

Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee

Approved Minutes

Friday, February 14th, 2025

9:00AM – 11:00AM

University 156

Attendees: Bitters, Cole, Cravens-Brown, Crocetta, Dwyer, Fletcher, Hedgecoth, Hilty, Kletchka, Lee, Martin, Nagar, Nathanson, Neff, Podalsky, Smith, Steele, Vaessin, Vankeerbergen, Xiao

1. Approval of 01-31-2025 Minutes
 - Crocetta, Cravens-Brown; unanimously approved.
2. Vote on Themes Subcommittee Reorganization
 - Nagar: We are proposing to change the language extracted from the ULAC minutes regarding the Themes Subcommittee restructuring to reflect that the subsumed Subcommittees should include 20-25% non-ASC faculty rather than at least three non-ASC faculty.
 - Committee member question: There does not appear to be a limit on the number of members that can come from non-ASC units in this iteration of the proposal. Are we voting on this particular iteration?
 - Vankeerbergen: We could propose a friendly amendment to this iteration to change the language from at least three to a maximum of 25%.
 - Committee member question: If there are 12 faculty on a Subcommittee, 25% would be three. What do we think the cap should be? If there were four people outside of the College of Arts and Sciences, would that be too many?
 - Committee member question: What is the percentage on all of the other Subcommittees?
 - Nagar: There are four or five faculty, one of which is outside of ASC. So, 20-25%.
 - Committee member comment: 25% should be the cap then.
 - Committee member question: There would be no more than two from outside the College of Arts and Sciences if there was an eight-person Subcommittee. Is that sufficient representation for other colleges?
 - Vankeerbergen: We are trying to make these large Subcommittees so it is more likely that we will have 12 members. In that case three non-ASC faculty seems fair.
 - Committee member question: If we need an exception one year, who would be the one to look at that? Who would the oversight person be?
 - Committee member comment: Ultimately it would have to come here.
 - Martin: If a college wanted to have a member serve on the Subcommittee, they would come to me, and we would discuss it.

- Vankeerbergen: In case there are years where we cannot get enough non-ASC faculty, perhaps the language should say *up to 25%*.
 - Committee member comment: We should make sure that the language ensures that by non-ASC, it is understood to mean other *colleges*, not any university entity.
 - Committee member comment: We could change the language in the proposal from faculty in non-ASC units to faculty whose primary appointment is a college other than ASC.
 - Committee member question: If we say that the Subcommittee will consist of up to 25% non-ASC faculty, that includes zero. Should we say at least one and up to 25%?
 - Martin: Perhaps we could imply that I will always try to get up to 25% non-ASC faculty. Some years it does not happen, and if no one serves we will have to move forward with only ASC faculty.
 - Committee member comment: It does give more flexibility if we keep zero in case the other colleges cannot staff the subcommittees.
 - Martin: As for the other subcommittees, we do not move forward unless we get one person from outside ASC even if they do not come regularly.
 - Nagar: We do have non-ASC faculty on our Theme Advisory Groups currently, so we should have people from other colleges who will want to serve for the foreseeable future. These people can even help us recruit.
 - Committee member comment: To be in good form with the Arts and Sciences Senate, I would suggest that we send a copy of this to the steering committee and the Chair asking them to share it with the Senate.
 - Nagar: I serve on the Senate steering committee so we can do that. We can now vote on this item with the understanding that we will make the following recommended changes to the language:
 - Each Subcommittee will have at least one faculty member whose primary appointment is in a college other than the College of Arts and Sciences.
 - Up to 25% of the Subcommittee may be made up of faculty members whose primary appointments are in a college other than the College of Arts and Sciences.
 - Every effort will be made to be inclusive up to this 25% maximum
 - Podalsky, Hedgecoth; unanimously approved.
3. Update on RSI (I. Nagar)
- Nagar: This update is regarding how we approve Distance Learning courses in terms of Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI). There has been some back and forth between the Office of Distance Education (ODE) and our subcommittees about what counts as a reasonable level of interaction between instructors and students. We want to clarify this so that our subcommittees and ODE are reviewing by the same standards in terms of what is considered sufficient substantive interaction.

