

Report to Senate: University Interdisciplinary Courses Committee

April 28, 2014

Hedley Freake, Chair

The University Interdisciplinary Courses Committee (UICC) consists of voting members and alternates representing the 8 undergraduate schools and colleges and additional regional campus representatives. In addition, ex-officio, non-voting members represent academic and student affairs units that offer relevant courses, as well as other stakeholders. The UICC oversees the interdepartmental and interdisciplinary and/or program-based, non-departmental curriculum and advises faculty members and staff on these course proposals. The UICC reports to the Provost's Office, and administrative support for the committee and routine matters related to INTD and UNIV courses is provided by a Program Assistant shared with other curricular committees and the Individualized & Interdisciplinary Studies Program.

On January 29, 2014, the UICC was also granted oversight of Military Science (MISI) and Air Force (AIRF) courses by Vice Provost Sally Reis. One non-voting representative from the Office of Veterans Affairs and Military Programs was appointed, and one alternate will soon be appointed by the Provost's Office to sit on the UICC.

Military Science (MISI) and Air Force (AIRF) courses are part of a national curriculum determined by the armed services, Department of the Army and Department of Air Force. The UConn department head and instructors for these courses are military appointments that do not undergo the typical UConn selection process. MISI and AIRF courses are not currently overseen by a faculty advisory board, but the Office of Veterans Affairs and Military Programs is working to establish one.

Additionally, the UICC added an ex-officio member from the Center for Career Development to the committee.

The committee has met 5 times thus far in the current academic year and this report summarizes its activities.

Clarification and documentation of UICC policies

The principles for separation of the existing INTD curriculum into INTD and UNIV sections developed by the committee were approved by the Senate in 2012 (Senate meeting 2/27/12) including a by-law change to require Senate approval for all UNIV courses (Senate meeting 3/26/12). The INTD designation is used for courses offered by more than one department from within the schools and colleges, whereas UNIV is used for those courses that originate from units that report to the Provost outside of the schools and colleges. The latter require careful oversight since they arise outside of the normal departmental and school/college curricula and courses review structures. The mechanisms developed for oversight for UNIV courses were built on the principle of faculty governance of the curriculum and attempt to replicate those used within the schools and colleges (see Senate minutes 2/27/12 for details). The division of the old curriculum into INTD and UNIV, agreed upon by the Senate in the last academic year (see Senate minutes 12/10/2012 and 2/25/13) was actualized last fall. The resulting curriculum now comprises 19 INTD and 23 UNIV permanent courses.

While members may often serve on the UICC for several terms, there is always some turnover. In an effort to aid institutional memory and inform the committee's actions, the UICC has drafted a policy guide to record their decisions on matters of protocol. The guide was developed by analyzing past committee meeting minutes and extracting important precedents or resolutions and will provide some measure of standardization.

In addition, a new website <http://uicc.uconn.edu/> was created to better communicate UICC activities to the University community and to serve as a source of forms and instructions for those wishing to conduct business with it.

Other Business

Grade Appeals

The UICC developed procedures to govern grade appeals for INTD and UNIV courses. Since INTD courses arise from departments within the schools and colleges, the usual procedures of those units can be utilized. Thus the issue lay with UNIV courses.

Study Abroad

The UICC continues to receive a number of requests from students to accredit courses taken while studying abroad. To date this academic year, the UICC has received requests from 19 students to accredit 30 different courses from 10 countries. Of the 30 course requests received, the UICC accredited 21 as INTD or UNIVs; the other 9 courses were referred out to other departments within schools or colleges, and 7 were accredited by those departments. The UICC is unsure of the status of the 2 remaining courses, but it is assumed that they were accredited since students did not reapply for credit through the UICC.

Given the value of study abroad to student learning and development, the UICC has been reviewing these applications and awarding mainly INTD 1993/3993 credit for courses that meet the appropriate academic standards. This allows students to receive credit even though these credits will likely not count towards major requirements. However, a number of issues have arisen regarding study abroad accreditation:

- Some departments are either unable or less willing to accredit Study Abroad courses, even if the course is clearly in their discipline (e.g. some departments do not have general 1000- or 2000-level “International Study” course shells, so lower-level courses cannot be accredited within that discipline). As such, those courses get funneled to the UICC as a last resort.
- There is no centralized process for accrediting study abroad courses, and Study Abroad does not have the personnel to oversee this process. Consequently, students are sent “shopping” for credit, a process that can take a lot of time and result in much frustration.

New courses

The UICC approved the following Special Topics courses for the 2013-14 Academic Year:

- UNIV 3995: Special Topics – Individualized Study Across Academic Disciplines
- UNIV 1985: Special Topics: The Holster First Year Project
- INTD 3995 Special Topics: The Disability Spectrum – Characteristics, Systems, Practices, and Impact
- INTD 3995 Special Topics: Global Perspectives on Disabilities
- UNIV 3995 Special Topics: Legal Analysis and Writing
- UNIV 3995 Special Topics: Basics of Trial Advocacy
- UNIV 3995 Special Topics: Gender, Sexuality and Community
- UNIV 1995 Special Topics: East Meets West in Southern China

Two of these Special Topics offerings were later approved as permanent courses and sent to the Senate C&C for their consideration:

- UNIV 2XXX Gender, Sexuality and Community
- UNIV 2600 Individualized Study Across Academic Disciplines

Finally, the UICC deleted one course, UNIV 1998 Variable Topics, from their list of permanent offerings.

