

Implementation Plan for the University Core Curriculum

Adopted by the Faculty Senate, November 24, 2009

Amended to reflect name changes from GE to UCC and the addition of two review panels, 2.22.10 and 1.27.11

Goal 1

Provide assistance to departments for UCC course development

The UCC Council will ensure that course development is discussed in an inclusive and collegial process. The Council will provide venues for the public discussion of outcomes and criteria in addition to responding to individual department requests for clarification and assistance in the process of adapting existing courses or developing new courses for the UCC. Where appropriate GE course development will be linked to faculty development initiatives as described in Goal 3.

The Council will

- Provide forums or other sessions to discuss course development and implementation processes
- Sponsor workshops and training to assist departments in adapting existing courses or in creating new course
- Work with other councils and units to provide assistance for UCC course development such as how to incorporate course-based assessment of UCC SLOs into a proposal

Goal 2

Develop a systematic process for submission of courses for approval

A. Standing Course Approval Process for the UCC

The existing course approval process as indicated in Policy 7 applies to UCC courses. The UCC Council will develop a checklist to assist faculty and departments in preparing an application for a UCC course. All courses submitted for UCC designation must be approved by the UCC Council prior to recommendation to the Provost.

In order for a UCC course to be approved it:

1. Receives Department approval.
2. Receives College Curriculum approval
3. Receives approval from the Dean of the College
4. Receives UCC Council approval
5. Receives Provost approval

The UCC Council will outline guidelines for departments submitting courses for UCC Council approval. This may include asking departments to discuss their ability to offer a reasonable number of sections and the ability to offer the course on a consistent basis. The UCC Council wants to encourage creativity and choice but is aware of the need to balance choice with practical concerns about providing sufficient options for students.

The Council will recommend courses with UCC designation based on criteria including student learning outcomes and appropriate assessments for each UCC Area SLO addressed in the course. The Council

may request clarification of a course proposal. Departments may resubmit courses after addressing the concerns expressed by the UCC Council.

B. First-time Implementation for a the University Core Curriculum Program

The transition to a new general education program will require a one-time special process since all proposed UCC courses, including existing ones, will have to be reviewed for adherence to the UCC Student Learning Outcomes and UCC assessment plan components. In addition, criteria for each Designated Area will need to be developed such that the requirements for UCC designation are clear. The determination of criteria for each Designated Area of UCC must be completed in an open and transparent process with an opportunity for review by the faculty.

The term “Designated Area” refers to the special areas or themes of the model.

Review Panels

The UCC Council recommends the formation of eight Review Panels to facilitate this first-time review. These panels will

- 1) Assist the GE Council in clarifying the language of the student learning outcomes
- 2) Assist the GE Council in clarifying the language of the criteria appropriate to the designated area
- 3) Perform an initial review of proposals for completeness, including incorporation of the GE SLOS and the outcomes appropriate to the area and an assessment component

The eight panels include 1) Personal Well-Being, 2) Expression, 3) Ways of Knowing –Humanities, 4) Ways of Knowing-Social & Behavioral Sciences, 5) Ways of Knowing- Science and Quantitative, 6)Diversity & Justice, 7)Community and Civic Knowledge, 8)Global Awareness.

The UCC Council will review “across the curriculum” components including writing and technology intensive courses in addition to outcomes aligned with the existing 5 University-wide Student Learning Outcomes (written and oral expression, critical thinking, information literacy, integration and teamwork). The UCC Council will seek input from advisory groups such as TAC, WAC, LLS and individuals with related expertise in developing criteria and guidelines for these components.

Note: The Faculty Senate approved two new panels – Writing Panel and Technology Panel to review proposals requesting writing and/or technology intensive designations.

Once the Review Panels are set up, the Council will ask the Senate or Provost’s Office to issue a call for UCC course proposals.

The new UCC program will be phased in beginning with the incoming class of 2011. The Panels should complete their work no later than spring 2012.

1. Composition of the Review Panels.

Each Review Panel will have five members. One member will be from the UCC Council with the other members recommended by the Senate Executive Committee. The same process currently practiced for setting up Senate Councils will be used to select members of the panels. Review Panels should be

representative of both depth of expertise and breadth of discipline. The Senate Executive Committee will call for applications for each of the Review Panels and then selects the members to ensure fairness. These Panels shall then be approved by the Senate.

The UCC Council also recommends the following guidelines in the selection of panel members. An individual may serve on no more than one review panel. One representative from Professional Staff may serve as a non-voting sixth member on any of the panels.

2. Review Process

Step 1

The normal course approval process applies. Although it is expected that many existing GE courses will be submitted, existing courses must incorporate the relevant student learning outcomes and the related assessment components. These changes in the course should be approved according to the existing Policy 7 process.

