

University Curriculum Committee

Minutes #14

February 20, 2019

Members Present: Grace Allbaugh, Martha Cook, Geoffrey Duce, Richard Hughes, Amy Hurd, Broden Knauss, Erin Mikulec, Mohamed Nur-Awaleh, Kyle Papka, Patricia Pence, Joanne Savage, Jean Standard, Joseph Trefzger, Li Zeng

Members Absent: Susan Dustin, Andrew Laudicina, Lance Lippert, Clara Munyer, James Wolf (on sabbatical)

Guests: Danielle Lindsey and Jess Ray, Registrar's Office; Rocio Rivadeneyra, Honors Program

1. CONVENE:

Standard convened the meeting at 3:05 pm.

2. INTRODUCTIONS:

3. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access in U.S. Society (IDEAS) Graduation Requirement Discussion:

Guest: Rocio Rivadeneyra, Director of the Honors Program, Chair of the IDEAS Ad Hoc Committee

Rivadeneyra explained how the initial idea of the IDEAS graduation requirement originated as a recommendation of the Campus Climate Task Force. In addition to the recommendation for an IDEAS course graduation requirement, the Campus Climate Report included recommendations for non-curricular strategies. The Ad Hoc Committee met in the fall of 2018 and included 15 faculty members from various programs that would be impacted by this graduation requirement and the Director of University Assessment.

Savage asked if the committee looked at existing courses that might fulfill this requirement.

Rivadeneyra stated that there are many courses identified in the report that directly relate to the learning outcomes and the number of seats available in courses that were identified that are also General Education Program courses. **Hurd** noted that In addition to Gen Ed courses, there may be major courses that will satisfy the requirement. **Zeng** asked if new courses could be created to meet this requirement. **Rivadeneyra** said that she has received several emails from faculty who are interested in creating new courses to meet the requirement. **Standard** indicated that faculty are also interested in revising courses. **Zeng** followed up by asking if the current courses available for the AMALI graduation requirement are Gen Ed courses only. **Standard** said that there are both Gen Ed and majors courses that students may take for AMALI credit and it would be the same for the IDEAS requirement. **Hurd** also noted that students would not be able to count one course for both AMALI and IDEAS.

Savage said that in her department (CJS), many courses are offered that cover topics related to diversity, and she wondered if three courses could count to satisfy the requirement. **Standard** indicated that issue came up when Writing Across the Curriculum was discussed and it seemed like it would work for that so it might also work for this. **Lindsey** wondered if there could there be an 'exemption' for the requirement by major that departments/schools could request. **Standard** said that would be a decision related to the implementation process. **Savage** stated that her students indicated that they did not want another online training program and they did not like the idea of another requirement in general.

Trefzger asked Rivadeneyra what her reaction was to all of the comments in the survey and the open forums related to the narrow definition of diversity and indoctrination to a set of beliefs. **Rivadeneyra** felt that the comments were hard to read, especially the illogical ones. She said that it is sad that these issues have become so political.

Trefzger expressed concerns about the wording of some of the learning outcomes, for example, one in which the word 'privilege' was used. **Duce** echoed those concerns and worried that even if UCC supports the requirement there could be potential backlash with the requirement having some negative impacts.

Trefzger asked whether the learning outcomes should be about what diversity is, not about privilege that makes students feel ashamed. **Rivadeneyra** inquired of Trefzger whether that one learning outcome (about privilege) was mainly what he had concerns with, and Trefzger responded that one received a lot of comments. **Savage** noted that UCC does not have control over who teaches the courses and students may often feel picked on if these concepts are delivered in certain ways.

Rivadeneyra: comments about evidence in research related to course evaluations?? I did not capture good notes on these comments

Hughes asked Rivadeneyra after reviewing the comments, if she would say this is why we need the requirement..**Rivadeneyra** said that some of the comments give evidence that we need to have this requirement. Taking a course on diversity for the requirement may encourage students to take more courses. **Papka** stated that he has been in classes where negative comments were made about being a while male and that left a bad taste in his mouth about these types of classes. **Hughes** replied that it is more comfortable when we are talking about others rather than ourselves.