The UNIV Curriculum

Offering unit	Course number	Course title
First Year Programs and Learning Communities	1800	FYE University Learning Skills
	1810	FYE Learning Community Seminar
	1820	First Year Seminar
	1840	Learning Community Service Learning
	1998	Variable Topics (deleted this year)
Honors Program	1784	Freshman Honors Seminar
	3784	Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar
Student Affairs	1991	Supervised Internship Experience
	3991	Interdisciplinary Internship Field Experience
	4800	Senior Year Experience
African American Cultural Center	2230	The PA²SS Program, Mentoring African American Students
Q Center	2300	Tutoring Principles for Quantitative Learning
Rainbow Center	2xxx	Gender, Sexuality and Community
Individualized & Interdisciplinary Studies Program	2600	Individualized Study Across Academic Disciplines
	4600W	Capstone Course
	4697W	Senior Thesis
Other courses	1985/3985	Special Topics (S/U)
	1993/3993	International Study
	1995/3995	Special Topics (graded)
	1999/3999	Independent Study

INTD and UNIV Course Statistics (2013-2014, with comparison to 2011-2012 and 2010/2011)

PeopleSoft listings of INTD/UNIV course sections (based on data supplied by OIR)

	2013-14		2011-12		2010-11	
	Sections	Seats	Sections	Seats	Sections	Seats
First Year Experience Program (UNIV 1800, 1810, 1820, 1840, 3984 – each 1 cr.) [1840 NEW in AY 13-14]	230	3889	255	4178	305	4785
Honors Program courses (UNIV 1784, 3784 – 1 cr., and 3 cr. respectively)	30	492	29	440	28	483
Linkage through Language course (INTD 3222 – 1 cr.)	2	17	30	139	24	139
Student Affairs (UNIV 1991, 4800 – 1 cr.; 3991 – var. cr.)	7	356	9	352	7	339
Departmental- and Program-based courses with individual catalog listings	9	243	20	182	19	189
Other INTD/UNIV courses (including experimental, special topics, independent study)	18	121	69	493	84	941
Study Abroad Courses (INTD/UNIV 1993/3993) *Data for 2011-12 and 2010-11 SA combined in category above	21	21				
Total	317	5139	412	5784	467	6876

In previous UICC annual reports, the data on courses were given for the previous rather than the current academic year. This year, data are given for the current year (2013-14) but this means that data for 2012-13 have not been reported. These data have been requested and will be included in next year's report.

INTD and UNIV courses seem to be experiencing a decline in offerings and enrollment. However, every one of UConn's six campuses used at least two INTD/UNIV courses to offer sections to its students.

2013-2014 instructors of INTD and UNIV course sections were 32% faculty (tenured, untenured, adjunct), 10% graduate students, and 58% other professionals* (versus AY12-13: 42%, 13%, 45% respectively; and AY10/11: 34%, 14%, 52% respectively). This would indicate that the drop in offerings since 2011/12 represents fewer faculty offering INTD/UNIV courses.

*Note: These percentages assume that Study Abroad courses are taught by faculty at each respective university.

UICC Members 2013-2014

Faculty (voting members and alternates)		
Chair	CANR/ NUSC	Hedley Freake
Member	CANR/ANSC	Gary Kazmer
Member	CLAS/ SOCI	Shannon Weaver
Member	NEAG/EKIN	Laura Burton
Member	SFA/ DRAM	David Stern
Member	SOB/ACCT	Larry Gramling
Member	SOE/ECE	Eric Donkor
Member	SON	Jennifer Telford
Member	SOP/ PHAR SCI	David Grant
Member	REGIONAL/URBN	Edith Barrett
Alternate	CANR/NRE	George Elliott
Alternate	CLAS/ HDFS	Ralf Schiffler
Alternate	NEAG/EDCI	Jason Irizarry
Alternate	SFA/DRAM	Michael Bradford
Alternate	SOB/OPIM	Girish Punj
Alternate	SOE/CSE	Ion Mandoiu
Alternate	SON	Thomas Long
Alternate	SOP	Olga Vinogradova
Alternate	REGIONAL/MARN	Annelie Skoog
Ex-Officio (non-voting members and alternates)		
Member	Enrichment Programs	Jaclyn Chancey
Member	Inst. for Student Success	David Ouimette
Member	Center for Career Devel.	Jim Lowe
Member	Registrar's Office	Marianne Buck
Member	Senate C&CC	Eric Schultz
Member	Student Affairs	Daniel Doerr
Member	Veterans Affairs and Military Programs	Kristopher Perry
Alternate	Enrichment Programs	Monica van Beusekom
Alternate	Inst. for Student Success	Maria D. Martinez
Alternate	Registrar's Office	Lauren DiGrazia
Alternate	Student Affairs	Sue Sanders

Excellent administrative support was provided by Karen Piantek, Program Assistant.