UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
January 9, 2014
Collaboration Room, Knight Library

PRESENT
Susan Anderson, Andrew Bonamici, Coleman Boyer, Ron Bramhall, Lisa Freinkel, Dave Hubin, Ruth Keele, Susan Lesyk, Danaan O’Donnell-Davidson, Lee Rumbarger, Alison Schmitke, Josh Snodgrass, Randy Sullivan, Kelly Sutherland, Glenda Utsey, Tom Wheeler; and Maggie Witt

ABSENT
Jeffrey Bradshaw, Sue Eveland, John Gage, Jim Imamura, Loren Kajikawa, Alisha Kinlaw, Lori Manson, Beata Stawarska, and Caitlin Yamaguchi

AGENDA
I. Minutes from November 12 & November 26, 2013 meetings: Review and approval
II. Updates from the Chair
III. Gen Ed and Para-Academic Courses: Goals and Strategies

MINUTES

I. MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 12 & NOVEMBER 26, 2013 MEETINGS
Minutes from November 12, 2013 and November 26, 2013 had been distributed in advance for members to review. The Chair called for any emendments or corrections to the distributed minutes. There were none. A vote for accepting the minutes was called.

The motion was made to accept the minutes from the UGC meetings of November 12, 2013 and November 26, 2013.

   Moved: Ron Bramhall
   Seconded: Maggie Witt

The motion passed unanimously.

The Chair invited the members to re-introduce themselves since there were a number of new faces in attendance who had not been able to attend during the Fall 2013 term.
II. UPDATES FROM CHAIR
The Chair presented updates of business occurring “behind the scenes” during the fall term and over the winter holiday break.

1. Honors College Representative added to the Council membership (Kelly Sutherland).

2. The UO Senate approved on 12/4/2013 a motion from the Committee on Committees that the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies serve as an ex officio non-voting member and Convener of the UGC. (This corrects a technical oversight that occurred in the original establishment of the UGC.)

3. The Chair endorsed (on behalf of UGC) a small, CAS-approved change to the minor program in South Asian Studies.

4. The Chair endorsed (on behalf of UGC) a change in the Undergraduate Incomplete Policy requested by the Registrar for closing the academic record when a student dies prior to graduation. The change allows a Pass grade equivalent to a C- or better to be recorded on the transcript of deceased students who were in good standing in a course with a small but significant piece of the course outstanding. (In the past, when a student died with an Incomplete on his/her transcript the Incomplete automatically changed to an F or NP after a set period of time.)

Future Business for the Council

1. AAA Proposal for a New Minor in Product Design (Muller)
   Submitted 12/5/13. Tentatively scheduled for review at 1/23/14 UGC meeting.

2. Possible AAA Proposal to Amend Current Policy Regarding Concurrent Degrees
   This would involve striking the prohibition on students pursuing concurrent degrees within the same school or college. Proposal has not been submitted.

3. Clarify Protocol for Review and Approval of a Proposal to Establish a Pre-Major.
   This issue has come up because of the development of a proposal for a pre-major issue in CAS International Studies. Pre-majors are more common in professional schools (e.g., Pre-Journalism, Pre-FHS, and Pre-PPPM). The current review process is unclear (“nebulous”) and the policy for review and approval need to be clarified. It seems appropriate for these proposals to be reviewed by the full Council but this should be discussed. Also, it is unclear sometimes why a pre-major is even needed. The Registrar’s Office also has some thoughts on the relative merits of handling the situation through perquisites rather than a declared pre-major. (This may also involve discussion of the impact of the budget model.)

4. Possible Change to the Final Exam Schedule.
   The growing number of evening classes has led to increased conflicts with the combined exam that is used in several departments (e.g., Accounting, Math, and Physics) for multiple sections
of the same class. Combined exams are scheduled M-T-W-R from 6-8 pm. Combined exams didn’t create many conflicts with evening class exams until recently but in the past few years many more classes are being scheduled at 5 or later (with many more students) and, as a result, we have many more conflicts between combined exams and evening exams. This creates problems for students, as well as faculty who have to provide make-up exams. The Registrar has a proposal to modify the final exam schedule that would eliminate these combined exam/evening exam conflicts.

5. Policy on Multicultural Courses at the 400-Level.
   UOCC has requested that the UGC clarify policy related to the use of 400-level courses to satisfy the Multicultural Course requirement. Currently, there are not stated criteria the UOCC can use when making this decision. This is confusing to departments that propose multicultural courses and for the UOCC when trying to make such decisions and to then offer rational decisions as to why some requests are approved and why some requests are denied.

6. Revisiting the Process for Approval of Bachelor’s Requirement Changes.
   UOCC has requested that we clarify the process whereby courses are approved to satisfy the B.S. Math/CIS requirement (and the B.A. Language requirement). The request is that UGC set the policy guidelines whereby courses are approved as appropriate for satisfaction of the requirement but that the UOCC use those guidelines to judge whether courses meet the requirements (i.e., the UGC should set the policy but the UOCC should interpret and apply the policy).

7. Revisiting the Math/CIS Requirement.
   UOCC has requested that we revisit the Math/CIS requirement to clarify whether the requirement is a Math requirement or a Math or Computer Information Science requirement. The desire is to consider whether the current interpretation is in accord with the original intent.

8. Revisions to Inter-College Committee on General Education (ICGER).
   There are some concerns that Inter-College Committee on General Education (ICGER) is out of compliance in several ways, mostly minor, including in its membership. For example, ICGER has no formal leadership. It only meets once a term but cannot establish “procedures governing the review process” as the Senate legislation requires. Group-satisfying courses SHOULD be reviewed periodically (this is required by Senate legislation) but ICGER, CASCC, and UOCC do not do this. This cannot be done due to limitations in capacity. However, if CourseLeaf can unburden these committees then we should consider including periodic reviews as part of the assessment mandate and actually doing them. (Also, it doesn’t make sense for ICGER to review Gen Ed but not Multi-cultural courses.)

   We are required by our accreditors to “identify and publish expected course, general education, program, and degree learning outcomes.” A possible action item for the UGC to take up—suggested by Ian McNeely—is to articulate 3-7 learning outcomes that are already implicit in
our Gen Ed requirements. We can decide whether those are the learning outcomes we in fact want out of Gen Ed, modify them if desired, and figure out a way to assess them.

10. Writing Requirement and Gen Ed.
John Gage has requested a few minutes at the beginning of one of the upcoming UGC meetings to hand out some information about the writing program and to describe some of its features. The motivation behind this is that since we are talking about the Writing Requirement in relation to Gen Ed, it would be useful to have the membership be better informed about what is already done. This is tentatively scheduled for the 1/23/14 meeting.

Discussion
The Chair and the Council discussed the feasibility of taking on all of the identified issues. It was generally agreed that the focus of the Council should be on developing clear consensus on General Education at the UO. Originally, the goal had been to produce a “white paper” by the end of the current AY. However, the focus is modified to develop the working groups to look at three concentrated, specific goals:

1. Clarify the policy on Multicultural Courses at the 400-level
2. Identify General Education Learning outcomes
3. Conduct a broad survey on General Education across campus (students and faculty)

Working groups will be formed and their charges will be presented. The development of a “white paper” will be left for another time.

III. GEN ED AND PARA-ACADEMIC COURSES: GOALS AND STRATEGIES
The issue of Para-academic courses was also felt to be urgent. It was decided that Kevin Hatfield’s course on RA development should be used to think through para-academic courses in general and how these courses can be assessed as credit bearing.

The next UGC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 23, 2014 in the Collaboration Room of the Knight Library.