

MINUTES

Meeting Date: September 14, 2011

Time: 1:30-3:00pm

Place: Dodd 162

Voting Members and Alternates in Attendance: Chair Hedley Freake, Edith Barrett (member, Regional Campuses-Hartford), Laura Burton (member, Neag School of Education), Eric Donkor (member, School of Engineering), David Grant (member, School of Pharmacy), Ion Mandoiu (alternate, School of Engineering), Thomas Meyer (alternate, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources), Richard Rockwell (member, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences), Ramesh Sankaranarayanan (alternate, School of Business), Olga Vinogradova (alternate, School of Pharmacy), Shannon Weaver (alternate, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences).

Voting Members and Alternates NOT in Attendance: Michael Bradford (alternate, School of Fine Arts), Larry Gramling (member, School of Business), Jason Irizarry (alternate, Neag School of Education), Gary Kazmer (member, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources), David Stern (member, School of Fine Arts)

Ex Officio Members and Alternates in Attendance: Eric Schultz (member, Senate Curricula and Courses Committee), Margaret Lamb (alternate, Honors and Enrichment Programs), Maria Martinez (alternate, Institute for Student Success), Marianne Buck (alternate, Registrar's Office), David Ouimette (member, Institute for Student Success).

Ex Officio Members and Alternates NOT in Attendance: Daniel Doerr (member, Student Affairs), Peter Kaminsky (alternate, Senate Curricula and Courses Committee), Sue Saunders (alternate, Student Affairs), Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith (member, Registrar's Office).

Meeting called to order at 1:35pm.

1. Welcome

Following the introduction of members, Chair Hedley Freake, described the different categories of membership represented on the UICC: voting members (from the schools and colleges), alternates to voting members (from the schools and colleges), and ex officio members (from different University units). On occasion, there may also be visitors to the meetings.

Chair Hedley Freake noted that he would like to shift the focus of the UICC to actualize discussions that have already taken place. While he encouraged all members, alternates, and ex officio members to attend the meetings to keep present on the discussions, he noted that he would look to the voting members in particular during discussions. He also reminded those present that each school and college has one vote; when a voting member for a school or college is not present at a meeting, the alternate member will have standing to vote.

2. Minutes of the May 2, 2011 meeting

Dr. Richard Rockwell moved that the minutes of the May 2, 2011 meeting be approved as presented. Dr. Eric Donkor seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

3. Old Business

Chair Hedley Freake distributed orientation packets to new members and updated information to those continuing on the committee. He noted that the INTD part of the UICC charge is fairly straight-forward since these courses

UNIVERSITY INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES COMMITTEE

continue to the school or college C&CC for approval; UNIV-type courses – those not based within the schools and colleges, but within programs in units reporting to the Provost- are more complex since these do not get approved by a school or college C&CC. The UICC has recommended that, before courses come to the UICC, they get approved by a program’s faculty review body. There has also been some debate about whether all UNIV courses should go to the Senate after UICC review; this is still to be decided.

The INTD section of the current course catalog is included at the end of the packet. It is part of the UICC responsibility to review existing courses to determine whether they should be UNIV or INTD.

3.1. Proposal to Change Committee Membership

In Spring 2011, Dr. Doug Cooper recommended to the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) that voting ex officio (1) and student (1) members be added to the UICC. Currently, no ex officio member has voting rights and there are no student members on the UICC, voting or otherwise.

Chair Hedley Freake stated that the suggestion was not well-received by most UICC members. The former chair, Dr. Gerry Gianutsos, sent a response to Senate Executive Committee, noting this opposition. The SEC has forwarded the recommendation to Senate Scholastic Standards Committee, where it currently rests.

3.2. UICC Letter to Senate Executive Committee

At the end of the Spring 2011 semester, discussion on the UICC turned toward a broader discussion of our charge and the need for a discussion about non-traditional courses across the University. The UICC sent a letter to the SEC recommending that they establish a taskforce to look at those areas of the curriculum.

Chair Hedley Freake stated that the UICC has just received the SEC response. The response letter from the SEC Chair states that, in terms of the INTD and UNIV, the UICC is the faculty body best placed to think about non-traditional courses.

Rather than set up another body, the SEC asked that the UICC consider the issues and bring recommendations for changes of approval of non-departmental courses to Senate. The response letter empowers the UICC to make recommendations about this group of courses to Senate.

Chair Hedley Freake, a member of the SEC, was present for the discussion on SEC. In general, he stated, there are quite a few people who would like to see action on the INTD area. Setting up a taskforce, it was thought, would likely delay setting up a UNIV designation in the catalog. In terms of courses under its purview, the UICC should be making recommendations.

Dr. Richard Rockwell noted that the UICC can accomplish those things it wishes to accomplish because the SEC letter broadens the UICC’s charge. Agreeing that the UICC is the appropriate body to consider these issues (non-traditional INTD and UNIV-type courses outside of the schools and colleges) broadens the mandate.

