

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

**Minutes**

240 SH

October 10, 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) First the committee reviewed minutes from the meeting on October 3, 2024. After a few small edits, the minutes were approved.

2) Next, the committee welcomed Dr. Matthew Shadle, CLAS's Academic Assessment Coordinator, to discuss assessment in the college. Matt's position was created within the last year, and Associate Dean Lang explained that part of the purpose of having an assessment coordinator in the college is to increase our engagement with the assessment processes required by the university and our accreditors. Associate Dean Lang explained that it is the responsibility of each DUS to lead assessment within their department, but they are not expected to conduct assessment on their own, and Matt is one of the resources they have available to them throughout that process. Matt also serves on the General Education Curriculum Committee and helps lead regular assessments of the CLAS Core General Education areas.

Matt began by introducing himself, his background as a Religious Studies faculty member involved in assessment work at his prior institutions, and his philosophy of assessment. In this conversation and in Matt's work we are focused specifically on assessment of student learning, which is a process with multiple layers beginning within the classroom itself, where instructors monitor how well students are meeting learning outcomes by evaluating their work and participation. Matt talked about how assessment has a perception problem, because often when people hear "assessment," they think about compliance issues, the extrinsic motivation for conducting assessments of programs of study and general education areas. Intrinsic motivations for assessment are also present, however, and more meaningful to the programs being assessed: most instructors and administrators would be interested in finding out what they are doing well that promotes student learning and what they can change or try differently to improve outcomes.

CLAS wants to engage more with the annual assessment process required by the Office of Assessment, because it is a good opportunity for sharing information across departments about assessment strategies, findings, and goals for moving forward. With the creation of Matt's role, we have someone in CLAS who can help departments find relevant data and interpret it, as well as providing meaningful feedback to departments about how they are conducting assessments and what they might do next with their findings. Ideally, assessment feels like a cycle that spans the whole year, not just a discrete task that happens in late spring and then is over. Goals coming out of the assessment process can be implemented in the summer or fall and monitored over the academic year, and then the next assessment report can provide updates about the state of those changes. Assessment should also feel like a conversation between the college and departments,

with some back and forth over time. The committee also discussed the time frame for assessments and whether requiring them every year allows for enough time for meaningful change in between reports. Matt explained that the annual assessment process isn't meant to suggest that departments should have addressed everything they found in the last report in one year. In many cases departments develop three- to five-year plans, and the annual assessment reports serve as check-ins along the way. Alternately, a department might identify several themes in an assessment that shape their goals and then choose only one of those themes for the upcoming year's focus.

The committee also discussed the assessment of CLAS Core General Education areas and how the process can be tailored to meet the needs of each area. The College recently finished assessing the International and Global Issues (IGI) area and is nearing the end of the process for the Rhetoric area, and the two assessment processes worked differently, partly because the Rhetoric requirement uses courses from only one department, while the IGI area includes courses from 11 departments. Shaping the assessment process to the specifics of each GE area allows for more meaningful, actionable findings.

Respectfully submitted,

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Secretary, UEPC