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Council on General Education Minutes
September 20, 2022
10-11:00 a.m., STV 140

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Presiding: Gregory Ferrence

Present: Brian Aitken, Gregory Braswell, Mary Elaine Califf (late), Linda Clemmons, Gregory Ferrence, Joseph Goodman, Amy Hurd, Bothwell Piason, Rocio Rivadeneyra, Chris Worland, and Haiyan Xie

Guests:
Malinda Aiello, Program Director, Illinois Articulation Initiative

Ferrence called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Action Items:

1. Approval of September 6, 2022 Minutes
Ferrence asked if there were corrections to the minutes as submitted. There were no corrections. The minutes were accepted as submitted.

2. IDEAS Curriculum
The Council continued its discussion from the prior meeting. Prior to the meeting, Hurd met with Academic Senate Chair Dr. Martha Horst for clarification regarding the Council's questions from the previous meeting and asked for possible suggestions. Based on their conversation, the following options were presented to Council members for discussion.

Option 1: Establish a Council on Undergraduate Graduation Requirements with three groups: general education, AMALI, IDEAS. The Executive Council (or other name) will serve as the overarching committee with members of each of the 3 councils serving on this committee. Its main charge will be to review graduation requirements. It will be a new external committee of the Academic Senate. The Council for General Education will no longer be an external committee. Members within the Councils will vote on those councils as well as serve and vote on the Executive Council.
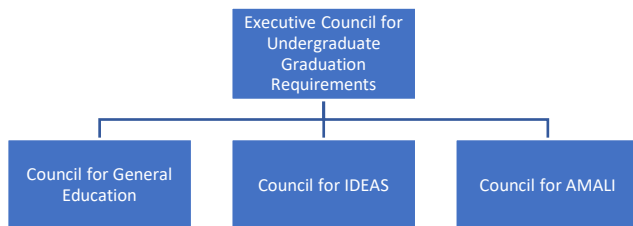
The curriculum committees would then be:
- UCC (external committee of the Academic Senate),
- Executive Council for Undergraduate Requirements (external committee of the Academic Senate)

- o CGE (sub-committee of ECUR)
- o IDEAS (sub-committee of ECUR)
- o AMALI (sub-committee of ECUR)
- GCC (proposed to be an Academic Senate Affiliated Committee)
- CTE (committee of the CTE)

Departments and Colleges

Option 3: A new IDEAS curriculum committee & a new AMALI curriculum committee solicited and approved by the faculty caucus. The curriculum committees would then be:
- CGE (external committee of the Academic Senate),
- UCC (external committee of the Academic Senate),
- GCC (proposed to be an Academic Senate Affiliated Committee)
- IDEAS
- AMALI
- CTE (committee of the CTE)

Departments and Colleges

Ferrence noted the options had been reduced from the four previously discussed and while not perfect, both seemed attainable. Hurd explained Option 1 would create an Executive Committee responsible for overseeing all graduation requirements which would include IDEAS, AMALI, and the Council as sub-committees. The Executive Committee would be an external committee of the Academic Senate while the sub-committees would not which means they would not submit annual reports to the Senate. She was not sure what the extent of the job would be for this committee but added everyone who was a member on one of the sub-committees would also be a member of the Executive Committee. Hurd went on to explain Option 3 would create IDEAS and AMALI as additional standalone committees that would also be external committees of the Senate. She added that while the Graduate Curriculum Committee is currently not an affiliated committee to the Senate, the proposal to make it one would be made soon.

Ferrence questioned from a process point of view whether in regard to Option 1, if proposal forms come to the Executive Committee, then when voting if all members of the Executive Committee would need to vote or just those involved in the particular sub-committee. Hurd thought the particular sub-committee members would be responsible for voting but acknowledged this is where Option 1 fall apart as she was then not sure if the Executive Committee was needed to do anything. Ferrence asked if Hurd had spoken to Horst regarding the proposed options. Hurd confirmed she had, and Horst had made the proposed suggestions. Hurd added that Horst was not leaning toward any particular option.

Worland asked if Option 1 would allow for a single set of bylaws or would each sub-committee need to have their own. If only one set was needed, he believed that would be a benefit of going with Option 1; otherwise, if each would require their own, he would then recommend going with Option 3. Ferrence thought only one set of bylaws for the Executive Committee would be needed. He wondered if that Committee would only need to meet at the beginning of the year to issue reminders, explain the group's purpose, etc. and then again at the end of the year to wrap things up.