3.3. Status of UNIV Discussions

Chair Hedley Freake stated that a fair amount of discussion surrounding UNIV took place in the previous academic year. A UNIV subcommittee was formed and a report submitted to the UICC which served to clarify the issues surrounding UNIV.

One of the issues was the question of whether all UNIV courses should be graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U). At the end of the discussion, the UICC voted that, no, grading status should be

UNIVERSITY INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES COMMITTEE

determined one course at a time, although it was acknowledged that there would be many UNIV courses where S/U grading would be appropriate. The UICC decided that it should be up to the proposers of the courses to make an argument for grading one way or the other.

Another issue was whether there should be an upper limit as to the number of UNIV credits a student could be permitted to include in their 120 degree credits. While we do not have data about the number of INTD credit taken by students toward their undergraduate degree, we know, anecdotally, that some students have taken many, sometimes for legitimate reasons (several different programs use INTD courses- Honors Program, First Year Experience, Senior Year Experience, etc.). Rather than put a cap on the number of INTD credit a student could take toward their degree, it was determined that it would be more appropriate to place restrictions at the course level (e.g. allow INTD 1800 to be taken only once for credit). It was thought that a blanket restriction could negatively impact the operation of some programs.

Chair Hedley Freake suggested circulating an expanded version of the current Definitional Matter document noting the decisions made in the previous year; this will be working document that describes how UNIV might be structured and administered. This will be circulated at the next meeting.

As noted earlier, and reiterated by Dr. Eric Donkor, one important item still to be decided is whether the UICC should be the final approving body for UNIV courses or if these need to go to Senate C&CC.

Dr. Edith Barrett asked what the determining factor should be when reviewing the course designation of existing courses. Chair Hedley Freake noted that, as decided earlier, the determining factor will be where the course originates: if within the schools and colleges, the course would be INTD; if outside of the schools and colleges, but from a unit reporting to the Provost, the course would be UNIV. The course designation is unlikely to be a factor when a student is deciding to take a course. Dr. Eric Schultz also noted that UNIV courses are more likely to be relying on resources that are not available through traditional means, such as the cultural centers; these courses could have real functional meaning for a student.

The UICC was reminded that the INTD designation stands for “Interdepartmental” and not “Interdisciplinary.”

4. New business.

4.1. Goals for the Academic Year

The goals for the current academic year are as follows:

- Finalize the creation of the UNIV designation so that it can be ready for inclusion in the 2012-2013 catalog. Having this designation will allow the UICC to formalize the division of courses into the two categories (UNIV and INTD).
- Answering questions raised in the Senate documents, such as where the administrative authority for grade appeals relative to UNIV courses should reside.
- Establish a timetable for the provisional sorting of existing INTD courses into INTD and UNIV so that programs are able to discuss what the consequences would be, if any, for the programs running these courses.
 - Early communication with programs where it is likely that an existing INTD course will be redesignated as UNIV will allow programs the opportunity to rework and/or reformat their courses for reconsideration by the UICC. It is important that this be done with enough time to get into the next catalog.
- Establish a timeline for when units will be required to submit program reports for their courses to UICC.

UNIVERSITY INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES COMMITTEE

- For some existing INTD courses likely to be designation as UNIV, there may be some discussion of changes to catalog language. In these cases, a request to change the catalog language can be submitted with the accompanying report.
- Prioritize which courses are most important that the UICC review. For example, given the size of the First Year Program, The UICC may wish to look at these courses first.
 - Mr. David Ouimette stated that he is prepared to submit reports on FYP & Learning Communities courses in stages: first INTD 1800 FYE University Learning Skills, followed by INTD 1810 FYE Learning Community Seminar and 1820 FYE Faculty/Student Seminar in subsequent reports.
 - The INTD 1800 program report will be on the agenda for the October 19, 2011 UICC meeting.

Chair Hedley Freake recommended that UICC members review the Program Report template included in the orientation packet.

Dr Richard Rockwell stated that the letter from the SEC presents the UICC with some goals, such as thinking about the whole collection of courses outside of the school structure and about whether the University is doing the best job it can do with its resources.

4.2 Course Proposals

Item removed due to late submission.

5. Other Business

Dr. Eric Schultz stated that an item of interest to the UICC is the movement toward a University-wide review of the way course proposals are handled. He noted that there may be some support for getting all University course proposals on the same online system to streamline the approval process.

Dr. Hedley Freake stated that proposals to the UICC will be electronically circulated to UICC members about a week before a UICC meeting. While discussion will happen during the meeting, members are expected to review proposals before the meeting. There may be some exceptions to this process if something is very urgent.

Future Fall 2011 UICC meetings will be scheduled for Wednesdays 1:30-3pm. An email with meeting dates will follow in advance of the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned 2:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Anabel Perez
IISP Administrator