- Committee member question: In the document provided on RSI, the first bullet mentions that pre-recorded lectures and videos contextualizing course content count as substantive interaction. Does this mean that an instructor who has taught a class before, even one time, could simply post the same videos and leave the class alone for the rest of the semester?
 - Nagar: Videos and lectures are one way for instructors to interact with students, but relying solely on them without additional engagement, such as providing feedback on assignments or holding office hours, does not fulfill the RSI requirements. The course needs to include more than just videos and lectures to meet the standards.
- Committee member question: What if an instructor is teaching a large class, they recorded their lectures during the pandemic, and the TA is taking care of the office hours, emails, and grading. Does that count as regular substantive interaction?
 - Vankeerbergen: The issue we need to discuss is how we should implement the switch to RSI from direct instruction. The divisional subcommittees are being asked to execute this, and different subcommittee are taking slightly different stances on the definition. Some want to see more RSI than others, and Bob Mick, the DL reviewer from ODE, is unsure of how to give good feedback to units who come to him and want to prepare their course for subcommittee review. This committee does need direction from ODE, but they also need your help understanding how faculty view this.
- Committee member comment: The evaluation of online courses is evolving from being based solely on the number of lecture or video hours to considering a broader range of activities under RSI.
 - Committee member comment: The new guidelines could still allow minimal interaction, such as simply providing three hours of lectures per week.
 - Nagar: Teaching involves more than just lectures, including various activities and discussions, so this conversation should focus on how to assess and better communicate to units the full depth and variety of RSI in distance learning courses.
- Committee member question: Is there a distinction between pre-recorded lectures, which do not have to meet the time requirement alone, and videos contextualizing course content?
 - Committee member comment: Perhaps instructor presence. This committee felt strongly that the instructor's presence should be felt in the classroom and that they should not just be curating videos. You can see in the DL cover sheet that instructors would have a difficult time convincing a subcommittee that pre-recorded lectures will be sufficient in terms of instructor presence in a course. They are required to have a plan for this when they develop the course.
- Committee member comment: Another value of clarifying what is defined as RSI is helping the evaluation of instructors and courses at the department level, and

we should think about this being used in that regard. There is also the issue of workload; students are often driven to online classes because they are perceived as much easier. RSI is a great effort to combat that idea, but it is important that the intensity of RSI be fully captured in what we require.

- Martin: At the Chairs and Directors meeting there was a presentation done about online asynchronous courses, and we have a few colleges where roughly 15-20% of their credit hours are generated by asynchronous courses, so it is important to come up with something robust that we are doing in our college that serves as a de facto gatekeeping mechanism for other colleges.
- Nagar: The other issue with online courses, especially the ones that enroll hundreds of students, is that feedback is very complex. Giving feedback to 200 students on their writing and discussions is a task. It is also relevant to think about the kinds of workloads we create for faculty. We do not want to have the intention of making a course robust for online instruction and end up making the course impossible to teach for faculty.
- Committee member comment: It seems like we are trying to clarify our own definition, and what should go into these forms to provide greater clarity to not only us and ODE in terms of what we are evaluating, but the instructors who are submitting these forms. For example, regarding the topic of prerecorded lectures, could we have verbiage in the cover sheet about including videos made by the instructor that respond to the specificities of the course that semester? Instructors could provide additional videos with added elements of RSI with context, connections, and questions to consider.

In subcommittee review, we have also looked at forms that say the instructor will monitor weekly discussions, but this does not necessarily mean that they are engaging with students. Could we include some language on the RSI guidance website that weekly discussion as a way of incorporating RSI means not only looking the discussions over but responding to students and giving them comments? We acknowledge that this could be happening, but it is not always clear on the documentation that we receive. We struggle with articulating feedback that there should be a constant back and forth between instructors and students. It does not necessarily need to be three hours per student, but the course proposal must signal that the instructor will interact with students in a number of ways.

- Committee member comment: We are talking about a wide range of classes, so interaction, feedback, and engagement can look different. It is the role of the subcommittee looking at the proposal to determine whether it covers “substantial” in the particular field for the course in question. I would strengthen the use of “engages” and “substantial” because it is not clear what that could mean.

