

## UCC MEETING MINUTES 12-4-2024

**Attendees:** Ellen Crowell, Liz Burke, Natalie Floeh, Allen Brizee, Susan Brower-Toland, Gary Barker, Lauren Arnold, Marisa Cope, Nathaniel Rivers, David Kaplan, Joya Uraizee, Renee Davis, Kathy Kienstra, Natasha Case, Matthew Elia, Maria Jose-Morell, Katie MacKinnon, Hamish Binns, Carolyn O’Laughlin, Bobby Wassel, Benton Brown, Ben Perlman, Elena Bray-Speth, Annie Smart, Heather Bednarek, Mike May, Kyle Crews, Nicole Mispagel, Genevieve Keyser, Jesse Helton, Richa Kulkarni

### 1. Call to Order / Announcements

- 2024 Ignite Instructor of the Year awards went to Dr. Shannon Cooper-Sadlo (Social Work) and Dr. Meadow Campbell (School of Medicine). Students from these classes came and shared how their class impacted them. Several finalists for the award were also finalized.
- Any courses intended to be in the 2025-26 catalog should be put forth to the UCC by the March 2025 meeting.
- Associate Directors shared some difficulties they experienced with course submissions, such as proposals submitted using old Core worksheets. An Equity and Global Identities subcommittee member confirmed this and explained that the new worksheets are not easy to find on the official Core website. The Director of the Core explained that faculty members likely downloaded the original worksheets years ago and are not looking for new ones.
- An Associate Dean from the College of Arts and Sciences mentioned that faculty teaching load may have to shift to meet the need and demand of students.
- A member from Biology asked if the Core curriculum will reach a point where there are more Core courses being offered than necessary. The Director shared that other universities run a finite set of Core courses all under their own subject code to avoid this situation. At SLU, only a few courses (CORE 1000, CORE 1500, CORE 2510, CORE 3500) are run under a Core subject code, while the rest are owned by the departments. The Director and Assistant Director of the Core may need to talk with department chairs about what number of Core courses should be offered by each department so that delivery of the Core is most evenly spread across the university.
- A member from Sociology and Anthropology shared that a course submission template would help faculty to feel less anxious about submitting courses and to be more successful with them.
- An Associate Dean from the College of Arts and Sciences shared that he believes negative comments about the Core are an anomaly, as the Core has elevated the level of teaching at SLU across the board by being a catalyst for professional development. He

admitted that it is a lot of work, but it improves the classroom experience. He also shared that the “once approved always approved” method is problematic for transfer articulation, so course review is a valuable process.

- A member from Mathematics and Statistics shared that he was aware of a faculty member who has given up on Core submissions due to getting rejected too many times. An Associate Director of the Core explained that new members join subcommittees and may reject courses that were previously expected to be approved by previous subcommittee members. The Ways of Thinking subcommittee chair shared that her subcommittee has had 3 different groups of people flow through, resulting in many different perspectives and opinions. Another Associate Director pointed out that despite the rejections, over 90% of submissions are getting approved.
- It was also mentioned that Core committees are not the only curricular committee to present challenges to faculty with course proposals. Submissions may be held up by any curricular committee along the approval workflow, such as the college-level undergraduate curricular committee. A representative from the Registrar’s Office mentioned that resubmitting course proposals in a timely manner after the Core committee rolls them back helps improve the whole process.

## **2. Approval of minutes from 11.6.24**

- Natalie Floeh first approver; Joya Uraizee second; no opposition
- Minutes approved

## **3. Course approvals**

### **Ignite Seminar**

CORE 1000:

Contemporary Spanish Cinema (Elisa Padilla)  
The Art of Losing (Brian Yothers)  
Think Like an Entrepreneur (Hayley Johnston)  
Global Citizenship in an Interconnected World (Hal Parker)  
La Pluriculturalidad del Mundo Hispanoamericano (Aaraceli San Martin Moreno)  
Undergrounds: Then and Now (Rachel Greenwald Smith)  
Monsters and Their Makers (Toby Benis)  
Early Christianity in 15 Objects (Peter Martens)  
Geocuriosity: Rocks, Crystals, and Landscapes (John Encarnacion)

### **Cura Personalis 2: Self in Contemplation**

ASCI 4050: Human Factors

**Cura Personalis 3: Self in the World**

MENG 4304: Thermal Systems Design

MLS 4611: Advanced Topics and Case Correlations

XRT 4800: Capstone in Radiation Therapy

**Eloquentia Perfecta: Creative Expression**

DANC 2850: Musical Theatre Dance

THR 3545: Scenic and Lighting Design

**Eloquentia Perfecta: Writing Intensive**

CHIN 3100: Modern Chinese Fiction and Film

ENGL 3590: Nature and Literature

**Dignity, Ethics, and Just Society**

HSCI 3200: Aspects of Health Law

**Global Interdependence**

WGST 4500: Madonnas, Witches, Rebels: Women and Gender in Italy

**Reflection in Action**

BLS 4800: Medical Sciences Capstone - Integrative Global Health, Ethics, and Community Impact

FIN 4440: Personal Financial Planning

MLS 4770: Clinical Phlebotomy Practicum

MRI 4700: MRI Clinical Practicum II

XRT 4350: Clinical Practicum I

(All courses approved)

**4. Discussion of Draft Policy on University Undergraduate Core “Open” Core Courses**

- The Director of the Core shared that she brought the draft policy to the Provost, and he thought it was going in the right direction to set boundaries around courses. The Director also discussed the draft policy with the Associate Provost overseeing University-wide assessment, who provided feedback and edits. The Director now wanted to discuss amongst the UUC and possibly put the policy up for a vote. If it were to pass, the policy would then go to the Council of Academic Deans and Directors, and then to the Provost. The Director then read through the draft policy to refresh UUC members and noted that policies such as the one presented are necessary because problems in a curriculum become apparent as the curriculum is carried out.

