

# UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM (UCOC)

## MINUTES

*November 1, 2017*

2:00-3:30 pm

\*\*\*\*HOH 114\*\*\*\*

### I. UCOC October 2017 Minutes

- *Attachment: UCOC October 2017 Minutes*

➔ **APPROVED**

### II. OLD BUSINESS

#### A. Last Year's (2016-2017) Unresolved Business (Jane Cody, Dornsife Associate Dean for Academic Programs; Andrew Stott, Dornsife Dean of Undergraduate Education)

1. Conferring Units
2. Who can offer a BA
3. Removing the line from the *USC Catalogue* (with negative consequences to professional schools offering a BA, if the BA remains conferred by Dornsife):

(<http://usc.catalog.acalog.com/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=1315> 16-17 *USC Catalogue*)

Basic Requirement for a Degree from the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences

For those undergraduate students earning a degree in the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, **a minimum of 104 units applicable to the degree must be earned in college academic departments. For students graduating with a minor or a second bachelor's degree, this minimum is reduced to 96 units.** Other exceptions will be considered by the dean of undergraduate programs in Dornsife College.

**Students who are completing major degree programs in a professional school, but whose degree is conferred by Dornsife College, are exempt from this policy.**

This policy also applies to transferable courses (see Course Work Taken Elsewhere).

**UPDATE SINCE SEPTEMBER 6 MEETING** Jane Cody has been working with Prof. Andrew Stott, Dornsife Dean of Undergraduate Education, to investigate these questions. Cody asked to attend the November 1 UCOC meeting as a guest to continue the discussion.

**DISCUSSED, NOVEMBER 1, 2017** Chair Chi Mak introduced guests Jane Cody, Dornsife Associate Dean for Academic Programs, and Andrew Stott, Dornsife Dean of Undergraduate Education, and asked them to speak about the language they are proposing for the catalogue.

Stott mentioned that he has recently joined the Dornsife Dean's Office, and has been investigating this issue at USC as well as at peer institutions. He explained that the goal is to establish a justifiable and reasonable minimum unit requirement from within the college for students also pursuing a BA outside the college in order to ensure a solid liberal arts education while also taking timely completion of the degrees into consideration.

Cody described a USC liberal arts education, which prescribes that a student's major field is pursued with depth of critical thinking within the discipline, as well as with breadth across many fields in the college, such that students maximize on self-development in their individual ways. This is opposed to professional school degree requirements, which are often more or less set according to the discipline being studied. She noted that the college has always had a liberal arts unit requirement to help ensure this. Traditionally, of the 128-unit minimum required for an undergraduate degree, 104 are required to be completed in the college. If a student pursues a second major, the minimum is reduced to 96 units to allow greater flexibility and exploration beyond the college. Further, if a student also pursues a degree that's administered outside the college, but conferred by Dornsife, the minimum college unit requirement is waived.

Cody said that over time, the rationale for this has eroded, and a minimum unit requirement for students pursuing outside degrees should be established. She claimed that to maintain the integrity of a liberal arts degree, over half of the units should be earned within the liberal arts college, which for a 128-unit degree would be 64. Marginally more, 70, should really be the bare minimum number of units required in the college.

Mak questioned what degrees are under consideration – the BAs administered outside Dornsife but conferred by Dornsife – and whether there are BAs that are not conferred by Dornsife.

Robert Morley, Assoc. Registrar, Curriculum, cited the example of a BA administered by Annenberg even though historically Dornsife has always conferred it. It is set up in the college but the diploma says Annenberg. He added that, from his operational perspective, a BA is always associated with the college.

It was questioned what it means for degrees to be "conferred," especially as policy and procedures evolve. Robin Romans claimed the BA in Annenberg is evidence of a change to these traditional underpinnings. At some point the Provost allowed a BA in Annenberg, but in keeping with Morley's remarks, history is preserved in certain operations and record keeping. Romans returned to Dornsife's request and questioned how it might affect other units.

Mak responded that if there is no basic agreement about which jurisdiction these populations of students are under, deciding what "confer" means could potentially have a real impact. Cody clarified that their goal is not to cause any impact on degrees across the university, but only to clearly and reasonably define what a liberal arts degree means when earned from Dornsife. Stott wondered if 70 is the proper number of units – more than half – but keeping time to degree in mind.

