

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Minutes

April 22, 2021

Present: Charles McAdams, Vicki Bingham, Edwin Craft, Emily Dabney, Ellen Green, Leslie Griffin, Christy Riddle, Jeff Slagell, Jon Westfall
Absent: Beverly Moon, Billy Moore
Guests: Tomeka Harbin, Chair of Management, Marketing & Business Administration; Chris Riley, Assistant Professor of Management and Distance Education Committee Representative; Andrew Wegmann, Assistant Professor of U.S. History and incoming Faculty Senate President

Call to order: A meeting of the Academic Council was held via Zoom on April 22, 2021. The meeting convened at 8:31 AM with Provost McAdams presiding.

Announcements:

- Jon Westfall is transitioning out of his Faculty Senate President seat. Beginning in May, Andrew Wegmann will transition in as the Faculty Senate President and serve on Academic Council. Provost McAdams and all members of Academic Council thanked Jon for his service on Academic Council.
- Dr. Vicki Bingham, Dean for the School of Nursing, will be the Academic Council Representative on the President’s Cabinet for the 2021-2022 Academic year.

Agenda item	Comments/Discussion	Action taken	Responsible party
Approval of Minutes:	April 9, 2021	Approved.	
Informational Item:			
Action Items:			
Course Review for Awarding Credit for Participation/Activity Courses	GST 210 Student Government Association and GST 215 Delta Diplomats are participation/activity courses. - Motion to delete GST 210 & 215 was made and seconded. 9-approved, 0-nay, 0-abstention. Motion carried.	Deletion Approved.	
Discussion:			
SACSCOC Distance Education Policy Statement & Credit Hour Compliance Audits – Distance Education Committee	The SACSCOC policy statement on distance education states that “For all courses offered through distance or correspondence education, the institution employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded”. To meet these requirements, the Distance Education Committee recommended: - A master list of activities classified as direct instruction and out of class student work should be developed and maintained which will be applicable to all courses regardless of delivery modality, using the Point		

	<p>University and National Louis University (NLU) lists as a starting point.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply the NLU process to one or two courses to see how it fits as an “example audit” to give the University more insight into how we should implement credit hour compliance. - Eventually, a course review process applicable for all courses regardless of delivery modality, blending the appropriate QM standards with credit hour compliance, may be beneficial to consider. <p>Provost McAdams recommended that Chris Riley or other members of the Distance Education Committee present this to Faculty Senate, and hopefully a process/audit tool will be in place by this time next year.</p>		
<p>General Education Committee Report</p>	<p>In Academic Year 2020-21, the General Education Committee was charged with the following. Below each charge is the result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review Catalog entry for General Education program and the General Education program for the Applied Baccalaureate and University Studies degree programs and make recommendations to Provost for clarification or correction as needed. [due October 5] <i>This was completed, submitted, and adopted by Academic Council.</i> - Develop a chart to document alignment of General Education courses to General Education competencies. Make recommendations to correct deficiencies as needed. <i>As part of the process for Charge 1, this was completed and adopted.</i> <p>A motion was made and seconded to add GEO 201 and 303 to two competencies (5,6) because the 30-hour GE core would allow a gap for students who chose GEO for 6 hours in that combined category. 9-approved, 0-nay, 0-abstention. Motion carried.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to review course syllabi of each General Education course and determine if the student outcomes and/or assignments are aligned with applicable General Education competencies and if the course is adhering to the General Education Guidelines. - Develop a chart to document all syllabi reviewed thus far and those syllabi currently in the review process. Indicate if sections of the syllabus related to the General Education review met expectations or are absent, 		<p>Jon Westfall</p>

unclear, or below expectations.

This has been completed. The committee reviewed 94 competencies listed in syllabi. Of those, 58 were linked to a Student Learning Outcome. Of those 58, 24 mapped the SLO, and thus the competency, to an assessment of some kind.

Based upon the review, there appears to be a lot of work left to be done in communicating to chairs, coordinators, and ultimately faculty, the importance of addressing the correct competencies as per the chart, of tying each competency to an appropriate SLO, and then in turn communicating clearly to the student which assignments or activities assess that SLO and competency. The committee feels that it is appropriate that chairs have meaningful conversation with the faculty who are teaching each General Education course, and review syllabi prior to the semester starting to ensure these 3 things are accomplished properly.