Ferrence asked Hurd if she had a preference. Hurd responded after hearing the Council's discussion, she thought Option 1 was just adding another layer of bureaucracy into the process and was now leaning toward Option 3. Ferrence believed Option 3 was less convenient but thought it may call out the

Academic Senate to rethink their external committee layers. He noted Option 3 was the most consistent with how the Senate currently does in regard to structure. Ferrence added he could see merits for both options and wondered how departments and colleges fit into either option. Hurd responded that they were their own separate structures which would not be impacted either way and she had just added them to the list to include the full curricular process. Ferrence asked what affiliated meant to which Hurd responded it meant a dotted reporting line to the Senate.

Goodman noted he was new to the Council and asked for background information regarding the current structure and why it would matter how it was handled going forward. Hurd explained the creation of the IDEAS graduation requirement sparked the conversation. AMALI proposals are currently reviewed by a panel of faculty experts. One of the differences between the two groups will be that while AMALI does not have a formal course review process, IDEAS courses will be reviewed every five years. In addition, there are very few requests made for the AMALI designation which means there is very little work for this committee. However, the IDEAS committee will have near constant work and faculty members saw a need to establish a proposal review process. Because of the specific expertise needed for either requirement, it was determined to have others outside of this Council review proposals. Hurd added she had met with AMALI faculty in the spring, and they had decided to review learning outcomes for AMALI. She believed that whatever was decided, going forward, the process for either committee should be the same.

Ferrence added that as part of previous discussions, it had been suggested to expand the Council's membership to include the panel experts as members but that would then require them to attend all meetings, thereby increasing their workload. In addition, the experts could potentially end up being a minority in the Council and have their decisions countermanded by the larger group during a vote.

Rivadeneyra thought Option 3 made the most sense in that it gave members of the IDEAS and AMALI committees the same power and respect as the other curriculum committees on campus. Ferrence noted if the respective committees would only need to meet as needed. He thought they could have the autonomy to set up a five-year review cycle which could be changed/adapted based on the number of proposals, etc.

Goodman asked where the college curriculum committees fit into this structure. Ferrence explained the source level was the department level which would feed then into the college level committee. College committees review proposals for their potential impacts at the college-level but not necessarily at potential impacts at the University-wide level which is currently the job of the respective external Senate committees. Ferrence did not believe the college level committees would be impacted by any of the proposed changes. Rivadeneyra noted the College of Arts and Sciences college curriculum committee was not a part of the Academic Senate. She explained it had its own bylaws and election rules. She added in regard to IDS proposals, this Council served as the college curriculum committee with Hurd signing as the chair.

Rivadeneyra asked if the Council's bylaws would need to be changed if the Council went with Option 3. Hurd responded regardless of which option was selected, the bylaws would need to be updated. Bylaws would need to be created for both the IDEAS and AMALI sub-committees. In addition, the BS-SMT graduation requirement would need to be re-added to the Council's bylaws and a change into what constitutes quorum. Hurd would like to see the quorum requirement changed to 50% of seated members as the Council consistently does not have enough student members which in turn, adversely effects quorum for the body.

Clemmons had reservations regarding Option 1 as she was worried a new Executive Committee may not have a defined role each year. She noted that once created, it is highly difficult to remove an external Senate committee. Clemmons thought Option 3 would work best given the timeline. She noted she had heard the Senate currently had a back log of items to review and wondered if the IDEAS ad hoc committee could continue as it is functioning currently until the proposed structure could be reviewed by the Senate. Hurd responded the committee could continue to function as it is now. However, the Academic Senate is currently working on its bylaws so we would need to inform them of any proposed changes so they can plan accordingly.

Califf felt that by creating separate external committees it would set a precedent to create individual committees with very limited functions. Rather she would like to see a model group created that would give jurisdiction over all undergraduate graduation requirements, including the BS-SMT requirement. She thought additional members could be added to the Council. She apologized for arriving late due to a scheduling conflict and asked what the Council's main concerns were with Option 1. Hurd summarized Council member's concerns regarding voting autonomy for sub-committee members and the concerns regarding the role of the Executive Committee as to what its purpose would be. Califf suggested having the Executive Committee handle BS-SMT requests.

Hurd felt the Senate needed to change its bylaws as current practices/procedures is what currently restricts its external committees. Worland agreed and thought while he would love to see option 1 put into place, he felt given the current practice/polices we are governed by, utilizing the option would hurt the Council more than going with Option 3. Califf asked if the Council could pressure the Senate to change its policies. Ferrence responded going with Option 3 may be the way to do so. Hurd asked if these requests should be handled by the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) as opposed to creating new sub-committees. Califf noted that while that would make the most sense, UCC didn't have the bandwidth to handle these additional requirements. She added new regulations regarding the Open Meetings Act hinders what can be handled via consent agenda.

