**Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee**

Unapproved Minutes

Friday, January 31st, 2025 9:00AM – 11:00AM

University 156

**Attendees**: Bitters, Cole, Cravens-Brown, Crocetta, Daly, Dugdale, Dwyer, Fletcher, Hilty, Jenkins, Lee, Martin, Nagar, Nathanson, Neff, Ottesen, Podalsky, Smith, Steele, Vaessin, Vankeerbergen, Wickham-Saxon, Xiao

1. Revision to the ASL Minor (Guest: Kristen Wickham-Saxon)
	* Arts and Humanities Subcommittee 2 Letter: The Arts and Humanities Subcommittee 2 reviewed a request from the American Sign Language (ASL) program to revise the ASL minor. The program has grown exponentially and undergone significant expansion of curriculum and personnel since minor was first approved in 2020. Thus, the program wishes to recognize those changes by updating the minor in the following ways:
		+ Reduction of the required number of courses in the core (by 3 credit-hours, from 9 to 6 credit-hours)
		+ Expansion of the number of elective courses taken by students (by 3 credit-hours, from 3 to 6 credit-hours)
		+ Adding new courses to the electives category (including a study-abroad option up to 6 credit-hours)
		+ Deleting 3 courses from the elective category

The Arts and Humanities Subcommittee 2 voted unanimously to approve the request with a motion to approve.

