

# UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM (UCOC)

## MINUTES

*February 4, 2015*

2:00-3:00 pm

\*\*\*\*HOH 706\*\*\*\*

### I. UCOC JANUARY Minutes

- *Attachment: UCOC January 14 Minutes*

→**APPROVED**

### II. OLD BUSINESS

#### A. Proposal to Allow Separate Courses be Taught in the Same Room, Time and Day (Brian Head, AHS Chair)

In the spirit of fostering more interdisciplinary teaching, Brian Head proposes that UCOC allow approval of courses in cases in which two courses are independent with regard to syllabus, grading and department, but which nevertheless work symbiotically with each other, even if their unit or pay structure is different. For example, ENGL 620 Literature and Interdisciplinary Studies (4, max 12) (taught by David St. John) and MUCO 548 - Writer and Composer (3 units) (taught by Frank Ticheli) have been run simultaneously for many years with great success. Getting credit in one would be quite different from getting credit in another: The creative writers write words, the composers write music. But they collaborate on their projects and take the same lectures thereby learning about the other discipline while actively creating song, oratorio and opera material. Head believes that there are other course pairings which would benefit from this approach, and in fact it was brought up by Jim Moore in Engineering recently at one of the WASC meetings. Head has faculty members in both Thornton and Roski who also would like to create similar pairings.

Brian Head noticed that MUCO 548 was initially constructed to house both creative writing and music composition students. However, at some point the new structure with the simultaneous courses was adopted, which Head believes allows for more flexibility for both sides. He proposes that UCOC formally allow such collaborations.

**ENGL 620 Literature and Interdisciplinary Studies (4, max 12)** Issues and theory of studying literature in relation to history, science, politics, psychology, religion, sociology, media, the visual arts, and other disciplines.

**MUCO 548 Writer and Composer (3, Sp)** Structured collaboration among composers and poets.

Please Note: A slight variation of this topic was addressed at the November 2013 UCOC Meeting. The minutes record the following:

“... The question was posed: should the professor be allowed to teach the same title, two different prefixes, with two *different* unit values at the same time and location?”

UCOC members were supportive of the idea, noting various cooperative teaching arrangements that had been arranged in their own schools. They said that if the professor could demonstrate different expectations for students taking different unit values of the course, with syllabi showing how the contact hours and workload would vary for the two versions of the course, they were willing to allow this as an exception.

...

NOTE: Subsequent to the meeting, the chair was made aware that the Registrar’s current policy, or procedure, is to allow only one course (potentially with a cross-list) to be taught in one location at one time. The current policy and a proposed revision to this policy will be presented to UCOC for a formal vote at the next scheduled UCOC meeting.”

Discussion of this topic was postponed until February 2014 and then assigned to the Curricular Innovations Taskforce. No formal answer was given to this question.

**DISCUSSED, December 3,** Brian Head said that the issue was different from the topic first presented in November 2013. Teachers have been collaborating on teaching a music and writing course for years to great effect and awards. At the WASC meeting such collaboration was encouraged, but a fellow USC faculty member noted that it was not allowed, per policy. Head proposed that UCOC formally allow such collaborations on a case-by-case basis.

Robert Morley said that technically this was not a curriculum issue, but a scheduling issue. Members brought up the questions of the professor-load, evaluations, etc., but were in general support. Tom Cummings requested that Head write a recommendation to the Provost to be endorsed by UCOC and referred to in the future when school’s look for guidance in regard to this question.

**DISCUSSED, February 4,** Brian Head recommended that the following language be entered into the *Curriculum Handbook*:

“UCOC allows and encourages interdisciplinary cooperation in which two courses from different departments or schools are approved as independent with regard to syllabus, grading and department, but which nevertheless are conceived to work symbiotically with each other, even if their unit or pay structure is different. The two courses would address two distinct student populations which work together within the class.

Examples include ENGL 620 Literature and Interdisciplinary Studies (4, max 12) and MUCO 548 - Writer and Composer (3 units).”

