

**UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MINUTES  
MEETING #5, October 31, 2006**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Brown, Burges, Crawford, Eldridge, Kornreich, Powell, Sonntag, Van Duzer, (chair)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Backues, Everett, Grazul, Hurlbut, Itin,

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Sally Botzler, CPS; Mary Kay, Library; Ginny Kelly, AIR Center; Steve Smith, CNRS; Richard Vrem, Provost, Academic Affairs; Harry Wells, AHSS

**I. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. In response to the chair's query, Mr. Powell agreed to serve on the Provost Council's Resource Review committee for the Assessment of Prior Learning program.
- B. Ms. Brown announced that seventeen faculty attended the Budding Ideas Tea addressing the Pilot GE effort and several good preliminary sets of ideas were put forth. Ms. Brown said the subcommittee will meet next week to determine the next course of action.

**II. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)**

Informal session, M/Van Duzer, S/ Powell to approve the minutes of meeting #4, October 19, 2006, with the following correction: correct the spelling of Mr. Itin's name throughout. The motion passed with one abstention.

**III. BRIEF DISCUSSION**

Response to the Campus Community Regarding GE & On Going Budget Cuts

In informal session, the chair stated that it could be very useful for future reference to create a set of talking points regarding the impact of the budget reductions on courses since there is a strong chance that many of the cuts will involve GE sections, for which the UCC has broad oversight. He pointed out that there are 9,000 fewer seats available this semester than in 2002, adding that it is true that many of the sections being offered in prior years were not completely filled, and also noting the importance of examining the number of seats occupied as well as the number of seats unfilled. The chair stated that this semester there is a greater tendency to offer GE courses which are more likely to be fully enrolled. Upon reviewing the available data for this term, Mr. Van Duzer stated that it is unclear to him how we can cut so many class sections and yet the remaining have the same number of seats as in previous terms. He said that students are complaining about the reduction in choices and variety. Several members agreed that cutting sections may, in fact, result in a loss of students. Ms. Little stated that Sociology had to combine two separate courses which were formerly offered to two different groups of students - one for LSEE majors and the other for Child Development majors - into one course of 150 students. The instructor was very concerned that due to the sensitive nature of the material this would have a negative impact on the students. She emphasized the importance of examining the appropriateness of the proposed changes on selected courses. Ms. Botzler strongly supported this statement. Mr. Van Duzer asked that UCC members email to him their greatest concerns about the impact of the cuts on GE.

Continuing informally, the chair distributed a document he received from the Provost which examines the student/faculty ratio (SFR) in comparison to the other campuses. He explained that next year departments will be asked to examine their present SFR in light of these comparisons and then provide any necessary justification for maintaining a different ratio. He pointed out that this data, unlike the erroneous data on the Institutional Data website, takes into account release time. Mr. Eldridge expressed concern that we are getting mixed messages from the Provost, when he first stated that we are not truly comparable to other CSU campuses, and later stated that the deans will work with individual departments to determine which departments in the CSU system to make SFR and FTES target comparisons. The chair said that the Provost wants to see how each unit can contribute to a 7 12% improvement in their SFR target. In response to Ms. Sonntag's query as to the UCC's role in these discussion, the chair said that, in his

opinion, the most useful data the UCC may be able to provide will come from the GE surveys being administered this semester. He replied to Ms. Anderson, that he hopes to see these surveys administered next year, as well, for an additional data set.

Informally, upon reviewing the systemwide comparison data there was some discussion about the missing cross listed courses. The chair noted that the data he provided today is a work in progress and is to be considered purely informational.

The agenda was addressed in the following order given the schedule of “time certain” items.

## V. NEW BUSINESS

### B. Revision of GE Area C Goals and Objectives with Measurable Learning Outcomes

In informal session, Mr. Wells said that these changes are a result of the work of the ad hoc Area C committee which was formed when the Area C Program Review was begun last year. As a result of the work of this committee the goals and outcomes have been rewritten for Area C, and they are much more measurable, according to Mr. Wells. He noted that this committee met about seven times and the resulting intent of these revisions is that all departments will use these goals to development assessment instruments for implementation in the Spring in order to measure one outcome. He added that the work of the committee continued this year despite the fact that ongoing assessment for GE was suspended by the Provost this year. A decision was made for this group to continue their efforts given the momentum they had gained. Mr. Wells explained that the instruments developed for use this Spring should be considered part of a pilot effort.

Continuing informally, Mr. Van Duzer noted that they had eliminated #2 of the former goals, which stated that comparisons would be made to methodologies of other disciplines. Mr. Wells said that the committee felt that this goal asked departments to be more articulate outside of their areas than they, in fact, were able to be. Mr. Wells confirmed that every class will be held to address all of the outcomes, but only one will be measured in the Spring. In response to Mr. Powell’s query, Mr. Wells stated that these new learning outcomes will not result in the elimination of existing Area C courses unless there has been drift in the course content since the initial approval of an Area C course. He also explained that the old Area C goals consisted of both preliminary and final goals. These new goals change this structure, and are more unified and simplified. He explained that the assessment instruments calibrate well at the department level, adding that they are assessing the first goal this Spring because it is the easiest. Ms. Little responded to the chair’s query that the college will likely decide to use rubrics in this assessment process. Mr. Wells suggested that the UCC remain uninvolved with the Spring pilot effort, noting that results will be reported to the UCC. In response to Mr. Powell’s query, Ms. Little responded that all sections of the same course will have the same embedded assessment assignment.

