

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING

May 13, 2002

Members present:

John Nicols, Scott Pratt, Herb Chereck, Karen Sprague, Hilary Gerdes, Kate Kranzush, Wendy Mitchell, Jim Imamura, Bob Zimmerman, Steve Ponder, K J Park, Gail Unruh, Kathy Roberts, Faye Chadwell, Dave Hubin

Members absent:

John Postlethwait, Paul Engleking, Anne Leavitt, Craig Hickman

Meeting began at 8:35

Announcements

John Nicols reports that the Discussion Draft of Contact-Hour Guidelines document below was presented by the dean at a College of Arts and Science Department Heads meeting. This document does not reflect the thinking of the Undergraduate Council, and it is not clear why it was presented.

DISCUSSION DRAFT OF CONTACT-HOUR GUIDELINES

3 May 2002

1. Classroom courses. Credit hours for all classroom courses should correspond to the equivalent contact hours. When there is not a direct correspondence between credit hours and regularly scheduled classroom hours, the course syllabus should list how the course meets the contact-hour requirement in one of the following two ways:

a. Formally scheduled discussion sections or laboratories

b. Scheduled times (at least 2 hours for each equivalent class contact hour) exclusive

of usual and normal office hours for meetings with students to supervise and

review out of class assignments representing additional work equivalent to the

differential in contact hours (e.g., writing assignments, lab experiments, field trips,

research papers). These options are typically appropriate only for small- to

medium-sized classes of not more than about 80 students.

Where it is not possible to match equivalent contact hours to the credit hours, the credit hours should be adjusted to match the contact hours.

2. *Non-classroom courses.* For non-classroom courses where credit and contact hours do not coincide, equivalence should be established through formal standards for student performance that are consistent with a corresponding classroom course. Preferably, students should have a choice between this type of course and the corresponding classroom course, with consistent standards of assessment. In some instances, e.g., rarely taught languages, a choice may not be possible, but there are nationally recognized standards and means of assessment that can be employed.

3. *Readings, research, etc. credits.* These guidelines for contact hours do not apply to readings and conference, research, internship, practica, or other similar types of credits, which should be evaluated using other traditional criteria for these credits.

4. *Monitoring.* When credit and contact hours do not coincide, either via class time or discussion/laboratory time, then course syllabi and practice should be regularly reviewed both by the department and the college for accordance with these guidelines.

Scott Pratt feels we should continue with our thought process on the credit/contact hour relationship and complete the recommendation we were working on, which would establish a review process. Herb Chereck feels the council has been irresponsible with this issue. The council is no farther ahead than when we started. It is up to the council to make a clear recommendation directly to the Provost, for his consideration. The Provost would then bring the matter before the Deans for their review. There are two proposals being considered. Scott would like the council to decide which one it favors and then forward that one to the Provost. The two proposals are:

1. Credit hours equal contact hours, and both three- and four-credit courses can be group- satisfying.
2. Credit hours can exceed contact hours, but the work required for the non-contact credit, and the means of evaluating it, must be specified.

A majority of the council favored of Proposal 2., which has already been drafted. When the council has had a chance to review this proposal and agree on a final version, it will be given to Provost Moseley and he will be invited to meet with the council for discussion of it.

American Sign Language

John Nicols read the ASL motion to the council:

American Sign Language Motion

Intent of Motion: To allow students who are proficient in American Sign Language the opportunity to request approval for BA clearance from the CAS Associate Dean for Humanities. The procedure would be consistent with that established for other languages not currently taught at U of O. This motion would not change the ability of departments to specify required or recommended languages specific to an academic major.

Motion 1: to accept American Sign Language (ASL) as fulfilling the BA second language requirement. Given that the U of O does not currently offer ASL at a level that would meet the BA requirement, the CAS Associate Dean of Humanities will determine whether or not a student has demonstrated proficiency at a level equivalent to the third term of the second year.

Academic departments would continue to have the ability to identify specific foreign languages (i.e. in Art History, Classics, Music) or skills (i.e. reading competency, conversational ability) as part of the stated requirements or recommendations for completion of a specific major.

Is ASL a sub-culture or a stand-alone culture? If the council approves the ASL motion, it would overturn the UEPC motions of February 3, 1994. Scott Pratt stated that if the UEPC had access to the information provided by Lorraine Davis, they would have been debating the wrong issue. However, since the language used to establish the criteria for fulfillment of the second language requirement has been in use since the 1960s, it may not be as explicit as it should be for the present discussion. Specifically, the question of “foreign ness” was not issue in the ‘60s.

K J Park thinks that the UO language requirement wording is about 150 years old, and was based on tradition, not legislation. It might even have been copied from another institution.

The question of why we now refer to “second” rather than “foreign” language was raised. The origin of this usage is the 1991 Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century, which defines ‘second language’ (Chapter 329) as a term that includes foreign language and American Sign Language. The term was adopted out of respect for the fact that users of ASL are not foreign.

John Nicols does not feel that the council has seen or heard enough information to make a decision. Bob Zimmerman also feels that the council is rushing into a decision. Bob would like to table the decision until there is more discussion involving UO second language policies.

Steve Ponder thought that the UO language requirement was more about proficiency than culture.

Gail Unruh feels that no matter how much we talk about culture, we have a language proficiency requirement, not a culture requirement. We have moved beyond the 1994 standards.

Karen Sprague thinks the study of a foreign language involves studying the significant culture of another language. She agrees with the Foreign Language faculty document, which has been given to the council, but has not yet been discussed. ASL culture appears to be narrow and focused on what it means to be deaf. ASL could more appropriately count as a multi-cultural requirement.

Kathy Roberts thinks that learning about another culture is also learning about other people and a different perspective. There does not seem to be a consistency of standards in the teaching of proficiency and culture between UO language departments.

Wendy Mitchell would like more information regarding the cultural component of ASL and also more information regarding the second language requirements at the UO.

Summary

The council would like more information before a decision can be made regarding:

1. The BA language requirement. Does the BA require proficiency and/or culture? What are the exact requirements?
2. What would 200 level ASL courses include? (This is the level where culture is typically introduced in foreign language curricula.)

The most recent draft of Credit/Contact hour Proposal 2, which was endorsed at this meeting, will be sent by email to all council members to review for the June 10 council meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00