

UUCC Meeting 6.12.2018

Minutes

1. Announcements, updates, and old business

- Gratitude and thanks to Gary Barker for serving as interim chair of UUCC and remaining in place to continue to offer his keen sense of important questions, procedures.
- Two representatives from advising invited to join our UUCC conversations in an ex-officio capacity: Peggy Dotson (accepted) and Louise Neiman (accepted). They will join us in late June / early July.
- Mentoring for Mission in Teaching / UUCC collaboration: Ness Sandoval will join M4M initiative to serve as a liaison.
- IGEA team worked on plan for engaging faculty that will emerge from our summer research, self-education, and initial work on architecture dreaming. We will be discussing and getting your feedback on this plan on our 6/26 meeting.

2. Discussion of *The Undergraduate Experience* chapters 3-4

- Discussed what overarching principles / practices presented in the reading are most immediately useful to our goal of developing a common UG core / culture of a common core?
- UUCC observed that these two chapters ask us to think about strategies for building campus relationships to student wellbeing.
- Gary: FLunch / FIN programs at Duke seem do-able at SLU to strengthen relationships between faculty and students. Also have potential to positively impact student wellness / wellbeing – an increasing problem on our campus.
- Kim: BLUE assessment is currently asking nothing about student involvement / feeling involved in core curriculum.
- UUCC noted that we should invite Kent Porterfield to talk with us about structural impediments to creating meaningful academic and community relationships at SLU.
- On “Expectations” chapter, UUCC discussed tension between high academic expectations and student wellbeing / stress levels (Bill)
- Discussed where and when academic / intellectual expectations can be best articulated and reinforced. Importance of recruitment as a place where this happened. If all students see (on website, in promo materials) are student life images of undergrads in hammocks, they will be surprised and stressed by high academic expectations.
- Necessity, too, of building in places where teachers articulate what students can expect of them: “This is what you can expect of me as your teacher” (Ginge)

3. Discussion of Hanstedt, *General Education Essentials*: “Some Examples of Integrative Curricular Models”

- Whole book surveys more than “integrative” curricular models, which are in the center of his spectrum. This chapter focuses on three versions of integrative models: Streams, Core/Distribution, Core-only.

- Discussed which overarching principles / observations in Hanstedt seem most immediately useful to thinking about core design at SLU, and what curricular elements / models we might:
 - Steal / Adopt
 - Modify / Customize
 - Reject / Avoid
- UUCC discussed three models briefly in preparation for sub-group presentation on Peer Core Curricular models.

4. Presentation of 2017 AACU Integrative Learning Institute (“Pathways”)

- Gary Barker presented the “action plan” generated by the SLU team who attended last year’s AACU summer institute on “Integrative Learning and Signature Work”: a proposal to develop a “Pathways” structure into a possible SLU common UG core.
- How many courses would constitute a “pathway”? [Ness] This is open to debate, but should offer some depth into a topical inquiry, and some upper level coursework / experience.
- Humanities / STEM integration courses already happening in a “pathways” model in place in College of Arts and Letters. [Bill] We need to identify where on campus we already see integrative pathways developing and capitalize on these—for instance, the Interprofessional Education Program in Doisy [Ginge]
- UUCC noted that across SLU we are seeing a trend towards topical approaches and interdisciplinary modes of inquiry (MOIs). We need to tap into this potential.
- Call for an audit of these approaches across campus—IPE, Catholic Studies, Women’s and Gender Studies, etc—to see where there is commonality in theme and/or structure.

5. Presentation by Peer Core Curriculum sub-group [Emily Lutenski, Jenny Agnew, Ginge Kettenbach, Fabiola Martinez, Bill Rehg, Devita Stallings]

- Surveyed Gen Ed curricula from a range of peer institutions: Jesuit, Catholic non-Jesuit, secular liberal arts colleges, state universities, and also noted curricular designs that were just unique, engaging. Also looked for universities with professional schools, international campuses. Looked especially at schools that have recently undergone core revision.
- Trends:
 - *Most* schools (65%) are using a hybrid core/distribution model (see Hanstedt—*General Education Essentials* above).
 - Catholic schools tend to be more distributive but also add integrative elements.
 - Many schools have interdisciplinary First Year Experience courses; distribution accomplished within thematic pathways; more than one writing intensive course [see “discourse courses” at University of Missouri-Kansas City]
 - In terms of gen ed curriculum size, there are minimums (set by accrediting bodies) but no maximums. Size is trending smaller – around 40 credit hours, with some as low as 30

UUCC discussed the contention of some universities that the 30-hour focused model invites intentionality and mission coherence. Asked whether models where a central core could be added to by colleges would be an attractive model – general feeling was that this would ultimately get us right back to the same situation we are now in, with multiple iterations and no common UG core.

- Question of how to build in reflection. Is there a way to require periodic one-credit courses that ask students to reflect on their intellectual preparation to date? [Emily] One credit courses can throw off credit / tuition structures. [Lauren] But we might think about exempting some courses from triggering an overload—credit/no credit [Gary]
- UUCC asked whether the flat-rate full time / 18 credit hour fee structure helps us or challenges us in this core invention process?

6. Discussion of "Joint AACU / AAUP Statement on the Value of a Liberal Education" (May 31, 2018)

- UUCC spent time discussing this recent statement on the importance of holding onto Liberal education's historic commitment to the Humanities. Overall, committee observed that best practices in both higher education and also employer hiring are increasingly focused on breadth of intellectual experience / critical and creative flexibility.
- Observed that as we strive to balance STEM and Humanities in any possible UG common core, we need to keep accreditation requirements in mind and also perhaps look for greater flexibility in those requirements when it comes to general education delivery.