

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
The Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee

Minutes

240 SH

September 12, 2024

Attending: Cornelia Lang (chair), Asha Bhandary, Rodica Curtu, Noelle Franzone, Megan Gogerty, Anita Jung, Liz Lundberg (staff), Julianna Pacheco, Sanvesh Srivastava, DeAndre Steger, Amy Strathman

Absent: Emilie Maurel-Destruel, Rachel Young

- 1) The committee began by reviewing and approving the minutes from September 5, 2024. Once approved, all minutes can be found [here](#).
- 2) Next, Associate Dean Lang discussed some proposed structural changes in CLAS that will be going before the Iowa Board of Regents this month. These changes have recently received some publicity, such as [this story](#) on clas.uiowa.edu. Last year, UEPCC met with the teams working on these proposals and gave its approval and feedback. Associate Dean Lang briefly reviewed the proposed changes:
 - a. Because the “Division” designation has been removed, the Division of World Languages, Literature, and Cultures (DWLLC) will be dissolved. In its place, pending approval from the Iowa BOR, Spanish and Portuguese will be a department, and everything else currently in the Division will become a new department called the Department of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures, and Cultures (DLLLLC). Other than the closure of the Portuguese BA program, which was approved separately last year, no curricula or programs of study will be closed at this time.
 - b. Pending approval from the Iowa BOR, the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences and the Department of Geographical and Sustainability Sciences will merge to form a new School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability (SEES). In this proposed change, there will be some curricular changes to fully combine and rethink the programs of study offered by the school. There will be three majors, with two degrees (BA and BS) and multiple subprograms available within them, as well as minors and certificates. It will still be possible for students to study everything they currently study in CLAS, but it might be structured differently.
 - c. Both of these proposed changes would increase opportunities for collaboration across disciplines, flexibility and support for students, stability for faculty and administrators, and efficiency in CLAS’s use of resources.
 - d. The committee discussed the differences between the proposals they had seen last year and what is moving forward now, and the potential need or desire for new department course codes. Associate Dean Lang and Liz Lundberg provided updates about the current state of the overall projects and ongoing conversations to decide and plan curricular and organizational details.
- 3) Next Associate Dean Lang explained some upcoming changes to the names of two General Education (GE) CLAS Core areas. She and Liz discussed the communications plan for

announcing and explaining these changes to faculty, staff, and especially students. They requested Noelle Franzone's and DeAndre Steger's perspectives on how best to reach students with this information, and the committee briefly discussed the changes and the communications plan.

- 4) Next Jennifer Bertrand (Director of Academic Policies and Student Services, CLAS Undergraduate Programs) presented a change in admission standards for CLAS's online programs.

Jennifer explained that the current admission standards for CLAS's three online programs (Enterprise Leadership BA, Political Science BA, and Sport and Recreation Management BS), were crafted in 2017 to match those of the online Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS) degree offered through what was then called the Division of Continuing Education (now administered by University College and Distance and Online Education.) Students entering these programs could be accepted with a lower incoming GPA than those entering in-person CLAS programs, but they were also required to have been out of high school for at least three years. In many cases these students had already earned an associate's degree, or they had started an in-person program but needed to switch online.

Since 2017, the population of students who apply to CLAS's online programs has changed. It has become clear that some students do start in an in-person CLAS program and need to change to fully online at some point, but that some students switch programs in the other direction as well. There has also been an increase in the number of students who want to pursue an online program of study directly after high school. It therefore makes sense to change these admissions standards.

Going forward, students applying to CLAS's online programs will need to meet CLAS's standard GPA admission requirement, a change that recognizes that online and in-person curricula are the same, and students can change between them in either direction. Instead of having been out of high school for three years, students will now be required to have earned at least 30 s.h. of college credit, whether they did so during or after high school. This requirement preserves the intent of the three years rule, which was to ensure that students entering a fully online program are capable of succeeding in a college program with that degree of autonomy.

The committee discussed some details about students switching between in-person and online programs, what the designation of an in-person or online learning center means in practical terms (when in-person students can take courses online and online students can take a limited number of courses on campus), and the role of online education within CLAS more broadly. UEPC supported these changes to the admission standards. The committee expressed appreciation for the way the new standards recognize the parallel value of online and in-person programs while also recognizing the unique challenges of online learning.

- 5) Finally, Associate Dean Lang showed the committee some materials related to the new framework for teaching assessment. The committee reviewed [a letter about excellence in teaching and learning](#) signed by Kevin Kregel (Executive Vice President and Provost), Lois Geist (Associate Provost for Faculty), Amanda Thein (Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Education and Dean of the Graduate College), and Tanya Uden-Holman

(Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of the University College).
Associate Dean Lang also discussed and previewed the [new SPOT survey](#) for collecting and reading student evaluations (which replaces the ACE system).

Respectfully submitted,

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Secretary, UEPC