

Approved 2-12-14
Teaching & Learning Committee
January 29, 2014 (Meeting #2)

Present: Ann Bergeron, Brandon Breuer, Lynn Brice, Jessi Eaton, David Edmund, Amanda Evans, Dalibor Froncek, Jennifer Fuchs, Sheryl Grana, Michelle Hargrave, Paul Kiprof, Hilary Kowino, Lara LaCaille, Carmen Latterell, Jennifer Mencl, Jerry Pepper, Janet Pribyl, Terrie Shannon, Junhua Wang, Janelle Wilson

Excused: Frank Farleo; Absent: Ryan Gormley, Matt Weber

Minutes from the 12-11-13 meeting were approved.

For Information

Carmen Latterell and Janelle Wilson are serving as co-chairs of this committee for spring semester. The chair of this committee also attends the University Coordinating Council (UCC) meetings. Janelle and Carmen are rotating this responsibility between them. The UCC is in the process of reviewing the Constitution. For instance, there are instances where one individual is called upon to serve on multiple committees because of the role they serve as chair of a different committee. Changing this language from “chair” to “chair or their representative” has been suggested as a more workable solution. Jerry asked that UCC review the issue of whether people can serve as voting members on more than one committee, and also if there are certain people that are disallowed from being chair. It was also suggested that the selective use of Robert’s Rules is not workable. Unless there is a parliamentarian on every committee, Robert’s Rules should be replaced with basic reasonable practice.

Committee term lengths

A draft of 1, 2, and 3 year term lengths was sent with the agenda. UCC is proposing to move to a single 3-year term length (currently a member can serve two consecutive 3-year terms). The intent of this change would be to involve a broader spectrum of faculty and staff participation. A motion was made and seconded to approve the draft proposal for term lengths for TLC committee members. Motion approved.

Committee Charges

The current charge for the TLC committee is as follows:

Teaching & Learning

The Teaching & Learning Committee addresses issues related to student learning. The committee will focus on the quality and effectiveness of undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, and to foster improvement of teaching effectiveness and recognition of excellent teaching. The Committee will foster the development of continued communication with the Administration and make recommendations to the appropriate standing committee or council.

Does the TLC cover only undergraduate education? There is a separate Graduate Council; should there be a parallel Undergraduate Council, and is that this committee? One suggestion was to add “Undergraduate” to the name of the Teaching & Learning Committee (TLC) and remove the words “graduate and professional” from the second sentence. Another member noted that teaching and learning encompasses all levels of education. There are many instances where an issue would affect both graduate and undergraduate education. It was suggested that the wording be more broad and simply say “university education.” The charge for the Graduate Council specifies curriculum and assessment as part of their work, but these are separate subcommittees of TLC and are therefore not part of the TLC charge. It was suggested that if the TLC committee does indeed cover all levels of education, that a grad student be included as a member.

The organizational chart for the new governance structure indicates that the curriculum committee reports to the Faculty Council. It was suggested that it might make more sense if the curriculum committee were to report to the TLC. Janelle will raise this issue at the next UCC meeting.

It was suggested that the individual subcommittees of TLC (Lib Ed, IT & Library, and Assessment) review their respective charges within their own membership.

Agenda items

Members were encouraged to talk to colleagues about potential agenda items. Members can contact Janelle or Carmen at any time with suggestions for agenda items. Subcommittees or other governance committees can also bring forward agenda items as needed. What are some of the broader issues that wouldn't otherwise go to the curriculum committee or the lib ed subcommittee? Suggestions included:

- MOOCS – is this something that UMD should pursue?
- Is there a way to move forward prestigious teaching awards, and have teaching excellence be more influential in the tenure and merit process?
- How can this committee better promote the scholarship of teaching & learning on this campus? Faculty are individually researching best practices in pedagogy, but there is not a larger campus conversation about this issue.
- Alternate learning experiences for students, service learning, etc. and how this intersects with curriculum decisions. The committee should be talking about more effective learning, not just teaching. Are there other valid ways to demonstrate knowledge rather than taking a test?

Undergraduate Degree Requirements

Leigh Neys joined the meeting to discuss a proposed change in point #5 of the undergraduate degree requirements policy. In order to better support student participation in study abroad courses, all credits taken abroad transfer back as credit on the UMD transcript (not necessarily as a degree requirement, but at least as elective credit). The current language specifies “courses taught by UMD faculty.” This language was predicated on the Study in England model. The suggested revised language is intentionally broader, stating it instead as “credits earned through programs approved by the International Education office.” Study abroad opportunities have greatly expanded, and this revision would formalize the recognition of all study abroad credits as resident credits. Would it be possible with this language that a student could take transfer classes their junior year and study abroad their senior year and get a UMD degree? Students still must complete at least half of their courses at the 3x level and higher at UMD. A motion was made to approve the revised language as drafted. Motion approved. Where does this policy go now? The next steps are unclear in terms of moving this revision forward. Our chairs will check with UCC on the proper protocol.

Meeting adjourned 4:20 p.m.