summative experience, and foreign language. There are professional schools who follow the same requirements. Why could they not confer their own degree as well? Mark Todd asked how other universities handle this and requested that Morley survey other schools.

UCOC members agreed that the Graduate School is the gatekeeper of the PhD, signing off on all necessary steps of obtaining the PhD. It is appropriate that the diploma state: Doctor of Music, conferred by the Graduate School.

Morley said that the question was not time sensitive but that he would like to know, for administrative purposes, if it is appropriate to continue the practice of automatically entering Dornsife or Graduate School as conferring units for BAs and MAs respectively, rather than the professional, owning school. Morley agreed to discuss the issue further with Katherine Harrington, in regard to potential impact on reporting (Morley said that reports refer to owning units.), and with Jane Cody of Dornsife and Sally Pratt of the Graduate School. He would send forward a recommendation to UCOC based on his findings.

- B. Unit Requirements for Minors: *Curriculum Handbook* Shows Further Discrepancies
In making the revision to remove the criteria of 16 *upper-division* units for a minor from "Appendix F: Guidelines for Minors" from the *Curriculum Handbook* to make it consistent with the *USC Catalogue*, <http://catalogue.usc.edu/undergraduate/grad-req/#minors>, further inconsistencies were found in the language. The language states "Four 3-4 unit courses are mandatory." This statement contradicts that 16-units are mandatory. Also, Number 3 states, "All new and revised minors will be reviewed after five years." This review has not occurred in the past three years.

The Curriculum Coordination Office would like UCOC members' response as to how this section should be further edited:

1. A minor should have no less than 16 nor more than 32 units, including pre-requisites of required courses.
2. ~~Sixteen units of upper division courses and~~ four 3-4 unit courses are mandatory.
3. All new and revised minors will be reviewed after five years. If no undergraduates have enrolled in the minor, the contact unit will be required to demonstrate why the minor should not be removed from the list of approved minors.
4. No specific limit will be imposed on the number of submissions from any unit. However, the committee reminds units of its conceptual commitment to approve only coherent, rigorous, distinctive, and non-redundant minors.
5. The following Rules of Four apply:
 - a. At least four courses (16 units) unique to the minor (i.e., required neither by G.E. nor the student's major).
 - b. Majors may take a minor in which their unit participates so long as four courses (16 units) required for the minor are taken outside the major department.

NOVEMBER 3, MINOR SECTION EDITED, UCOC members responded:

1. The “should” in Number 1 implies that there may be exceptions, as there are in Engineering, which offers 3-unit courses. The line should remain unchanged.
2. Number 2 should be deleted completely, as the 16 units of upper-division courses have already been removed and the reference to “four 3-4 unit courses” is potentially contradictory and addressed in Number 1.
3. A five-year review of minors implies conditional approval, which UCOC’s approval is not. The line should be omitted. UCOC members said that the Curriculum Coordination Office (CCO) should offer departments data yearly as to how many students have taken the minor in the past three years, just as is done with courses. This data should be offered to each school at the time of the fall UCOC-school outreach, with the encouragement to remove programs, minors and courses that are no longer used. The goal is to have the *USC Catalogue* represent accurately the offerings of each school to students.
4. Number 4 remains unchanged.
5. In addressing the potential discrepancy posed by stating “four courses” and “16 units,” UCOC members voted to remove the reference to “four courses” and only state “16 units” in both 5a and 5b. The two lines were edited in the following way (They said that Catalogue should be edited in the same way.):
 5. The following Rules of Four apply:
 - c. At least ~~four courses~~ (16 units) **must be** unique to the minor (i.e., required neither by G.E. nor the student's major). ***If the minor comprises fewer than 16 units, the courses must be unique to the minor.**
 - d. Majors may take a minor in which their unit participates so long as ~~four courses~~ (16 units) required for the minor are taken outside the major department.

DECEMBER 3, Kristine Moe asked UCOC members to review the attached document, detailing how the proposed revision to the *Curriculum Handbook* would impact the minor language in the *15-16 USC Catalogue*. She questioned if removing the reference to “four courses” in numbers (3) and (4) would negatively impact minor exceptions that are made up of four courses, but do not total 16 units. Associate Registrar, Matt Bemis, said that the minors that do not total 16 units are exceptions. Those minors that are approved for less than 16 units, should have a note in their catalogue copy addressing the exception to the “at least 16 units” rule. Bemis said that the reference to four courses was a holdover of old policy that referred to course number alone. With Sylvia Manning, the 16-unit requirement was added. Degree Progress would not have an issue with the reference to “at least four courses” being removed. They refer primarily to the “at least 16 units” requirement.

UCOC members voted to strike the reference to “at least four courses” in numbers (3) and (4) at <http://catalogue.usc.edu/undergraduate/grad-req/#minors>. A note should be added to the minors section of the *Curriculum Handbook* that, moving forward, exceptions to the 16-unit minimum should be noted in a minor’s catalogue copy.

