

UCC MEETING MINUTES 9-4-2024

Attendees: Ellen Crowell, David Kaplan, Natalie Floeh, Bobby Wassel, Anne Carpenter, Katie MacKinnon, Joya Uraizee, Natasha Case, Marissa Cope, Kathy Kienstra, Fr. John Peck, Allen Brizee, Liz Burke, Gary Barker, Nathaniel Rivers, Hamish Binns, María-José Morell, Heather Bednarek, Annie Smart, Matthew Elia, Susan Brower-Toland, Benton Brown, Paige Chant, Elena Bray Spreth, Fr. Mike May, Ben Perlman, Lauren Arnold, Renée Davis, Lisa Dorsey

1. Call to Order / Announcements

- Though Zoom is an option, please try to come in-person if possible
- Welcome to the new academic year
 - Welcome to our new members: Susan Brower-Toland (stepping in for Atria Larson as Associate Director of Theological and Philosophical Foundations), Natalie Floeh (serving as Advising representative), Fr. John Peck (serving as Jesuit representative), Matthew Elia (serving as Theological Studies representative), Anne Carpenter (serving as Theological Studies representative), Katie MacKinnon (serving as Anthropology representative)
- Brief history of the Core (development and implementation, 2018-present)
- Currently, 75% of students are on the new Core curriculum, meaning we are almost finished phasing out the old Core and are now fully embracing the new Core
- The new Core Instructor Resources website was recently launched
- Update on current Core assessment efforts (SLOs 1, 4, 6, 2, and 9)
- There will be two reengagement workshops to help faculty and staff better understand the Core. The workshop dates are 10-1-24 (3:30 – 5:00 pm) and 10-18-24 (3:00-4:30 pm). The form to register for the reengagement workshops will go out soon, and the UCC needs to help spread the word and encourage participation.

2. Approval of minutes from 5.15.24

- Joya Uraizee first approver, Lauren Arnold second, no opposition
- Minutes approved

3. Approved courses

- Brief overview of course approval given for new members. Discussion of how to find course submissions in CourseLeaf.
- UUCC agreed to hold off on discussing ECE 5800: ECE Design I, since there is not yet a UUCC policy that addresses consideration of 5000-level courses for the Core.

Cura Personalis 3: Self in the World

ECE 4800: Electrical and Computer Engineering Design I

Dignity, Ethics, and Just Society

CVNG 3040: Sustainability and Environmental Engineering

Ways of Thinking: Social and Behavioral Sciences

CCJ 2290: Crime Control Policies

Ways of Thinking: Natural and Applied Sciences

EAS 1090: Climate Change

Collaborative Inquiry

ECE 4800: Electrical and Computer Engineering Design I

NURS 4107: Leadership and Management for RNs

(All courses approved)

4. Planned UUCC work for AY 24-25

- Part of UUCC's work of this year will be to revise/re-imagine the bylaws. The current UUCC bylaws were designed for creating a curriculum, but not for overseeing a curriculum. Another part of the UUCC's work will be to revise the Final Core Document to reflect non-substantive changes made in the spirit of student success. The UUCC must also determine mechanisms for messaging out to SLU community any and all changes to the Core Document.
- Other work will include assessment work in various subcommittees.
- In this first year of assessment of SLO 9, Fr. Brian Christopher, Jesuit Superior of Belize, will be giving a talk on campus October 23rd to raise consciousness about Reflection in Action and Core assessment efforts.
- Dr. Paul Hanstedt of the University of Minnesota Rochester will be giving a talk on campus February 20th to raise consciousness about Integrative Learning (SLO 2).