- Develop a plan to complete the syllabus review over a three-year period. *The syllabus review was completed this spring; however, this must continue as an ongoing process. The committee feels that the next step would be for chairs to be provided with the attached General Education Mapping matrix, and a generic syllabus for every one of their general education courses that shows the REQUIRED competency or competencies not to be removed by individual faculty members. The committee recommends that dedicated staff, perhaps in IREP, be assigned to create, maintain, and distribute these generic syllabi. Those General Education competencies are then REQUIRED to be mapped to at least one SLO listed for any section of the relevant course and further, to the major course activity used for assessment of student achievement of that outcome. The committee understands the importance of correcting the syllabi without delay because of the reliance on the appropriate General Education course outcomes for the Annual Reports and for accreditation compliance. Chairs should then communicate with their faculty and work with them to implement. Deans should then follow up with chairs by requesting chairs do a self-audit of their General Education courses. The results of those self-audits should be forwarded to the General Education Committee for further review.*

Guidelines for Student Success in OS Courses & Tips for Faculty Teaching OS Courses – Distance Education Committee

Guidelines:

Technological Expectations:

1. Use a computer or laptop rather than mobile devices when in class.
2. Have a back-up technology plan in case batteries die or internet connections fail (i.e., backup batteries, hot spots if wi-fi freezes, etc.).
3. Use working technology including a camera, microphone, headphones/earbuds.
4. Have the appropriate learning tools (pen and paper, textbook, calculator...).
5. Be prompt to the class meetings and stay muted with the camera on for the duration of the class to be counted as present for attendance.
6. To strengthen connectivity and decrease the likelihood of internet disruptions, close all unnecessary applications and tabs, including social media, downloading, and streaming tools.
7. Use “Reactions” and the “Chat” features to actively participate in the class meetings.
8. Be alone in a quiet space free of distractions, and be mindful of the confidentiality of classmates or client-sensitive course content in practice courses by using headphones or earbuds.
9. Be attentive to lighting so that the face is clearly visible and background light is not distracting or blinding to others.

Additional Expectations:

1. Come to class prepared to learn (i.e., read the textbook and complete assignments relevant to each class meeting).
2. Take notes throughout all class meetings in order to maintain attention and improve learning.
3. Come to class meetings dressed/groomed appropriately.
4. The environment, appearance, and behavior of each student should be professional and respectful during all class meetings.
5. Be seated--stationary and distraction free while in class (i.e., not driving, walking around, doing chores, talking with others, looking at other screens, etc.)
6. Verify the instructor’s expectations for the course and sign an OS contract if required.
7. Contact the course instructor whenever there are questions or extenuating circumstances that require exceptions to these guidelines.

Tips:

OS Requirements:

- Have Chair and Dean approval
- Use with upper-level courses (300 or 400 level)
- Complete required training
- Meet same criteria as all online courses
- Focus on skill development, group problem-solving, engagement activities essential to content, seminar style discussion
- Hold class meetings weekly or every other week unless chair and dean agree to an alternative schedule

Common Concerns/Challenges:

- Use of mobile devices rather than laptops or computers
- Weak or unreliable internet signals
- Insufficient or unreliable internet access for off-campus students, especially in rural areas
- Insufficient commute time to F2F classes for on-campus students
- Insufficient quiet/private space on- and off-campus for zoom participants
- Zoom fatigue
- Retaining students' attention during class meetings
- Student learning/retention of course content
- Skill/competency/SLO mastery/measurement
- Difficulty counting attendance (faculty need better guidelines re: how to count attendance)
- Technology assistance for students with broken/inadequate devices/computers

Tips for Faculty Teaching OS Courses:

- Provide clear evidence in modules of routine synchronous class meetings with recordings and searchable transcripts provided in the Canvas course shells of all OS courses.
- Clearly note the specific class meeting dates and times on Canvas and in the syllabus.
- Specify attendance and participation expectations in the syllabus.
- Hold students with unreliable technology or internet harmless re: attendance¹.
- Turn off the recording feature in zoom when any personal matters are discussed.
- Ensure every student has a voice and chance to participate in class meetings.
- Use OS class meetings for class presentations and group activities/projects.
- Use interactive engaging activities with students in OS class meetings such as flash quizzes, polling, Kahoot, Flip-Grid, Zoom's Chat feature, breakout groups, etc. to enhance learning.

¹ Faculty can identify weak connections from, among other things, the notifications on the screen under students' names during Zoom sessions.

- Stay after class to talk with students who need personalized attention. Be sure to turn the recording function off.
- Consider taking attendance at the end of class instead of the beginning.
- Assign a student to monitor the chat function and write down who comes in and out of the class meeting. This role could rotate among students.
- Instruct students with weaker internet connections to turn off their cameras and microphones and utilize the chat feature to communicate.
- Consider pairing OS class meetings with follow-up discussion boards on Canvas.
- Let students repeat the top 3 points of the class meeting at the end of each class to improve learning.

	<input type="checkbox"/> Consider awarding participation badges to students who engage in classes and follow the guidelines.		
Graduate Catalog Wording - Concentration	Emily Dabney has noticed different terms being used in place of the term concentration in the graduate catalog, such as “track” and “emphasis”. Emily recommended conforming the language to “concentration” to lessen confusion. Provost McAdams asked Hayley Pinion to review the graduate catalog for words being used other than “concentration” and to compile a list for deans to distribute to chairs/curriculum coordinators. If there is any reason to not use the word “concentration”, they should let Hayley know by May 12th, then this item will be discussed again at the next Academic Council meeting.		Emily Dabney
Adjourned:	9:57 AM		
Next Meeting:	Tuesday, May 18, 2021 @ 8:30 AM		