- Attachment: Minor Guidelines Revised for 2015-16 Catalogue

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **WASC Meeting Update (Tom Cummings, UCOC Chair, and Gene Bickers, GE Chair)**
Tom Cummings reported that the WASC committee primarily had questions about the revised General Education (GE) program, which Gene Bickers answered. Mark Todd reported that the WASC committee was satisfied with the changes that had been implemented since their visit in 2010, when they had expressed concern over the GE program. They delivered a positive report to President Nikias.
- B. **UCOC Outreach Meetings Updates (Judy Garner, HPS Chair, and Geoff Shiflett, SES Chair)**
Kristine Moe reported that the meeting with Judy Garner and Pharmacy representatives was productive. They expressed interest in creating minors and partnering in more undergraduate ventures. Moe met with Jane Cody of Dornsife the following day. She was open to the possibility of partnering with Pharmacy to create additional, undergraduate offerings. She felt that it could be beneficial for various Dornsife departments as well. Cody asked to learn more about the incentives offered to undergraduate programs. Moe asked Mark Todd to reach out to Cody with greater details of the undergraduate incentive.

At the UCOC meeting, Moe asked Mark Todd to clarify the undergraduate incentive. Todd said that the incentive is an adjustment to admission limits. If 20 students choose to participate in an interdisciplinary program, where students and tuition dollars are diverted from the main department/school, that department/school will be allowed to admit 20 more students into their main program.

Geoff Shiflett and Mark Todd met with the Engineering Education Department and informed Louise Yates and various members of the provost's curricular incentives. Cummings asked if most deans are aware of the incentive for creating interdisciplinary programs. Todd said that the incentive was announced at the Provost's Retreat, but deans may not be as aware of the incentives as they should be.

Shiflett said that he was made aware of a problem with the Computer Science/Business Administration program. Engineering feels that there are business classes better suited to their students. Marshall has said that they could not change the classes due to Marshall accreditation. Tom Cummings and Diane Badame, both Marshall faculty, agreed that the program owned by Viterbi, was not subject to Marshall accreditation. Cummings requested that Shiflett arrange a meeting for David Kempe, Associate Chair of Undergraduate Programs in Computer Science, and Ty Callahan, Vice Dean for Undergraduate Programs at Marshall, to discuss the issue.

- C. **Review of Physical Education Courses (SES Chair, Geoff Shiflett)**
SES Chair Geoff Shiflett proposes that physical education courses be approved administratively as they are not academic in nature, and therefore, do not require subcommittee review. He proposes that PHED courses be repeatable and graded Credit/No Credit.

DISCUSSED, Geoff Shiflett questioned having physical education courses reviewed by the SES subcommittee. He proposed allowing physical education courses to be administratively approved, repeatable, with an option of Letter-Grade or Credit/No Credit, per the proposal's request. UCOC members were not opposed to this request. Robert Morley said that there had been some issues with repeatable athletic courses in the past.

Cummings directed Shiflett to meet with Steve Lamy and to request that Lamy make a recommendation on the subject.

D. Proposal to Allow Separate Courses be Taught in the Same Room, Time and Day

(Brian Head, AHS Chair)

In the spirit of fostering more interdisciplinary teaching, Brian Head proposes that UCOC allow approval of courses in cases in which two courses are independent with regard to syllabus, grading and department, but which nevertheless work symbiotically with each other, even if their unit or pay structure is different. For example, ENGL 620 Literature and Interdisciplinary Studies (4, max 12) (taught by David St. John) and MUCO 548 - Writer and Composer (3 units) (taught by Frank Ticheli) have been run simultaneously for many years with great success. Getting credit in one would be quite different from getting credit in another: The creative writers write words, the composers write music. But they collaborate on their projects and take the same lectures thereby learning about the other discipline while actively creating song, oratorio and opera material. Head believes that there are other course pairings which would benefit from this approach, and in fact it was brought up by Jim Moore in Engineering recently at one of the WASC meetings. Head has faculty members in both Thornton and Roski who also would like to create similar pairings.

Brian Head noticed that MUCO 548 was initially constructed to house both creative writing and music composition students. However, at some point the new structure with the simultaneous courses was adopted, which Head believes allows for more flexibility for both sides. He proposes that UCOC formally allow such collaborations.

ENGL 620 Literature and Interdisciplinary Studies (4, max 12) Issues and theory of studying literature in relation to history, science, politics, psychology, religion, sociology, media, the visual arts, and other disciplines.

MUCO 548 Writer and Composer (3, Sp) Structured collaboration among composers and poets.