5. Discussion of approving graduate-level coursework for the Core

- In light of accelerated programs, the UUCC must discuss if it is appropriate to review and approve graduate-level courses for undergraduate Core attributes. This would put 5000-level courses in SLU's permanent course catalog under the categories of Core components. This discussion was prompted by the submission of a capstone course dual-listed as both 4000- and 5000-level. It is preferable to enter a few exceptions as possible, so a policy must be put into place.
- A point made was that the UUCC should not consider graduate work because graduate work and undergraduate work are significantly different, and that bringing in graduate-level courses for review would unnecessarily add to the UUCC's and the subcommittees' current workloads. It was suggested that advisors substitute the undergraduate students' courses for the 4000-level course that does have the Core attribute.
- Per University policy, dual-listed courses must be distinct courses and have distinct titles. Giving Core credit to both classes in a dual-listed set would imply that the two courses are the same, which they should not be. Mentioned was the need for a caveat allowing only Accelerated Bachelors to Masters (ABM) students to receive Core credit from a 5000-level course. Without this caveat, any undergraduate student could request credit from a 5000-level. Furthermore, this may increase the requests made by undergraduate students to enter graduate courses, simply because those courses meet a Core requirement. One UUCC member noted that graduate courses assume people have expertise, and graduate instructors may see 5000-level courses with Core attributes as problematic.
- Another UUCC member observed that in some departments, the distinction between undergraduate and graduate courses is determined by prior curriculum, which graduate program a student is taking, and the learning outcomes. If a student has met the objectives through that course, having a graduate number should not be a problem.
- Discomfort reviewing graduate courses without a graduate voice in the room was expressed, as well as concern that colleges may try to fit 5000-level courses into the Core without those courses being part of an accelerated program. This would require asking graduate students to do undergraduate-gear activities.
- UUCC representative for SSE noted that because ECE 4800 (dual-listed with ECE 5800) is a capstone course, only Seniors will be in the course. There would not be a mixed community of undergraduate and graduate students.
- UUCC representative for Advising argued that for advisors, it would be quite helpful to get 'upper-level' Core (e.g., Collaborative Inquiry, Cura Personalis 3, and Reflection in Action) done Senior year. This would give more flexibility to student in more credit-heavy programs. There could be a caveat that only that 'upper-level' Core areas be allowed satisfaction by 5000-level courses.

- It would be a bad optic for students to be in the same course but not all get the same credit, just because of how they are registered.
- Capstones are the first place we are seeing this issue because the first true new-Core cohort is getting to their Senior year. The initial focus was on the courses students see early, but now we must focus on the courses students take later in their undergraduate career.
- Representative from UAAC noted that the Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Affairs Committees should be involved as well. Graduate education is different from undergraduate education, and 4000-level and 5000-level courses are supposed to be different: they cannot count the same; they should be different experiences for the students. At the upper-undergraduate level, students pull together their final Core experiences. This should not be done at the graduate level. However, there are many programs at SLU where the undergraduate student's final year consists entirely of graduate coursework. In light of this, perhaps the Core should be completed by the start of a student's Senior year. Additionally, more students are pursuing 3-year Bachelors degrees, and that situation may parallel an accelerated program. In accelerated programs, Seniors "transfer in" as graduate students into mixed courses. The robust conversation that comes from the diverse experiences of UUCC members is necessary to this discussion. If SLU wants to make a hard line between graduate and undergraduate courses, dual-listed courses need to be addressed.
- Students cannot be penalized because faculty and staff cannot find a solution.
- The differences between 4000-level and 5000-level courses is the concern of the college, not the concern of the UUCC. The UUCC only looks at whether a course fulfills a Core requirement.
- The fundamental question is: Should an undergraduate Core curriculum - as it is represented to students, parents, non-SLU observers, and others - include graduate coursework?
- Dual-listed graduate courses in particular cause an issue. If a dual-listed 4000/5000-level course set is broken in the future, then that 5000-level course would retain the Core attribute. It would help to specify that the 5000-level course only counts if it is dual listed, not in isolation.
- The UUCC will continue this conversation at subsequent meetings.

6. Discussion of study abroad courses counting for Core requirements

- Currently, there are students asking for study abroad courses that are not from SLU Madrid to count for multiple Core attributes at once. This may stem from an older mindset, that studying abroad is the time to complete general education courses.
- It is easy for abroad courses to satisfy the Ways of Thinking component and sometimes the Creative Expression component, but some students want to maximize one course for several attributes. One recent example is a course transferring in from Chile, for which the student requested two different attributes.
- UUCC members should consider if it is to SLU's benefit to have students complete a significant amount of the Core outside SLU. There is concern for the impact this would have on the distinct education that SLU offers.
- There may be no syllabus or course description available for the abroad course, making articulation difficult.
- The UUCC began a discussion on whether to limit the number of SLU Core requirements that can be met by a single study abroad course.

7. Adjourn