Brian Head, AHS, questioned if there should be such a difference in policy when considering a BA in Dornsife and, for example, a BFA in a professional school. What explains the difference in "collegeness" under one circumstance but not the other?

Mak and Cody summarized the global issue, which is that if each unit were able to define what a BA or BS is, the problem would be resolved. But if each unit were asked to translate their BS or BA into Dornsife College parameters, various schools would not agree because of the vast unit differentials. Mak said that the committee can understand the justification for Dornsife's request, but added that further investigation into potential effects is required and that future discussion of any such effects would be further enhanced with input from Assoc. Registrar Matt Bemis, Degree Progress.

B. Potential Overlap between New Proposals and Existing Curriculum Offerings (Chi Mak, Chair of UCOC)

**DISCUSSED, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017** Chair Chi Mak acknowledged the issue and noted the potential for proliferation going forward, which suggests that policy should be developed or revised. Recently approved ACAD 309 - Dreams and Madness: The Art of Japan's Golden Age of Animation overlaps content from within the School of Cinematic Arts as well as Dornsife College. Mak read the response SCA Dean Renov provided when asked to sign off, emphasizing the second paragraph that specifically pertained to content duplication. Mak then read Dornsife Dean Jane Cody's response, which seconded Renov's comments and added that:

*"We should be careful or the result will be divergence in presenting and studying subjects of mutual interest. This is quite the opposite of the university-wide mandate for convergence and, even worse, may well result in trade school-like curricula in a significant number of units."*

Mak said this course captures the current issue, noting the similar issue of affected department sign-off for Special Topic courses. Steve Bucher questioned what percentage of the issue is a result from Special Topics versus regular courses. Robert Morley described the affected department policy in its most recent form, citing that by nature of their temporary and expedited offerings, sign-offs were not expected until that course be made a real course. Diane Badame disagreed, stating that this process should be done up front. Judy Garner noted the general lack of a consistent sign-off procedure and questioned logistics: What are repercussions when the result isn't collegial? How does potential overlap get identified?

Brian Head agreed and added that syllabi are encouraged to be posted in the online Schedule of Classes, which is clearly a beneficial update from the print version format. Head expressed interest in the idea of posting every syllabus in a searchable way. Steve Bucher noted the constructive – not punitive – motivation for this. Geoff Shiflett suggested the online USC Catalogue. Morley returned to the idea adding each syllabus to the Schedule of Classes.

Robin Romans questioned if such procedures are really necessary and noted the groundwork required for all syllabi to be posted. Mak expressed favor for the idea and offered to investigate options, then returned to the issue of overlap. He noted the potentially punitive nature of sign-off procedures and emphasized that the focus should be on encouraging a collaborative atmosphere. Bucher brought up the issue of terminology and the committee recommended it be known as an acknowledgment more than a "sign-off."

Morley questioned the CCO's role in enforcing this procedure. Garner concurred and added that proposals involving very specialized areas may not be received by the appropriate party anyway. Shiflett claimed that occasionally the same content does deserve to be taught in differing formats and focus, perhaps one course with huge sections and one with small. Garner stated the crux of the issue is when a department really does hold supreme prowess over an area in the eyes of the university, but added that if there's another department that merely 'dabbles' then what's the harm. Mak said arguments can be made for both sides but that UCOC shouldn't say pass or no pass for a proposal. Shiflett expressed concern over misuse of resources in inappropriate instances of overlap.

Mak encouraged a more thoughtful process and questioned if it could be built into the proposal in a preemptive way. Head concurred and referenced CCO outreach, a process that often starts just as Mak described. Mak reiterated that the procedure should be in place and done right for positive results, and potentially a change of language in the proposal form would help this effort. The committee agreed, wrapping up with discussion emphasizing the importance of collaboration.

**DISCUSSED, OCTOBER 4, 2017** Chi Mak confirmed that the question of content overlap is a larger issue than originally thought, reiterating that improvements could be made to the proposal forms to encourage early stage consideration. Committee discussion returned to the idea of an approved syllabi archive, which would help record approved content and make it accessible to the academic units. The catalogue is searchable but the title and description of a course are obviously not as complete as a syllabus. Geoff Shiflett noted that it would be useful to be able to refer to the syllabi of existing courses when said courses are referenced in new proposals.