Please Note: A slight variation of this topic was addressed at the November 2013 UCOC Meeting. The minutes record the following:

“...The question was posed: should the professor be allowed to teach the same title, two different prefixes, with two *different* unit values at the same time and location?”

UCOC members were supportive of the idea, noting various cooperative teaching arrangements that had been arranged in their own schools. They said that if the professor could demonstrate different expectations for students taking different unit values of the course, with syllabi showing how the contact hours and workload would vary for the two versions of the course, they were willing to allow this as an exception.

...

NOTE: Subsequent to the meeting, the chair was made aware that the Registrar’s current policy, or procedure, is to allow only one course (potentially with a cross-list) to be taught in one location at one time. The current policy and a proposed revision to this policy will be presented to UCOC for a formal vote at the next scheduled UCOC meeting.”

Discussion of this topic was postponed until February 2014 and then assigned to the Curricular Innovations Taskforce. No formal answer was given to this question.

DISCUSSED, Brian Head said that the issue was different from the topic first presented in November 2013. Teachers have been collaborating on teaching a music and writing course for years to great effect and awards. At the WASC meeting such collaboration was encouraged, but a fellow USC faculty member noted that it was not allowed, per policy. Head proposed that UCOC formally allow such collaborations on a case-by-case basis.

Robert Morley said that technically this was not a curriculum issue, but a scheduling issue. Members brought up the questions of the professor-load, evaluations, etc., but were in general support. Tom Cummings requested that Head write a recommendation to the Provost to be endorsed by UCOC and referred to in the future when school's look for guidance in regard to this question.

E. "Cross-listing" a Course with Another University (Robert Morley, Associate Registrar)

The Director of the online Master of Public Health program would like to create a new global health course in collaboration with another faculty at UC Irvine. Is it possible for a USC course to be "cross-listed" with a course from another university? USC students would enroll in a USC version of the course that is offered by another university.

Robert Morley asks UCOC members to consider this question in establishing guidelines for USC's collaboration with other universities, e.g. WBB.

DISCUSSED, Morley presented the cross-list request and asked UCOC members to consider if this is a request that they would consider in the spirit of collaborating with other universities, per the Provost's directive? Tom Cummings asked Morley to lay out the issues for courses and degrees, the criteria for partnerships, etc. and to consider how UCOC should advise the Provost on this issue. UCOC will review Morley's recommendation at the next meeting.

F. Curricular Improvements to Address

How are the issues that the UCOC taskforces identified last year to be dealt with? For example, how is shared revenue identified across schools and how are faculty load issues dealt with for joint programs? What are the possible incentives to create programs? How do we better deal with affected sign-offs, schools focusing on a similar topic from a slightly different angle? How can the communication of UCOC decisions be improved? What forums already exist for best practices: online, partnering with other national and international schools, etc.? Can they be partnered with to address issues identified by UCOC as well? Etc.

→**POSTPONED until January.**

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. GE Memo – New GE Designation Added to Existing Courses

- *Attachment: New GE Memo, November 17 2014*

B. Repeatable Seminar Topic Courses

DISCUSSED, October 1, Geoff Shiflett presented the concern that current topics courses are being created that are repeatable, some with section titles, with no oversight as to what is taught beyond the initial topic. Kristine Moe said that allowing of section titles to repeatable courses may have

encouraged this movement. A good number of these courses have been created in the past few years, and some to very good use, i.e., current topics in stem cell biology, where students gather to discuss the latest topics in the field. To review every new section of these courses would overwhelm the Curriculum Coordination Office.

UCOC members agreed that the current practice should be maintained. A general course structure should be presented for the repeatable seminar topics course; subsequent changes would be just to the current topic that will be taught. The department and faculty, who are ultimately responsible for content, will be responsible for subsequent renditions of the repeatable seminar topics course.

For UCOC's Information, The attached *December 4, 1974 Minutes* details the creation of university-reviewed Special Topics courses. They were the solution to the proliferation of courses, such as "Current Topics, Current Problems, Current Issues," etc.

Allowing courses to have section titles in the past few years may have led to more departments offering such courses, that act essentially as special topics courses at the department level, for example IR-307.

The university-wide Special Topics and the department-level Current Topics, Current Problems, Current Issues, etc. are now parallel courses: one is centrally reviewed and the other not. Should there be one and not the other? If special topic-like courses are allowed at the department level, then why have the special topics courses and central review of those courses? (The topic was presented as an informational item only, as there is not a current, immediate issue that needs to be addressed.)

- Attachment: *December 4, 1974 Minutes, detailing Creation of Special Topics*

Members present

Diane Badame
Steven Bucher
Thomas Cummings (Chair)
Brian Head
Susan Metros
Kristine Moe (Support Staff)
Robert Morley
Geoffrey Shiflett
Mark Todd

Members absent

Gene Bickers
Judy Garner

Guests

Matt Bemis