

AUC Curriculum Committee Draft Minutes

Thursday March 7th, 2019

Hammond G-01

Attendees: Catherine Buell, Andrew Chan, Wafa Unus, Daniel Sarefield, Adem Elveren, Steven Fiedler, Sherry Packard (SP), Meg Hoey, Pamela McCafferty, Keith Williamson, Cheryl Goldman, Nermin Bayazit, Yasser Djazaerly (YD), J.J. Sylvia, Shaughn O'Hollaran.

Absent: William Cortezia, Theresa Dzierwinski, Tianna McToggart, Nirajan Mani, Franca Barricelli, Timothy Hilliard, Britton Snyder

Guests: Linda Dupell, Jenn Berg, Zak Lee, Lisa Gimm, Heather Urbanski, Liz Gordon, John Paul, Rene Reeves, Mark LeBlanc, Frank Mayhe, Theresa Thomas, Christine Dee, Chola Chunsaki, Bruno Hicks, Alberto Cardelle, John Schaumlöffel, Chris Cratsley, Gerald Higdon, Sean Goodlett, Emma Downs, Laura Garofoli, Sarah Wright, Krista Marr, Joe Wachtell

Meeting called to order at 3:30 PM

I. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve minutes of Feb. 21st with no amendments: Pamela McCafferty, Second: Daniel Sarefield

Approved, 12-0 -1

II. New Business

A: None

1. **AUC # 60 – New LA&S Curriculum**

Sponsor: Chris Cratsley

Motion to consider AUC #60: Pamela McCafferty, Second: Daniel Sarefield

Discussion: The Sponsor provided a summary of the motivation for the proposed LA&S curriculum revision and described shortcomings of the current approach. These shortcomings include: alignment to outcomes; complexity that limit clear communication to students, and; LA&S electives specified by the major (option C) that vary too widely to align under any specific outcome. The proposed LA&S curriculum represents a shift from the current and more traditional distributed model to a more integrative model that prioritizes student success by providing more flexibility in the way students navigate an LA&S curriculum. Specific components of the proposed curriculum were summarized including: (a) **Foundations for Lifelong Learning**; (b) **Critical and Creative Thinking across Disciplines**, and; (c) **Integrating and Applying LA&S Learning**.

The Sponsor was asked to comment why course designations under the **World Languages, Speaking and Listening** sequence appears somewhat arbitrary because the related outcomes could be met in almost any LA&S course. Also, the specification for professional majors completing a minor or second professional major under the **Integrating and Applying LA& S Learning** sequence should apply broadly for all majors since the terminology “professional major” is open for interpretation. The Sponsor outlined the process for departments seeking the **World Languages, Speaking and Listening (WS)** designation for courses and accepted a friendly amendment to specify that all majors completing a minor or second major include at least 9 credits in LA&S disciplines for that minor to satisfy the **Integrating and Applying LA& S Learning** sequence.

The Sponsor was asked to comment on an apparent lack of data in the rationale for the proposal. Such data might inform the proper allocation of resources for additional workload including assessment of outcomes and scheduling of additional sections of courses including the new FYE seminar and related courses included in the **Foundations for Lifelong Learning** sequence.

The Sponsor reported on the LA&S Self Study including enrollment and faculty workload data from the Office of Institutional Research and results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) at Fitchburg State University. NSSE results, comparisons with peer institutions, and EAB reports suggest that the proposed approach will improve achievement of our LA&S outcomes which mirror essential learning outcomes implemented across AAC&U peer institutions. The proposed approach leverages the FYE seminar as a foundation and best practice for broadening course options for upgrading/developing LA&S designated courses. The Sponsor also acknowledged concerns involving additional effort to ensure that courses were delivering intended outcomes, and discussed a strategy for distributing assessment over an extended (perhaps 3 year) assessment cycle. Discussed how the **Foundations for Lifelong Learning** appears to provide a means for world languages (including ASL) to help students broaden their perspectives on other cultures. Discussed the university’s commitment for LA&S resources, including autonomy for deciding faculty workload for the FYE seminar.

The Sponsor was asked to address more details on an implementation strategy for the FYE seminar and address concerns that the MSCA contract does not appear to provide the necessary resources for High Impact Practices aimed at integrating learning across courses. The Sponsor discussed how the collaborative aspects of the FYE seminar provides an opportunity for sharing a common practice for preparing students for college level work. This shared aspects of the FYE provides a meta-major feature that helps students articulate why they are taking specific LA&S courses. Many of our peer institutions have developed various ways to implement and share this common responsibility. Discussed President Lapidus’ support of the new MSCA equivalencies and the university’s commitment to provide FTE faculty as needed for the FYE seminar. Discussed the MSCA 15% rule for part-time faculty and noted that the university is substantially below this limit.

The Sponsor was asked to address the complexity of the review process, and comment on a criticism of “bounded rationality” involving unreliable information, limited capacity to weigh all the facts, and limited time. The Sponsor reiterated that the proposed effort provides the means to link LA&S courses to high priority learning outcomes defined by the campus community. The approach also gives us the capability to ensure that outcomes are being met in ways that are not possible with the current curriculum.

The Sponsor was asked to comment on how transfer students might be impacted by the proposed changes. The Sponsor reported that the LA&S Council recognizes this concern and will be considering a framework with the necessary flexibility for aligning a range of transfer courses.

The Sponsor was asked to comment on why financial literacy skills were not included as **Foundation for Lifelong Learning** topic, particularly because of its importance after College. The Sponsor noted that Quantitative Reasoning is a foundation for financial literacy, and represents an example of how some outcomes emerge from others. Discussed how financial literacy impacts student success, and work by the Student Success Task Force to review student orientation programs and presentations about Financial Aid. Financial literacy is also an important topic in the FYE seminar, and topics involving financial literacy also provides a co-curricular bridge between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

The Sponsor was asked to comment on whether involvement of the LA&S Council for course proposals was consistent with the shared governance framework in the MSCA contract. The Sponsor suggested that the LA&S Council should be seen as a resource option for non-binding feedback. Discussed Framingham State’s approach involving the LA&S Council as a sub-committee of the AUC Curriculum Committee. This approach allows for input from the LA&S Council without violating the MSCA shared governance framework.

Discussed the approval process for **Foundations for Lifelong Learning** course designations involving (a) First Year Writing I for the ENGL prefix; (b) First Year Writing and Information Literacy for the ENGL prefix, and; (c) First Year Quantitative Reasoning for the MATH prefix. The Sponsor accepted a friendly amendment to change “must be approved” to “must be recommended.”

Friendly Amendments (if any):

7a (from Sponsor) Under **Integrating and Applying LA&S Learning**, change “Professional majors completing a minor or second professional major” to all majors completing a minor or second major.”

7b (from Sponsor) On the **Foundations for Lifelong Learning** course designation form, under First Year Writing Requirement, change “This course must be approved for the ENGL prefix to “This course must be recommended for the ENGL prefix.”

7c (from Sponsor) On the **Foundations for Lifelong Learning** course designation form, under First Year Writing and Information Literacy Requirement, change “This course must be approved for the ENGL prefix to “This course must be recommended for the ENGL prefix.”

7d (from Sponsor) On the **Foundations for Lifelong Learning** course designation form, under the First Year Quantitative Reasoning Requirement, change “This course must be approved for the MATH prefix to “This course must be recommended for the MATH prefix.”

Vote to Recommend Approval of AUC#60: 9-6-0