- Committee member comment: We need to provide instructors with more detailed guidance on what we expect in the DL cover sheet, specifically regarding their explanation of how they are interacting with students. While we currently state that engagement is required and must be substantive, it's important to expand on these expectations
- Nagar: Imagine a 200-person class that meets in person with the instructor and five TAs. How substantive is the feedback students are getting in that case?
 - Committee member comment: I teach a class in person with 200 people. Yes, it is substantial work, and it is different from when I teach the class with 40 people, but one has to manage. Instructors must ensure that their students do not feel shortchanged. This guide is important for the departments to self-regulate and self-control, but also for the faculty to understand what is expected of them. It gives the faculty involved in the review process an understanding of the intent.
 - Committee member comment: I teach a 600-person section of a course with seven TAs who do recitation. I answer emails from all of the students, and I host launch seminar interview sessions across the semester. The time I spend interacting with students in this large of a class is nearly equal to that of teaching another full-time course.
- Committee member comment: If an instructor is teaching 250 students and gives 5 minutes to each student every week, that is 20 hours. It does not happen. We curate the experience and bundle that time into things like office hours to control interaction. Feedback is not necessarily individual, so we have to be careful that we are not asking for more in an online setting than we would in those larger conversations.
 - Committee member comment: We should ask the same. Some instructors are doing substantially less.
- Committee member comment: I agree that we do not want the really conscientious instructors reading these forms to increase their workload when they are already doing something fantastic. What we are aiming for is clear, consistent guidance for both reviewers and instructors. We are hearing that subcommittees are approaching this differently, which is partly due to the fact that we are still learning and refining the process as we apply it. I am not sure that this is a language problem as much as communication issue. We need to develop practices that we can agree on.
 - Martin: The challenge is implementation when courses are actually taught once they are created. I think that some instructors put in that initial additional effort to create an online course and its lectures, then just sit back. Part of this is related to simply not understanding what substantive interaction means in practice, which is a more department level or discipline specific problem.
- Committee member comment: One of the reasons that the language has to be so vague is because we have courses come through where the materials and videos

were not created by the instructor, but the substantive interaction was in their curation and guidance of the work. We also get courses where instructors are incorporating RSI with lectures they record each semester, so the document has to encompass a variety of ways that RSI can be achieved.

- Committee member comment: Sometimes we are trying to solve really complex issues with a form. It seems like what the website needs is some well-produced, brief videos with faculty who are addressing these issues on online teaching. They can talk about the class they are teaching and how they meet RSI requirements. I know that would be a lot of work, but it seems like we need to unflatten the situation and give actual examples.
 - Vankeerbergen: The Office of Distance Education needs to be a part of this discussion. For example, the website those videos would potentially go on is their website. We should have this conversation with them present.
 - Committee member comment: We discussed this with them last year and they did have a number of resources and videos on their website. I think the problem is that sometimes their resources do not align with the ways and timelines in which faculty develop courses.
- Committee member comment: I think the bigger problem is that the DL sheet is not reviewed by the subcommittees. We should make units aware that information in the cover sheet is part of the submission and review process.
 - Committee member question: The forms are very useful when it comes to review in the subcommittees. What we struggle with is instructors not providing enough information for us to use the guidelines. What are the mechanisms by which we can solicit the information we need to assess the RSI in terms of our guidelines?
 - Nagar: Perhaps this is where ODE comes into the conversation to give us some direction. Why are these courses coming to subcommittees without ODE intervening in ways that would be productive for the reviewers managing courses?
- Committee member comment: I would recommend that we make a smaller working group of people who want to be a part of this conversation and talk about the problems we are seeing outside of the main ASCC meetings. Then that group could bring back their thoughts to the full committee so that we can better use the time here.
- Steele: This conversation started with ODE reaching out to me about DL review, so in the meantime could we communicate to them that we would appreciate their staff looking at the DL form from the perspective of the subcommittees? That is, asking the question of whether an instructor's example of RSI could potentially be executed in a hands-off way that is not actually meeting the standard. If so, they return it and ask for more information. For example, if an instructor includes information in the DL cover sheet that they will monitor discussions as needed, ODE will ask for more details (e.g., the instructor will monitor discussion at least once a week and provide comments to students).

- Committee member comment: ODE seems to view the cover sheet as information that is there for the subcommittees to assess, and the subcommittees think that a DL cover sheet signed by ODE means that the distance aspect of the course must be fine, so it is really not being thoroughly reviewed.
 - Steele: ODE provides comments back to the unit that submitted the course, but the unit is not required to make those changes. There have been cases where ODE has recommended something, and the subcommittee will then require the ODE feedback to be addressed if they think it is important.
 - Nagar: We need more guidance from ODE about the form. Subcommittees need to be able to know when ODE does not think a course meets RSI standards or has comments that they would really like to see more information.
 - Committee member comment: It has been helpful in the past when ODE provides comments encouraging instructors to build an idea and make it more visible to students in the syllabus, which also makes it visible to the reviewers.
 - Nagar: We will close this discussion for now and bring back a summary of what we have to the committee when necessary.
4. Revision to the Master of Arts Art Education (Online) (Guest: Dana Kletchka)
- Art and Humanities 2 Subcommittee Letter: On January 10, 2025, the Arts and Humanities 2 Subcommittee reviewed a request from the Department of Art Education to revise the Online MA in Art Education. The revision was based on a curricular review by the department's Digital Learning Committee and included student feedback over the years. The proposed revisions (summarized below) are an effort to better respond to the program's more diverse student population:
 - The addition of ARTEDUC 7708 (Universal Design for Learning: Disability Studies and Art Education) as a required course (vs. its current role as a 6-wk elective)
 - A reduction in the overall number of required courses for greater curricular flexibility (from 18 CH to 12 CH)
 - The expansion of the number of electives (from 6 CH to 12 CH)