Several members questioned how it would be determined if an archived syllabus is up to date and if the units would have to submit updated versions – an unrealistic expectation. Steve Bucher also wondered if a course is approved and syllabus posted, but then subsequently changed by new faculty or leadership, would it create conflict. Diane Badame questioned if the archive would be public or private?

Mak asked Morley if the syllabi could be posted on the Registrar website. Morley supported posting the syllabi in general but expressed concern that the overhead involved to use the Registrar site would be too great. Shiflett noted that Curriculog currently houses all approved syllabi proposed in the system and that it's searchable. He also questioned the use of the term "syllabus" when proposing new courses, noting the material that is required for a syllabus but not for course review, such as Statements on Academic Conduct and Support Systems. Shiflett and Morley discussed the idea of using blackboard to house the typical 'boilerplate' information, but only 60-70% of courses have an active blackboard site. The sites are set up but not in use, which was suggested to be a faculty issue.

Morley and Badame voiced support of the current syllabus requirements, noting that inclusion of certain components in a "syllabus" is a standard, and that while seasoned faculty might understand this standard, adjunct faculty might not.

Mak asked the committee to consider the current content overlap language in the proposal forms and described potential additional language to be added to the new program and new course form, reiterating that UCOC should shift focus toward encouraging collaboration and innovation not obstruction. He offered to draft the new language and to have it approved at a subsequent meeting, and expressed interest in inviting guest speakers who might provide examples of successful collaboration.

**DISCUSSED, NOVEMBER 1, 2017** Chi Mak presented the proposed language to be included in the new proposal forms and questioned if the Provost should review and approve. Robin Romans suggested that Vice Provost Elizabeth Graddy should review it. Mak asked the committee to think on it and suggest any edits, noting that the goal is for the units to formulate their programs and courses with affected departments considered in advance.

C. Catalog Entries Regarding Inter-, Intra-academic Unit Programs and Other Interdisciplinary Programs (Brian Head, AHS Chair; Geoff Shiflett, SES Chair)

- *Attachments: Updated Task Force Report  
Summary of Suggested Catalog Changes*

**POSTPONED FOR LATER MEETING (out of time)**

**D. Sign-Offs for Special Topics (Robert Morley, Associate Registrar)**

Robert Morley contends that no sign-off should be required for special topics courses, as they are meant to fast track and test new and innovative offerings. The content will be reviewed and sign-offed on by affected units if and when they become permanent course offerings.

*From the MAY 3, 2017 Minutes:*

The Curriculum Coordination Office (CCO) performs a cursory review of the temporary course offerings, Special Topics, via Kualii, and then schedules the courses for various departments. Attention has not been paid necessarily to getting “sign-offs” from potentially affected departments. The priority is an expedited review for new ideas to be tested.

Recently Sol Price proposed a course, “Social Marketing,” which was approved without request for sign-off from Marshall. Marshall objected. The curriculum staff member then questioned if the following Marshall courses that were approved should have had sign-offs as well:

Course	Title
MKT 499	The Art and Science of Creating and Marketing Blockbuster Entertainment Franchise
BUAD 499	The Mixed-Use Development Process
BUCO 499	Crisis Communication
BAEP 599	Entrepreneurship in the Media and Entertainment Industry

Members of CCO question if a proposal should have a sign-off or two multiple times a day. For regular review, we insist on it. For the cursory review of Special Topics, which are supposed to be a fast-tracked approval to try out new ideas, should sign-offs be required as well?

Separate, but related, would the transparency of Curriculog assist this process by making departments more apt to communicate with potentially affected departments that may see the review in process on Curriculog?

→**DECIDED, MAY 3, 2017**, UCOC members felt that Special Topics offerings should also get affected school sign-offs. Units should be encouraged to collaborate. More and more special topics are being offered that impinge on content offered by another school. Sign offs for special topics would help mitigate this.

Members of CCO request that a memo be sent from the Provost stating this change to process and procedure for special topics offered by schools and departments, effective spring 2018.

**REVISITED, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017** Discussion about content overlap (see III, A) touched on the issue of requiring sign-offs for Special Topics. If the May 3, 2017 decision stands, the members of the CCO request a Provost memo, as above.