Goodman asked for further clarification regarding the five-year review process for IDEAS courses. Worland and Rivadeneyra explained that the Council has found courses have either floated or changed dramatically over the years. Currently there is not a review mechanism in place to review General Education courses as there is IAI courses. Worland added there is a large emphasis going forward on having a formal, periodic assessment for all courses, so the Council was trying to be proactive in creating an assessment process for IDEAS courses.

Aiello explained IAI had an ongoing review cycle put in place because of course content drift or changes to the category descriptions. The review serves as a check between both the institution and the IAI panels. Ferrence asked for what Aiello's thoughts were based on her experience with the IAI tiered review systems. Aiello responded she couldn't really answer the question as IAI panels are identical. Based on her experience working with boards she would recommend combining IDEAS and AMALI committees together and have the combined committee answer to an Executive Committee.

Goodman feared the Council had become an Abilene paradox. Ferrence noted that while both groups had smaller total tasks, they were meant to be distinctly different and both IDEAS and AMALI committees deserved to be independent bodies such as UCC and GCC. Regardless of the option chosen, Aiello wondered if adjustments could be made as things progressed with the caveat that the Council obviously did not want to keep continuously changing the process. Hurd thought due to the current Senate backlog, the Council would have some time to put a process in place and make necessary

adjustments prior to the bylaws reaching the Rules Committee for review. She noted the ad hoc committees could continue with their work under their current structure until a new structure was approved by the Senate.

Califf made a motion to select Option 3 as the curriculum structure going forward. Clemmons seconded the motion.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

Hurd will work on updating the Council and IDEAS bylaws for the Council to review.

Discussion Items:

3. General Education Assessment Update
An update was provided by University Assessment regarding the General Education assessment activities. The activities include:

Spring 2022: General Education Student Survey
- Administered for the second time at ISU (first time was spring 2019)
- Survey items focused on students' perceptions regarding:
  - Purpose/role of General Education and extent to which students obtained program learning outcomes (measured through close-ended/rating scale items)
  - Strengths, areas for improvement, and additional comments (measured through open-ended/text response items)
- All students currently enrolled in at least one General Education course were invited to participate (n = 10,370); of those students, 705 (6.8%) responded
- Of those who responded, 20 were randomly selected to receive $10 gift card
- Results from both administrations have been imported to Power BI dashboard

Summer 2022: General Education assignment reviews
- Completed for the second time at ISU (first time was with United States Traditions)
- Collected assignments from the following General Education course categories were reviewed:
  - Fine Arts
  - Humanities/Language in the Humanities
  - Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning
  - Natural Sciences; Natural Science Alternatives; and Science, Mathematics, and Technology
- Faculty who teach/have taught General Education courses in those categories were recruited to review assignments
- Each course category had three faculty reviewers, but 'Sciences' had four faculty reviewers
- Reviewers attended an online orientation session during which:

- o Background/context for the General Education program and assessment process was provided
- o Overview/demonstration of the ReggieNet committee site that stored the assignments and rubrics was given
- o Reviewers individually assessed several sample assignments with the category-specific rubrics
- o Reviewers discussed those reviews among themselves to ensure consistent use of the rubrics
- Reviewers individually completed reviews of 15 assignments; for this work, they received a stipend of $500
- Results have been imported to Power BI dashboard
- Assignments from the Social Sciences course category were planned to be reviewed
  - o One reviewer was unable to participate but did not notify until the day of the orientation session
  - o Another reviewer was unable to attend the orientation session due to a family emergency
  - o These assignments will be reviewed during 2022-2023 academic year
- Additional assignments are needed from the Individuals and Civic Life course category
  - o Requests for assignments from these courses were sent at the beginning of the fall 2022 semester
  - o As of Thursday, 09/15, two instructors have volunteered to submit assignments (12.5% of the 16 who were invited)

In addition, the Council was given the link to the student survey dashboard. There was discussion about the contents of the dashboard and the ability to review data broken out by college and the overall University. The comments showed concern that many students did not understand the value of general education. There was discussion about the lower response rate (6.8%) and how to get that up. Lastly, there is a need to "close the assessment loop" and demonstrate how the data will be used. More discussion will be held about assessment throughout the fall and spring semesters.

3. Curriculum Software RFP Update
Hurd informed Council members the RFP I snow third in line to be processed by the Purchasing Office. She will provide additional information once the RFP has been sent out for bid.

Worland made a motion to adjourn. Xie seconded.

Meeting adjourned: 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons