

Curric Affairs Committee 21 April 2014 Agenda 1-2 pm Reich 300

audio conference information: [1-800-893-8850](tel:1-800-893-8850) Participants' PIN: 1109306

I. Approve Minutes of last meeting

II. Briefly review comments from CLA (VIA Dean Sherman)

"I have compiled many of the comments from faculty and department chairs of CLA. GERC has taken their charge very seriously and have proposed a distinct and much more flexible replacement for our existing core. All of the responses I have received from my request note their appreciation of the work done at GERC. As you might imagine, there is not a consensus on the proposal. The majority of departments I have heard from are in approval of the general proposal though there are questions on certain aspects. I have heard directly from about half of CLA's departments and programs. **My general observations:**

There were questions about the capstone course and how it may not be appropriate for all degrees.

Questions on implementation of the proposal are in my mind. Student advising, curriculum review and syllabus design and revision are some of the immediate questions in the logistical consideration."
(individual comments given at end of agenda)

III. Proposed motions

DRAFT MOTION 1

The Curricular Affairs Committee moves that the Faculty Senate submit the following changes to the UAF baccalaureate requirements for a faculty vote of approval:

Each student must take one course which possesses each of these attributes:

- (E) Civic Engagement (3 credits)
- (A) Alaska and the Circumpolar North (3 credits)
- (D) Intercultural Competence and Diversity (3 credits)

Total credits in addition to the GER to satisfy this requirement: 0 – 9 credits

Courses taken to satisfy these requirements may also satisfy General Education Requirements; they may satisfy a student's specific degree requirements; or they may satisfy a student's major requirements.

Although some courses may have multiple attributes, a student must take one course per attribute, for a total of 9 credits.

- Students will be provided with lists of courses with these attributes and such courses will also be indicated in their catalog descriptions. Faculty Senate committees will determine whether a course should have a certain attribute.
- These requirements should not necessitate taking additional credits to satisfy a student's common baccalaureate requirements, although depending on the choices, the courses could increase that total.
- Majors are not required to offer courses marked A, E, or D.
- Foreign languages, Alaska Native or American Sign Language, and many Study Abroad programs will satisfy the D requirement.

DRAFT MOTION 2

The Curricular Affairs Committee moves that the Faculty Senate submit the following changes to the UAF baccalaureate requirements for a faculty vote of approval:

Each student must complete a capstone course or experiential learning opportunity (e.g. internship) in student's major or program (0 – 3 credits).

DRAFT MOTION 3

The Curricular Affairs Committee moves that the Faculty Senate submit the following change to the UAF baccalaureate requirements for a faculty vote of approval:

Replace the current requirement for 2 written-intensive and one oral intensive class with "three courses marked "C", that integrate several kinds of communication practices with upper-division content, typically in a student's major. Non-written forms of communication may include, but are not limited to: oral presentations, discussions, training, videography, podcasting, or performance".

Responses from CLA faculty (via Todd Sherman, Dean CLA)

(a) does your department endorse or does it oppose the proposed changes?

I heard from four CLA departments that are in favor. Four express support with concerns. One faculty member and one chair were opposed. The other half were quiet or ambivalent and did not respond directly to me.

(b) are faculty in your department interested in modifying and (or) submitting courses for the A, D, or CE designators?

Those who responded positive are interested. For some, this is seen as a way to increase enrollments to courses outside of the current core designated classes.

(c) are faculty in your department willing to serve on committees to evaluate courses for A, D or CE designators: both initial approval and evaluation of effectiveness?

Yes, faculty in the departments responding positively to the proposal have indicated a willingness to serve.

Selected quotes from chairs and faculty:

1-“A, D, E requirements--First, I applaud any schema that features foreign language study; I was hoping that the GERC revision might insist on a foreign language requirement. Study of another language can highlight the diversity of the world in indelible ways; facility in a second language can also prove useful in job searches or graduate study (I have just read again of the US' singularity as a monolingual nation). The A & E requirements seem vague and a bit over-directive and unnecessary. Civic engagement in particular strikes me as misty.

I appreciate the change from O and W to C. I would agree with those faculty who say that coherent written expression is a primary goal for students and that "most of our undergraduates are challenged to produce clear, persuasive, well-organized arguments in writing, even as seniors."

If The D requirement can translate into language study, then it is worthwhile; otherwise, the Instructional Objectives are both vague and directive. Who will be defining 'diversity' here? "

2- "The proposal will take a great deal of faculty work on course development, but this work will be spread unevenly (and presumably will be uncompensated).

"The proposal makes unrealistic assumptions about the advising assistance available for UAF students.

I am surprised that during the early stages of work, no one proposed a return to the GE curriculum in place before the adoption of the current core in 1990-91. The status quo ante allowed students to take any courses they wanted, grouped into the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, math, and communications. That was a simple and straightforward GE curriculum; the GERC proposal (based on the 2011 learning outcomes) is complex and convoluted."

3- "We will have questions if/when this moves forward about some of the logistics, but in terms of the broader questions posed by Rainer and by Jonathan, we do not object to the new designators, and would be willing as individuals to serve on any necessary committees as the designators are implemented."

4- On Ethics and critical thinking: "no class in, let's say, research methods could teach the principles of critical thinking; and that no class in a particular subset of moral issues, could possibly teach ethical theory. There simply would be no time to cram the theory, *and* to understand the complexities of its particular application, in one single class. This is easy to see in the case of math and writing, but it seems to be harder to see in the case of ethical and critical thinking."

5- "The changes to the GER will open up a variety of pathways for students to complete core requirements, meaning that we should be able to populate a wider variety of 100-level courses than what we typically offer."