Discussion was tabled to the next meeting.

### A. Current Initiatives: Provost Vrem

In informal session, the Vice Provost explained that the following three tracks are ways in which Academic Affairs will proceed in order to address the present budget crisis:

- 1) Because our present SFR is not sustainable, the Provost explained that departments will be asked to examine their present SFR figures against those of other CSU campuses similar to HSU to establish new benchmarks. He added that the goal is not necessarily to reach the CSU average as this would result in the loss of distinctive qualities for which HSU is known.
- 2) A review of the administrative structure within Academic Affairs will be undertaken, specifically examining whether there are too many administrative positions at present; i.e. do we have too many colleges beyond which we can presently afford in this budget climate? This could include an examination of faculty assigned time for possible future reductions, according to the Provost.

3) Exploration of possible program reductions or eliminations. The Provost said that they are currently developing criteria to use as an initial screen of departments. These screens include numerical measures such as number of majors, cost per FTES, number of graduates, and market trends.

Continuing informally, Provost Vrem said that realistically we have until the end of February to work through this process. He explained the very compact timeline for accomplishing these very serious tasks, noting that in the initial review of data presented for possible program suspension/elimination they anticipate screening out most departments. After that process is concluded, he continued, screening will be much more specific, including examining quality of faculty, quality of students, and centrality of the programs under consideration. The Provost expressed concern that we may not be able to avoid this process. The chair expressed concern that the criteria being used may lead to the conclusion that the most vulnerable programs provide the least cost savings, and suggested that they also examine the cost per FTE; to which the Provost replied that elimination of large departments usually results in a substantial FTE reduction. In response to Ms. Burges' query, the Provost stated that departments will have opportunity to work with their administrative units toward the reduction in hours required of their programs, in order to achieve greater cost savings. He pointed to the reductions made in the Range Management program in 1992, which resulted in a more efficient program, avoiding program elimination. In response to Mr. Eldridge's query, the Provost stated that one cannot simply use metrics to make decisions of this magnitude. He stated that this is an excellent time to make certain that our GE courses are efficient and effective and possibly consider whether we should be moving toward a core GE program. Another question to examine, according to the Provost, is whether there should be greater budget control over GE offerings, which now resides in the colleges.

The Provost noted, informally, that one former method of scheduling which has contributed to our problems today occurs when departments offer more GE classes in order to increase their SFR. In these cases we actually had more seats available than we needed in these GE courses. He suggested that we may need to set separate enrollment targets for GE courses than we have set for majors courses. He also suggested that we consider examining enrollments in lower division GE courses for those departments that are "GE heavy," adding that this seems to be a very crude method and may not be realistic. In response to the chair's query, the Provost stated that whether or not the SFR for a GE class should be significantly lower than the SFR for a departmental offering is strictly dependent on the specific course and what is appropriate to the course pedagogy. The Provost suggested that in the pilot courses there may be opportunity for classes to be larger. He thought that some areas view GE as a place to look for efficiencies, a view which could be exacerbated during these austere budget times, especially for those departments which are unable to collapse their major sections into larger sections.

Ms. Little stated, informally, that various people over time have suggested the idea that GE FTES generation accrue to the University as a whole rather than to the departments, noting that this makes good sense when enrollments are flat. The Provost suggested examining this model as well as our present model, stating that he hopes the UCC will take a lead in this review. Ms. Sonntag suggested another model might be to treat the Institutions courses as if they, too, were University offerings. The chair stated that the task of the UCC is to look at other models for funding GE to determine better efficiencies, noting that for some departments the GE FTE generation has provided them the opportunity to have smaller majors courses. Placing GE in a central pool, he noted, may drop the SFR for these type of departments. Mr. Van Duzer replied to Ms. Brown that very early in the GE Reform discussions they agreed not to touch on structural matters, to which Mr. Crawford agreed, adding that at the time the committee was considering pedagogy not efficiency. Ms. Anderson suggested that there be a joint subcommittee of the UCC and the Academic Senate examining these issues. The chair reiterated that he does not feel that reducing FTE assists us unless it changes the ratio of faculty to students. Ms. Burges emphasized that first and foremost we should look at institutionalizing our ultimate goals for our students, adding that we must itemize what we are after from our graduates, the experiences we want them to encounter, and then work back from that point in terms of the programs that will help us achieve these goals, following up with

alignment of our resources to achieve these goals. She added that we should avoid the “course per skill” approach, and instead think in terms of the components of what every student will achieve and what kind of experiences they will encounter to achieve these components, both in the major and GE. The chair stated that we do not have to go back to ground zero to have this conversation. There was general agreement that the UCC continue this discussion at the next meeting. Ms. Burges agreed to report on the activities of the WASC Action Team, Theme 1 committee. The chair said that we will also address subcommittee convener’s reports at the next meeting.

#### IV. OLD BUSINESS

Subcommittee Conveners’ Reports  
Tabled to the next meeting

Meeting adjourned.