In order for a UCC course to be approved for this first time only transition to the new general education program, a course

1. Receives Department approval.
2. Receives College Curriculum approval
3. Receives approval from the Dean of the College
4. Receives approval from the Review Panel
5. Receives UCC Council approval
6. Receives Provost approval

Step 2

Departments will submit course proposals to the Review Panel responsible for the UCC area. A course may be submitted for more than one area and the course proposal would need to be submitted to all relevant areas as desired by the Department. The Panel will review all proposals based on their adherence to the area criteria, UCC student learning outcomes, and the course-based assessments specific to the UCC learning outcomes. The Review Panel may ask a department to resubmit any incomplete proposals.

Step 3

Recommendations from the Review Panels will go to the full UCC Council which will make the final recommendation. The UCC Council may approve recommendations of the Review Panels or suggest modifications to the course proposal if needed. The full UCC Council will monitor issues of fairness, adherence to the UCC outcomes and related criteria and assessment.

3. UCC Courses “in the major”

While not part of the review process, both models indicate areas where UCC outcomes might be incorporated into the major. The UCC Council will assist departments in the implementation of UCC student learning outcomes in the major.

Goal 3

Develop and implement a transition plan

A transition plan will require the coordinated effort of the UCC Council, Department Chairs, Deans, the Registrar, the Director of the University Core Curriculum and other units. Many of the issues concerning implementation fall beyond the authority of the UCC Council. The UCC Council's standing charges are 1) to monitor the UCC Program and review and recommend all proposed course and curriculum changes to the Senate and 2) to review and make recommendations regarding all changes in UCC Policy to the Senate.

The UCC Council has identified the following areas as key elements of the transition.

Examples of issues to be addressed include

- Minimum number of sections required
- Comparable opportunities for departments, including small departments, to participate in GE
- Ability to meet requirements for writing intensive and other skill areas
- Caps on writing intensive courses
- Ability of departments to offer major courses that will double count
- Impact of new UCC on specific majors
- Work with FYE, Departments and Student Services to determine how students will be introduced to the new UCC
- Work with Student Development and other units and programs to develop co-curricular components based on UCC Program Goals and Student learning outcomes.
- Development of curriculum control sheets and training for advisement for the new UCC

Small departments typically include departments with comparatively fewer majors or departments with a small number of faculty. The issues of small departments need to be addressed primarily by the dean in consultation with the department chairperson.

The following items are suggestions from the UCC Council concerning ways of minimizing the impact of changes in UCC on small departments.

- a. Clear administrative support and flexibility are essential. Provost should provide a grace period on UCC course cancellations during the transition.
- b. Control course offerings by doing one or more of the following
 - Priority for UCC courses from "at risk" departments.
 - Ensure that small departments are well-represented in the UCC
 - Cap on courses in any one area
- c. Encouraging participation in clusters including the development of sophomore level clusters
- d. Linking courses to FYE courses
- e. Development and/or promotion of minors
- f. Enhanced collaboration between departments in support of double majors and minors.
- g. Examine the practice of prepackaging and its impact on student choice.

Goal 4**Provide Opportunities for Faculty Development**

The success of our new University Core Curriculum will require ongoing faculty development in a number of areas. Priorities for faculty development should focus on pedagogies to enhance the goals of the UCC. The UCC Council stresses the need to provide a budget for development and can assist in investigating opportunities for external funding as well.

In addition, faculty development initiatives should address strategies for enhancing writing and oral communication, information and technological literacies or strategies for assessment of student learning outcomes. The UCC Council should identify and prioritize specific areas for faculty development. The GE Council will work with the Director of the University Core Curriculum, the Center for Teaching Excellence and other units to create a plan for faculty development.

Goal 5**Develop an Assessment Plan for the University Core Curriculum**

The UCC Council will work with the Assessment Council and Institutional Research & Assessment to develop an Assessment Plan for the UCC.

Assessment activities will focus on three areas: program outcomes, UCC student learning outcomes and process outcomes.

As a part of program review, the Council recommends that the UCC program will be formally reviewed on a 7-year cycle to ensure that outcomes are being met and to address any problem areas. Course-based assessments will be incorporated where feasible. The UCC Council will provide information on assessment activities in its annual report to the Senate.

The UCC Council also recommends the development of a set of process outcomes that can be used to monitor student progress through our UCC.

Goal 6**Revise Existing Articulation Agreements**

Articulation agreements with area colleges and community colleges and the New Jersey Transfer listings will need to be revised. This responsibility falls outside the purview of the UCC Council.