Rivadeneyra asked how the members would feel if the learning outcome was reworded to 'privilege' instead of 'your own privilege'. **Nur-Awaleh** stated that it is normal for students to have these types of courses, ISU is behind. His students do not feel indoctrinated and they need to be introduced to these topics; it is all about how you present the issues. **Trefzger** replied that it sounds like Nur-Awaleh has a good approach and does not make students feel bad about the issues and situations. **Cook** asked if the issue is related to the personalization of it. She suggested that one approach she has heard about is to give students different identities with various backgrounds and attributes for discussions about privilege. **Savage** stated that to add a new requirement, she needs to be persuaded. She wondered how many students we will reach with this requirement and whether we need to worry about some negative outcomes. **Mikulec** said that it is troubling, that we need to depersonalize things because part of this issue to be uncomfortable,,the premise is to see yourself in others. **Zeng** stated that it is almost impossible not to have self-reflection in classes on diversity. However, seeing the learning outcomes before the class begins might be too soon, before the students are ready.

Savage reiterated that she thinks favorably of the idea of a diversity requirement but is not confident it needs to be a class requirement or that it will be done well. **Standard** commented that UCC has learned after much experience with the AMALI courses that a panel of experts is likely to be needed to approve the courses, and a suggestion of that sort could be added to the UCC recommendation to the Senate.

Hughes wondered what percentage of the push back and the opposition was about adding a new course requirement. **Cook** noted that there were a lot of comments about that, and she indicated

that in the IDEAS report (by Cook and Trefzger), the comments about another requirement were not included.

Standard asked about the sense of the committee and their current feelings toward the requirement. She wondered whether to continue discussion, take a straw poll, or vote on the proposal. Savage wondered how much leeway UCC has in making a recommendation. **Standard** said that UCC can add anything the committee wants to; ultimately it is the Senate's decision. **Knauss** said that it would be important to explain the requirement better to students. **Papka** added that UCC can add stipulations and approve good courses that truly meet the requirement. **Standard** replied that UCC can use AMALI to learn from our mistakes and recommend that the IDEAS requirement have built into it a review of courses by a panel of experts.

Trefzger stated that with all the comments and the many concerns, he would like to have learning outcomes that ISU can be proud to show parents at Preview. **Standard** asked whether the 'privilege' learning outcome ("Reflect on one's own cultural identity, beliefs, biases, and privilege within dynamic socio-historical contexts.") was the one that is most concerning. **Savage** asked if she should draft some revisions to get started. **Hurd** indicated that she has serious concerns about this group revising the objectives because UCC is not a very diverse group and the group that drafted the original learning outcomes was a diverse and experienced group in their levels of expertise with this topic. **Savage** asked if the learning outcomes could be tweaked and sent back to the Ad Hoc committee to review. **Standard** said that maybe UCC could suggest some revisions and send them to Rivadeneyra to review and give feedback. **Cook** noted that Rivadeneyra seemed open to that.

Pence wondered whether there is there a school that has already instituted a diversity requirement that could be used as a model. **Standard** said that as an institution we do seem behind others, but she was not sure if the Ad Hoc committee looked at practices by other institutions.

Mikulec echoed Hurd's concerns and asked whether members of the Ad Hoc committee could be invited to visit UCC. **Hurd** followed up her previous comments to state that if the edits to the learning objectives are minor edits, that might be okay. **Allbaugh** asked whether UCC could approve the recommendation from the Ad Hoc committee with stipulations and not change the learning outcomes. **Standard** noted that the Senate would most likely prefer a firm recommendation from UCC on the IDEAS requirement, not a set of options.

Duce noted that he would like to see facts on other institutions' examples of diversity requirements and articles or publicity related to any negative backlash that institutions might have faced (there were survey comments related to negative backlash at other institutions).

Savage asked whether the Ad Hoc committee conducted a review of practices and outcomes at other institutions. **Hughes** said that he assumed that they did.

Standard asked if a member or group of members would be willing to make minor revisions to the learning outcomes. **Savage** and **Hughes** volunteered, with the call open to all to submit additional suggestions. **Standard** noted that edits should be sent to her or **Hurd** before the next UCC meeting.

4. Proposal Action & Proposal Discussion:

Due to the length of the meeting, Mikulec moved to postpone all proposal action and proposal discussion until the next meeting. Savage seconded. The committee approved by acclamation,

5. Liaison Reports:

Standard: said that as a result of the lengthy IDEAS discussion, any liaison reports will be postponed until the next meeting.

6. Staff Report:

Hurd stated that James Wolf is on sabbatical so the schedule for proposal reviews must be revised again.

7. Adjournment:

Mikulec moved to adjourn. Pence seconded.