**DISCUSSED, OCTOBER 4, 2017** Chair Chi Mak referenced prior Provost discussion and wondered if requiring affected sign-offs for special topics is stifling innovation. He requested input from Associate Registrar Robert Morley, who had contended at previous meetings that no sign-off should be required for special topics courses, as they are meant to fast track and test new and innovative offerings. Morley read an email from a prominent coordinator in Marshall School of Business that described a situation wherein an instructor who Marshall would not endorse to teach business topics was subsequently hired by another school to teach the material via a special topics course; this example heavily underscored the need for sign-offs.

Morley discussed the process by which special topics get approved, and noted the expectation of a quick turnaround. The Curriculum Office staff become the obstructors when a legitimate sign-off is requested. The CCO will continue to enforce this policy but requests the full support of UCOC and Provost backing, in particular a memo sent to the community to inform them of what will surely be interpreted as a new policy.

Mak acknowledged that that there hasn't been a formal process in place and one needs to be carefully developed – not to stifle innovation but to address egregious issues ahead of a special topic being offered. Mak asked the committee to think a little more on this topic for future discussion.

**POSTPONED FOR LATER MEETING (out of time)**

**E. Various Administrative Issues Involving Off-campus Studies (Robert Morley, Associate Registrar)**

**DISCUSSED, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017** Robert Morley explained that the CCO is trying to get a better handle on off-campus curriculum. He said that overseas courses and programs involve many aspects of university policy and questioned if there should be a high level “owner” over the whole process. He described the CCO’s efforts to get caught up since Edwenna, noting that many records were lost, and wondered how to proceed. The CCO and UCOC need direction. OSP Chair Steve Bucher agreed and noted that there’s never really been an actual inventory of these items. Morley added that foreign transcripts are coming through the Articulation department without any prior OSP approval. Brian Head and Bucher discussed the ideas of MOUs between USC and foreign institutions and how they seemed to be false representations of approval. Chi Mak agreed and questioned if there is a central USC unit that could oversee OSP. Robin Romans doubted this but mentioned Anthony Bailey’s office. He added that schools have their own overseas offices and that Student Affairs does require centrally that all students are accounted for in case there’s an incident. Student Affairs questions how all bases for travel are covered (health and safety, compliance and logistics).

Romans noted OSP should be concerned about academic quality, which Mak reiterated, but Bucher argued that OSP is in a position to reject a proposal if the Student Affairs components were not addressed. Head mentioned the USC 300 block enrollment course for which UCOC has no oversight and that there are many factors related to off-campus programs and offerings that should be overseen in a central place. He added that other offices may pursue their interest in creating MOUs but are not concerned with mechanics of the entire process. Bucher agreed that the role of OSP should be framed as helpful and not hindering.

Morley said that once the CCO has a fairly complete inventory, the Registrar could potentially monitor and control trips being taken by providing or denying session codes based on OSP approval, emphasizing Articulation considerations. Mak asked Romans if the Provost Office would be willing to get involved, noting the need for a larger discussion than just UCOC. Romans added that UCOC should advise the Provost but a central inventory would be required based on type and category, and that he will raise the question to the Provost Office once more information is gathered. Megan Chan discussed compliance issues and expressed interest in being involved. Chan, Morley, Romans and Bucher agreed to form an information gathering taskforce and will report back at the October meeting.

**DISCUSSED, OCTOBER 4, 2017** Robert Morley provided an update following the OSP taskforce meeting, which was attended by UCOC representative as well as the Articulation department of the Registrar. He said the discussion was primarily information sharing and gathering, but the taskforce came up with the following outline of common OSP scenarios:

- 1) A student enrolls in a course at a foreign institution and comes back asking for credit
- 2) A student goes abroad and earns credit that isn't part of the USC course of study
- 3) A unit endorses a program abroad for their own students/department
- 4) A unit wants to construct something new
- 5)

The taskforce then identified questions and concerns with the above scenarios in mind:

- 1) Who are the relevant Actors on campus?
  - o Student Affairs
  - o UCOC
  - o Financial Aid
  - o Registrar/Articulation/Curriculum
- 2) What are their interests?
  - o Student safety
  - o Compliance
  - o Consumer protections - i.e., accreditation and unit value
  - o Standard academic progress
  - o Curricular rigor and value

Morley said the meeting culminated in the decision that some of these questions be posed to the Globalization Compliance Working Group, which is geared toward addresses issues of this nature. Megan Chan agreed to head up this effort.