The overall number of credit-hours in the Online MA remains the same. The A&H2 Subcommittee voted unanimously to approve the request with three contingencies. Those items have since been addressed by the unit and the proposal is now advanced to the ASCC with a motion to approve.
 - Martin: The proposal mentions that the population of students in the program is changing. Have you seen an expansion of people interested?
 - Kletchka: It used to be mostly people who were teaching, and their schools would pay for them to come back and do additional hours. Now there are more people with bachelor's degrees in art education or visual arts who are interested in working in museum education or community settings. It correlates greatly with

our undergraduate minor in arts management. There seems to be a growing population or growing opportunity for people to work in arts centers or nonprofits, so more people are interested in taking that base knowledge and moving up.

- Art and Humanities 2 Subcommittee Letter, Crocetta; unanimously approved.
5. Informational Item: BA, BS, and Minor - Biology (I. Nagar)
- Nagar: The Center for Life Sciences Education submitted the following changes to the Biology Major and Minor to be implemented in the Summer 2025 semester:
 - Allow the combination of Biology 1111 and 1112 to satisfy the same requirement as 1113 in all areas of the Major and Minor.
 - Update advising sheets to allow EEOB 2511 wherever 2510 was previously approved, since the Department of Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology (EEOB) has replaced their Human Anatomy course, EEOB 2510, with a new course, EEOB 2511, and will cease offering the previous version as of Spring 2025.
 - For both the BA and BS in the Life Science Education Specialization, add an additional checkbox option in the area of Ecology for the Pick 2 Additional Major Coursework. These courses are to include EEOB 3270, 3410, 3420, and 4240.
 - For all Specializations of the Biology BA, add Math 1120 AND 1121 as an option to fulfill the Mathematics Supporting Course requirement. This combination is considered the de facto equivalent of Math 1075 through 1150 and therefore mirrors other previously approved options.
 - For all Specializations of the Biology BA and BS, allow the ‘stretch’ version of the existing supporting course, Physics 1250, as the two-semester version of Physics 1248 and 1249.
 - For all Specializations of the Biology BS, allow the ‘stretch’ version of the existing supporting course, Math 1151, as the two-semester version of the combination Math 1140 and 1141.
 - Correct an error in a recently approved proposal affecting the Biology Minor. In the proposal, a discrepancy exists between the proposal and the advising sheet relative to the required Core Course options. Students completing the Minor will not be required to complete the Capstone course, Biology 4901. The advising sheet mistakenly included this course despite the proposal explicitly indicating the course would be required only of the Biology Major.
6. Informational Item: Theatre BA, Lima Campus (I. Nagar)
- Nagar: Due to enrollment trends and program sustainability, the Lima campus will discontinue offering the Bachelor of Arts in Theatre. The Theatre Minor will continue to be available on the Lima campus, ensuring that students can still engage with and explore the performing arts. The Theatre Major will be removed from their list of degree options as they move into the next recruitment cycle. If

students arrive in AU25, they will continue to offer the program for the duration of their time on campus.

7. Informational Item: Sociology PhD Goals and Outcomes (I. Nagar)

- Nagar: The Department of Sociology has made recent changes to the learning goals and outcomes for their doctoral program. These changes arose from the adoption of a new method for assessing dissertations with a multi-dimensional rubric. Prior to the development of the new dissertation rubric, the doctoral program's goals referred to three broad categories: Core Knowledge, Research Skills, and Professional. More specific and measurable learning outcomes were added to the existing program goals.