- Members of the UUCC shared their thoughts about Preamble. Small edits were suggested, such as adding the specific names of the Core courses in question. It was explained that temporal language and contextual justifications within the Preamble were requested by the Office of the Provost.
- There was discussion of the use of the term “multidisciplinary” in the preamble: the Director noted that while it is ideal for Core courses to all be as open as possible, calling a course “multidisciplinary” can give the wrong impression to faculty of the teaching methods expected to be used in the course; additionally, it is the diverse disciplinary expertise of the students that make the class multidisciplinary, not that of the instructor. Another member pointed out that a diversity of disciplines from the students is not a guarantee. An open Collaborative Inquiry section could still be populated entirely of students of the same major, and this would not be grounds to not run the section.
- The Director shared that while the Office of the Provost would like to see no locked courses, she feels some locking is necessary for programs to implement the Core properly to students.
- Members of the UUCC shared their thoughts about the next section of the draft policy, section 2.0.
  - Members shared insights from students on the importance of the Ignite Seminar as a place of discovery, especially if students entered SLU without knowing what they wanted to study.
  - “Double counting” language was removed, as it is problematic for the Registrar’s Office.
  - There was discussion of the language used to indicate an academic program: One member asked if the phrase “major or minor” was too limiting, since students also obtain certificates and micro-credentials. The term “program” was used in place of “major or minor” until a member pointed out that a “program” is defined as including Core credits, which would undermine the credit hour minimal threshold that excludes Core credits. The language of section 2.0 was shifted to “academic majors.”
  - A member from Nursing asked for clarification on the definition credit hours that add up to the 85-credit hour threshold, and the Director answered that those credits are everything required by a program for the degree, whether it is in the subject code or not (e.g., common body of knowledge), minus courses that contribute to completion of the Core. The Nursing member said that a list of the programs that meet this 85-credit hour minimum would be helpful, and the Core Office agreed to work with the Registrar’s Office to produce a list.
  - The order of subsections within section 2.0 was altered to begin with the availability of open courses to all programs and then moving into the stipulations of locked courses, including the definition of “locked.”

- Language throughout section 2.0 was simplified and made more direct. Some language was highlighted to be modified later with consultation from the Office of the Provost.
- There was discussion of what valid Collaborative Inquiry choice options for students look like. One member said that if students are required to take a Collaborative Inquiry capstone run by their home department, but they get to choose between two or more in-house options, that should be viewed as a valid open choice; however, the draft policy does not seem to allow for that. Another member pointed out that departments do not have a common use of the word capstone. For some programs, capstones are open to non-majors, while for other programs they are not.
- There was discussion of the language of “electives” versus “major requirements.” A member shared that the policy needs to make explicit that a Collaborative Inquiry course can be an elective for a major, as long as it’s a choice among many. Another member mentioned that elective language is unclear.
- There was further discussion of the term “locked.” A member from Psychology pointed out that if the policy uses the Registrar’s definition of the term “locked,” then that does not include courses “functionally locked” by disciplinary pre-requisites. The Assistant Director shared that adding a list of definitions back into the policy could be helpful. The Psychology representative mentioned that if the Core subcommittees do not intend to approve courses based on pre-requisites, then it is best to omit reference to “functionally locked” courses.
- Section 2.5 was omitted.
- There was discussion of the ‘why’ of Collaborative Inquiry. A member explained that students are meant to practice their expertise across the university and outside their program. She continued that keeping majors in their own discipline for every course, including Collaborative Inquiry, hinders their achievement of Student Learning Outcome 2.
- A representative from Business explained that the Core cannot engineer the diversity of majors within the classroom. The Director of the Core responded that while that is true, the policy tries to ensure the greatest variety possible.
- A representative from Mathematics and Statistics asked if departments are allowed to require that students pick one of multiple in-house Collaborative Inquiries, since that would still constitute a choice. The Associate Director of Collaborative Inquiry noted that this is already the case for the Department of Communication.

- Another member pointed out that, under this policy, a department offering required in-house Collaborative Inquiry options for its majors (e.g., pick one of three ENGL courses that count for Collaborative Inquiry) would be out of compliance, and the Core could maintain that and not allow it to move forward.
- The Director of the Core explained that previously approved courses would be grandfathered in, but for newly proposed courses, the Collaborative Inquiry subcommittee would need to check if the courses would be locked, functionally or not. She further explained that no one has bad intentions, but there is confusion from students and from faculty, so determining a consistent message is necessary to alleviate this confusion.
- There was discussion of combining subsections 2.4 and 2.5, but it was decided to keep them separate.
- A member noted that subsection 2.5, points (a) and (c) codify the process that is already followed but not written down, while subsection 2.5 points (b) and (d) ensure the practice of necessary procedures (professional development and enrollment restrictions).
- The Director of the Core expressed that she did want to rush voting and moving the policy forward. Several UUCS members expressed that they wanted to see next draft of policy with revised language before voting.
- An Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences confirmed with the Director of the Core that the policy is not catalog-specific, meaning the policy does not have to be passed by a certain time before being implemented the next academic year.

## **5. Adjourn**