OSP Chair Steve Bucher and Morley agreed that at present the goal is to identify who should oversee and who should support. Bucher questioned if there is a role in charge overall – even while the individual moving parts are functioning, who is chiefly responsible? Morley cited the “Sorbonne incident” in which, according to Articulation, it was discovered that one student got credit and another didn't even though they attended the same OSP course. In the end, credit was not granted and when OSP was consulted they had no idea there was confusion resulting from an accreditation issue. He pointed out how critical the Articulation role is, yet sometimes Articulation is the last to hear about programs.

Chi Mak wondered if there simply is no overarching policy and these issues are the result. He asked Bucher what the key issues are that UCOC should focus on for this problem

Bucher responded that in part it's circumstantial. A unit signs an MOU with a foreign institution and asks OSP to review yet there is no curricular information. Should UCOC look at that? To Bucher's point, Morley mentioned another incident discussed at the taskforce meeting: a recent Thornton program (Sibelius Exchange, Finland) that is a one-to-one student arrangement similar in design to tuition exchange. Thornton worked closely with the foreign institution to cover relevant considerations (but never alerted the Articulation department). Would an agreement such as this require CCO/Articulation review, noting that in this case it's a really a question of judgment made by the school and the expertise of the faculty? Morley said this case seems to fall outside of UCOC purview.

The committee discussed the significance of the MOU and agreed that it's unclear exactly what OSP's role is amidst all this. UCOC has its own charge and is not the “king” of off-campus activities. It was questioned if Anthony Bailey's office should be involved, though it's hoped that through collaboration with the Globalization Compliance Working Group a “sheriff” should be able to be identified.

Chi Mak said this is a collection of issues that should have been address long ago and now discussion is surfacing in disparate areas of the University, but will hopefully lead to collaboration and unification.

Bucher brought up the inadequacy of the existing “n+1” units policy as related to OSP, noting that the way units are granted, an 8-week program can earn up to 9 units. This means that a 15-week semester can only earn up to 16 units even if the student is doing 18 units worth of work. Morley added that depending on the arrangements, a student might return with (the equivalence of) a surplus of units. The units to be granted and the units to be forfeited must be decided. Bucher suggested an 18-unit ceiling to help allay these problems, with committee support.

**POSTPONED UNTIL LATER MEETING (out of time)**

F. Checklist for Joint International Programs (Robert Morley, Associate Registrar)

**DISCUSSED, OCTOBER 4, 2017** Associate Registrar Robert Morley noted the need for guidelines related to programs in which a USC academic unit enters into a formal written agreement with another institution. He cited considerations for accreditation, how USC work is articulated, and unit limits. He asked that these questions be considered by UCOC in order to produce an approved set of guidelines and suggested the Rossier Yonsei program as a good example to start with.

UCOC Chair Chi Mak voiced support of a set of central guidelines related to these administrative matters and requested that a ‘checklist’ be drafted, reiterating that the purpose of such guidelines should be strictly administrative, not academic, in nature.

Mak also observed that, generally, expectations and timing of various administrative elements tend to change and an explicit timeline of curricular/Registrar procedures would be useful to the curriculum community. John DeMartini will draft a comprehensive timeline that incorporates these dates and deadlines.

**POSTPONED UNTIL LATER MEETING (out of time)**

G. Duplicate Credit between Certificates and Other Degrees (Robert Morley, Associate Registrar)

**DISCUSSED, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017** Robert Morley explained that there is grey area in Degree Progress with regard to applying units back and forth between graduate programs and university certificates. According to Morley, Degree Progress cites the lack of policy and will try to apply the units however the department requests. It was questioned if master’s students should be able to apply units to a certificate and should the certificate be awarded if the master’s is not completed. Morley offered to report back with examples and noted that the issue is more interesting when units are being cross-counted in differing areas, as opposed to from within the same area, which wouldn’t be as enticing to a student anyway.

**POSTPONED UNTIL LATER MEETING (out of time)**



III. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Maximum Unit Policy for USC Overseas Programs

- *Attachment: Revision to the Maximum Unit Policy for Overseas Programs*

**Members present**

Diane Badame  
Steven Bucher  
Megan Chan (Financial Aid)  
John DeMartini (Support Staff)  
Donna Garcia  
Judy Garner  
Brian Head  
Chi Mak (Chair)  
Danielle Mihram  
Robert Morley (Assoc. Registrar)  
Robin Romans  
Geoffrey Shiflett

**Members absent**

**Guests**

Jane Cody  
Andrew Stott