8. Concurrence (A. Martin)

- Martin: There have been questions about how the process of concurrence will work with the Chase Center as they develop courses that would overlap with what we do in our college. Currently, if another unit offers a course that is deemed to overlap with our subject area, OAA is great about identifying that and ask ASC to provide concurrence when needed. My expectation is that this would apply for any courses in the Chase Center. That is all I know right now. Concurrence happens all the time, but it does not always work perfectly. We have had cases where units develop courses with significant overlap and pushback is successful.
 - Committee member comment: Concurrence is more a raising of a concern than a block. Oftentimes units have to agree to disagree, and it does not always go in our favor. I am not aware of examples where a course was not offered because of a concurrence issue.
- Committee member comment: One of the Themes Subcommittees saw a course where two units had not concurred, and the instructor made significant changes to the course based on the feedback in the concurrence letters.
- Martin: There was a situation where the Department of Physiology in the College of Medicine proposed a course that overlapped with a big EEOB course, and they withdrew it. Ultimately, if there is a concurrence disagreement, the issue goes to Randy Smith, and he tries to have a conversation with the units. He would make the final decision if there was really a contentious issue.
 - Committee member comment: A discussion to find a way that makes both sides happy is the ideal, but if one side is not agreeable there is nothing we can do except hope that Randy Smith steps in.
- Committee member comment: One of the reasons I wanted this body to discuss the topic of concurrence is because it is very important to know which parties are traditionally involved in concurrence conversations. Would an entity that is not housed within any college have the operational infrastructure to actually be requested for concurrence? For example, what if Student Life got involved in concurrence issues? How can we keep concurrence to be between the curricular processes of colleges?
 - Martin: If a unit is offering courses, they will be involved in concurrence. This includes the Chase Center.

- Committee member comment: Historically, we have not had a unit that is not a TIU offer concurrence.
 - Vankeerbergen: I have noticed a shift over the years, and this is a good opportunity to reclarify this. We never used to ask Centers for concurrences because they were not TIUs. Over time, units started involving centers in concurrence conversations. If you think this needs to be redefined than maybe that should be a conversation.
 - Martin: I can ask Randy Smith for clarification. My take is that it is a messy process, but it works right now. I will say that both the divisional deans and I play boundary maintenance with other units.
 - Committee member comment: I would assume that if we have to ask for concurrence from the Chase Center, then the reverse is also true. That expectation has to be clear.

9. Update on Senate Bill 1/House Bill 6 (A. Martin)

- Martin: Everyone is aware that Ohio Senate Bill 1 passed and now it is at the House. I want to talk about a few things in the Bill that affect the work we do. There has been concern about our Race, Ethnicity and Gender Diversity GE Foundation category and courses, but after conversation with David Horn it does not look like there is anything in SB1 that would preclude us from continuing the work that we are doing in terms of REGD or Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World. That is not to say that other things will not come up that would potentially be threatening, so we will continue to monitor. As of right now, we will move forward.

SB 1 also includes a civics requirement, which we know the Chase Center likely sees as an opportunity. We have many units including History, Political Science, and Philosophy developing courses in this area that we would like to get through and on the books in order to stake out ground. We ask concurrence from units that have courses and since the Chase Center has no courses, there is no need to seek concurrence with them at this point.

Lastly, there is a provision in SB1 regarding small undergraduate majors that graduate less than 5 students yearly. We have had conversations with some units including NESAs that have several small majors, and the idea is that we would combine them into an undergraduate degree with different tracks. Another example, the Italian major and the Italian Studies major would be rolled into one Italian major. We will be seeing programs combining and creating tracks and we will rely on Randy Smith for guidance on getting approval.

- Committee member comment: I worry that the reason REGD has not been a part of SB1 is because they do not know about it.
 - Martin: There is obviously a lot of concern, but the university notes that the Bill is that it is not focusing on anything about DEI in the academic

space. It has been all about staffing. So that issue has not yet come to the surface.

- Committee member comment: Regarding the civics requirement, I am concerned about the way in which the course idea at the state level gets replicated with the narrow imagining of that course at the university level. I do not think that History, Political Science, and Philosophy should be tasked with getting courses approved for this; it should be much more expansive. If we are thinking about this in terms of general education, every unit should be able to offer these courses. Having a general education mentality could counter the limited conception of civic literacy.
 - Martin: We would welcome other units to offer those courses. The specific units mentioned are the places thinking about it most explicitly, but there is no reason that other units cannot offer these types of courses.
- Committee member comment: We need to have an REGD and even Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World course that engages the requirement.
 - Martin: Our goal is to have this course live outside the existing General Education program because if it lives within a GE category, then all of the other courses in that category will be gone..

10. Subcommittee Reports

- Arts and Humanities 1
 - Arts and Sciences 2798.03 – approved
 - Music 3401.35 – approved
 - Near Eastern Languages and Cultures 3804 – approved with contingency
- Arts and Humanities 2
 - Arts and Sciences 1137.xx (Johnson) – approved with contingency
 - Music 7770 – approved
 - Scandinavian 3270 – approved
 - Theatre 4500 – approved
- Natural and Mathematical Sciences
 - N/A
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
 - Arts and Sciences 1137.xx (Kogan) – approved
 - Political Science 3620 – approved
- Race, Ethnicity and Gender Diversity
 - N/A
- Themes 1
 - Comparative Studies 4645 – approved
 - Earth Sciences 5242 – approved with contingency
- Themes 2
 - N/A