

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING

May 27, 2003

Members present: Deborah Baumgold, Malcolm Wilson, Karen Sprague, Kathy Roberts, Mark Thoma, Wendy Mitchell, Tyler Neely, Sherrie Barr, Jim Imamura, Steve Ponder, John Nicols, Colleen Bell, Hilary Gerdes

Members absent: Paul Engelking, Nora Ahmed, Herb Chereck, Lowell Bowditch, John Postlethwait

Revised Language for Undergraduate Council Proposals

Clarifying revisions of the proposals approved on April 22 were suggested:

1. **Original proposal:** General-education courses may not be offered in less than a four-week format.

Suggested revision: General-education courses must be offered in time periods that are standard for UO academic terms: 10 weeks for Fall, Winter, or Spring Term courses, and not less than 4 weeks for Summer Term courses.

2. **Original proposal:** All syllabi for group-satisfying courses must state in the syllabus how the course meets group-satisfying guidelines.

Suggested revision: The syllabus for each group-satisfying course must state the fundamental questions(s) addressed by the course, and must indicate how the course meets the criteria for group status.

The suggested revisions for both proposals were voted on, and passed unanimously by the council.

Karen Sprague reminded council members to forward examples of the exemplary syllabi they noted so that she can use them to illustrate the desired characteristics of group-satisfying courses.

Online Delivery

Deborah Baumgold distributed a document prepared by Sandra Gladney from the UO Continuation Center. The document listed the 13 distance education courses offered online that are administered by the Continuing Education Center in conjunction with academic units, as well as an historical overview, a description of the administration of distance education, charts of enrollment by term and a summary of widely accepted best practices. Deborah reports

that Sandra is concerned about the consistency and standardization of delivery and format of online courses. The blackboard format is very useful but not widely used.

The council discussed online courses and these observations emerged:

1. Would a review of the delivery and format of online courses by Computer Science faculty or another special committee (Teaching Effectiveness, Media Services, Distance Education, Social Science lab) be useful?
2. Some online courses are taught by GTFs with no faculty oversight. Oversight consists of complaint management. Who is responsible for the content of these courses?
3. What would the effects be of disallowing general education courses to be offered online? This would be against the trend since online course enrollment has gone up significantly over the last 7 years.
4. Online courses are useful for students with schedule limitations (single moms for example).
5. Many UO students take online courses at other schools (probably 2-3 times the number taking UO courses online).
6. How do online courses compare with their classroom counterparts? For instance, do students who take EC 201 online, and then go on to a 300- or 400-level EC course do as well as students who take the traditional EC 201 course? The comparison hasn't been made.
7. Perhaps we need a periodic re-review (every 3 years) of online courses to make sure the course is offering the same experience and content as a traditional course and meeting the same General Education objectives.
8. Are online courses taking best advantage of current available technology?
9. The Graduate Council is also reviewing online courses. However, their focus is limiting the number of distance education courses they will accept.
10. When an online course is proposed, it should be reviewed for content so that it is equal or similar to its traditional format. Then, the course should be reviewed on the same cycle as traditional courses. Courses that are currently offered should be reviewed first since they were not initially reviewed when they were proposed.

Deborah will draft a proposal for the next council meeting regarding general education courses that are to be offered in an online format.

Lower-division Group-satisfying Course Discussion

The council finished its review of the remaining five lower-division general education courses. Council members want to underscore the message in the defining characteristics of group-satisfying courses as described in motion US01: Group satisfying courses in the social sciences must be liberal in nature rather than being professionally oriented or limited to the performance of professional skills. Deborah will draft a proposal for the next meeting.

Next Meeting

The next Undergraduate Council meeting will be on June 7, 2003, at 3:30 in Johnson Hall Conference Room. Herb Chereck will present a draft of the Student Records Policy. Deborah Baumgold will have draft proposals of two recommendations for the council's consideration.