UCOC members questioned the terms “allow” and “encourage,” but were generally in support of the described scenario. Judy Garner said that a current situation in which two school could not agree on unit load and revenue sharing would be solved by allowing two courses to be taught under two different prefixes. Head reminded UCOC that the scenario described by Garner, however, was not one that he had addressed. His statement addresses two courses, taught by two professors, to two populations in one location. The scenario that Garner describes deals with one professor teaching the same content to two different populations for two different unit values, contact hours and workloads, and different tuition rates.

Questions arose in regard to faculty load, income distribution, tuition revenue, the Student Information System (SIS) and Registrar programmatically allowing the scheduling of two courses in the same location, communicating that this scenario is now allowed (and who “allows” it), etc. Members agreed that these types of arrangements would encourage the interdisciplinary work that is sought by the Provost.

Tom Cummings requested that Brian Head redraft the statement, and that it be written as recommendation from UCOC to the Provost, as the Provost would be the one to allow this arrangement ultimately and communicate it to the University community. Words like “UCOC allows” or “permits” should be avoided. Judy Garner said that she would help draft the scenario of one teacher, with expertise in multiple subjects, teaching a student population from multiple schools in one location for more than one unit value, and thereby, contact hours and workload.

UCOC will review the recommendation at the next meeting in March.

### III. NEW BUSINESS

#### A. New Curriculum and Catalogue Management System (Robert Morley, Associate Registrar)

Robert Morley announced that contract negotiations for the purchase of the integrated curriculum and catalogue management system by Digital Architecture are currently being finalized. The contract will be submitted to General Counsel for final review. The upfront implementation cost will be covered by the Provost, and the yearly maintenance fees by the Registrar. If all follows the projected schedule, the new curriculum and catalogue management system will be live in early fall 2015.

#### B. Curricular Improvements to Address

Have the issues that the UCOC taskforces identified last year been dealt with? For example, how is shared revenue identified across schools and how are faculty load issues dealt with for joint programs? What are the possible incentives to create programs? How do we better deal with affected sign-offs, schools focusing on a similar topic from a slightly different angle? How can the communication of UCOC decisions be improved? What forums already exist for best practices: online, partnering with other national and international schools, etc.? Can they be partnered with to address issues identified by UCOC as well? Etc.

**DISCUSSED,** Tom Cummings asked for UCOC to consider what has been done in the past year and what improvements, and follow through, should still happen. Judy Garner said that there was an expressed interest and general excitement at the possibilities in the initial interviews with schools, but there has been no follow through. Many times the professional schools are not invited into the conversation about undergraduate education, and they have great resources. Kristine Moe said that were a few promising leads in the fall semester, but it was not clear if it was up to her, the chair, or the Provost, to follow up to see if anything had, or could, develop from those initial conversations. Garner said that she needed to be assigned the task.

It was suggested that the Curriculum Coordination Office (CCO) website become more dynamic and serve as an internal promotion of unique, interdisciplinary programs. Robert Morley questioned using CCO resources for the creation of video content, highlighting curriculum innovations.

Garner suggested that syllabi be published, as a way for students to know the contents of a course they

are considering and for other faculty to consider cross-listing with, or using as a part of their own program. Cummings acknowledged that other universities do this and that it may be something for USC to consider.

Cummings concluded that Mark Todd and he would meet to review what has been done this past year and to offer directives on what is next to accomplish, based on the findings of last year's UCOG taskforces.

#### IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

##### A. Carnegie Foundation Reviews Credit Hour as Measure for Student Learning

- *Attachment: Carnegie Foundation Credit Hour Article*

**Members present**

Diane Badame  
Steven Bucher  
Thomas Cummings (Chair)  
Judy Garner  
Brian Head  
Susan Metros  
Kristine Moe (Support Staff)  
Robert Morley  
Geoffrey Shiflett  
Mark Todd

**Members absent**

Gene Bickers

**Guests**