* + Arts and Humanities Subcommittee 2 Letter, Vaessin; unanimously approved.
1. Approval of 12-06-2024 Minutes
	* Committee member comment: I do not think that certain comments from the last meeting were reflected in the minutes when we were talking about General Education review. I was looking for it to refresh my memory on some of the acronyms being used, and I did not find the discussion in the minutes. I feel that it should be included as it was a key point of discussion that I found very important.
		+ Committee member comment: I called to have a broader discussion of how concurrences are made. I also brought up that the Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Diversity Subcommittee (REGD) is not receiving much work now and feels like it is becoming a wasted resource. Given that the Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World Theme has the idea of diversity within it, there is an affinity between the category and REGD that I would like to discuss.
		+ Committee member comment: I agree that it makes sense to revisit.
		+ Vankeerbergen: That is a point of discussion in the next update.
	* Cravens-Brown, Fletcher; approved with two abstentions.
2. Informational Item: TAGS/Themes Subcommittees (I. Nagar)
	* Nagar: As it stands, the current two Themes Subcommittees and eight Themes Advisory Groups (TAGs) review different Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs) for each Themes course request. We propose that the process use rubrics prepared in consultation with the Themes Subcommittee and TAG Chairs to streamline the GE approval process by providing precise and objective guidelines for course approval. We also propose to subsume the eight TAGs into two enlarged Themes Subcommittees. Currently, there are two Themes Subcommittees and eight Theme Advisory Groups with a membership of five to eight faculty each. This leads to a total of 49-51 faculty members in the TAGs and an additional 10 faculty members who serve on Themes Subcommittees 1 and 2. This proposal would change the number of faculty members from 59-61 to 16-24, as they each would have a membership of 8-12 faculty members representing the College of Arts and Sciences (ASC) with at least three members representing non-ASC units. Both of these motions passed at the University Level Advisory Committee (ULAC).
	* Martin: We only had one Themes Subcommittee to start off.
		+ Nagar: Yes, and we divided them into two because of the number of course requests that we were receiving. When the process started, there were so many courses that wanted to convert to the needs of the New General Education. That process is now far reduced, which is one of the inspiring reasons for making this change.
	* Committee member question: Who will develop these rubrics?
		+ Nagar: It will be a collaborative effort between ASCCAS, Meg Daly’s office, and me.
		+ Daly: The Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) had a first pass at them and now that this motion has gone through, we will share the rubrics with the Themes Subcommittees and TAGs to edit and revise. We have a draft that starts with the Theme ELOs, and hopefully these reviewing bodies can revise the rubrics this semester in their normally scheduled meeting times now that the workload is lighter.
	* Committee member question: Are these rubrics meant to serve as the basis for helping programs with their assessment?
		+ Daly: They could, but it will not be required. That said, working with rubrics to develop the courses should make assessment more straightforward.
	* Committee member question: You mentioned a first draft written by someone in OAA, but is it not mostly the TAG and Themes Subcommittee Chairs that should include what they have been looking for in Themes courses?
		+ Daly: OAA took a first pass with the ELOs, and I tried to put notes of expectations that often come up at the Themes meetings because I sit in on all of them. This is just a starter to encapsulate where the reviewers are coming from.
	* Nagar: ULAC also discussed who will make up these Themes Subcommittees because it is important that they represent all of the university, not just the College of Arts and Sciences. That is something we are going to be very mindful of as we go forward so that the General Education is not only an ASC process, but it also involves the entire faculty of the university.
		+ Committee member comment: That is against the rules of the university. The General Education is the domain of the College of Arts and Sciences.
		+ Daly: Arts and Sciences would still have a voting majority on the reconfigured Themes Subcommittees.
	* Committee member question: How will GE assessment will work in terms of these rubrics?
		+ Daly: These rubrics will be shared with people working in assessment and could be adapted and used, but that is a separate process. They would have these resources and could use them as they deem appropriate.
	* Committee member comment: We mention ULAC, but ULAC has never been integrated into the administrative structures of the university. There is no record of meetings, minutes, or agendas. So, when we get informational items that come from ULAC it is harder to determine how decisions are made and who is making these decisions. This proposal to some extent was introduced to us as very necessary while we were making the New General Education, and it is hard when things that should be determined by this body are being determined at another level. In this climate, I would really like to have a paper trail of an actual proposal rather than an informational item because we are being asked to change our processes (even if it is based on something that, if we could see the whole picture, might be better).
		+ Nagar: This proposal came from ASCC a couple of meetings ago.
	* Committee member question: Why did the proposal need to go to ULAC then?
		+ Daly: The next thing I am doing with the vote of ULAC is to take it to the Council on Academic Affairs (CAA) at the February 19th meeting. The recommendation of ULAC per its charge from CAA is to deal with implementation of the GE. ULAC received this proposal from this body, voted on it, and is taking that recommendation to CAA.
	* Committee member question: Who is on the ULAC body, from which constituency?
		+ Daly: There are members from ASC per the agreement for staffing the body, and there are representatives of other colleges per those recommendations from leadership, typically the Curricular Dean and the ASC Divisional Deans. The Chair of the ASC faculty senate is offered an ex officio seat that not been taken for the last two years. There is very much a presence in shaping the discussion that has been less visible lately, but that is at the body’s discretion. I take your point that the agendas and minutes of ULAC should be accessible via the CAA website.
		+ Committee member comment: I think archiving is important and I am asking these questions with the intention of ensuring that decisions are made through the channels that have been established.
	* Committee member question: At this level, did we vote on the proposal?
		+ Nagar: It was not a proposal; it was an informational item.
	* Committee member question: How do we get an informational item to become a vote to be presented to CAA?
		+ Committee member comment: What you are bringing up is important, especially since these Subcommittees change membership. It is good to have continuity and the ability to look back and connect dots, not just from our memory but from an actual process.
	* Committee member comment: I would move that we have a proposal that is voted on by this body first, so we delay everything until we know what is in the proposal. Unless someone can give me a written or very detailed verbal account of what was the information item.
		+ Vankeerbergen: It is in the minutes. It was presented verbally so it should be in the minutes of the meeting.
	* Committee member comment: I just do not think that anything should be voted on at ULAC that is not voted on here.
	* Committee member comment: We are meeting again on the 14th, and my suggestion would be that we actually write something and have it for the next meeting.
	* Committee member question: So, what exactly is the proposal?
		+ Vankeerbergen: From my perspective, it is organizational. We have two Themes Subcommittees and several TAGs that basically float in and out of the Subcommittee meetings. Sometimes we have situations when the TAG Chairs do not show up to meetings or there are complications getting a vote. It has become hard to manage. In addition to that, having a multiplicity of people leads to a multiplicity of opinions that make the interpretation of Goals and ELOs difficult for the units to understand, which has contributed to the need to have rubrics. Finally, having to recruit faculty members for all those various TAG and subcommittee positions is very difficult and not tenable long-term.
	* Committee member question: How does that relate to the expansion of the Themes Subcommittees?
		+ Vankeerbergen: We have eight Themes, so each Themes Subcommittee has four Themes to discuss, and we want to have members who are experts in the Themes they review. Right now, our Themes Subcommittees have five members, so that becomes very thin. Also, faculty from the other colleges want to be a part of the conversation (e.g., Health Sciences would want to be a part of the conversation for the Health and Wellbeing Theme). Since we need expertise, we cannot just have five members anymore.
		+ Daly: TAG Chairs are also not always available for the Subcommittee meetings because all the TAGs do not have work even every month. The workload is much more chaotic for the TAGs. They have to be bigger so that there are always people available when courses need reviewed.
	* Committee member comment: I completely understand the rationale for the TAGs, but it is the Themes that I do not understand, especially in relation to Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World.
		+ Daly: The current Themes Subcommittee consists of five reviewers. That is four ASC faculty and one faculty from outside ASC. They review the ELOs that are common to all the Themes, then the Theme Advisory Group reviews the ELOs that are specific to the Theme, and they have a conversation about it. The tricky part is when consistency comes in if there is overlap (e.g., is this advanced in the discipline?). We are proposing to collapse this structure so that there would be someone among the faculty on the Subcommittee with Citizenship expertise, or Health and Wellbeing expertise, etc. The Subcommittees would have four Theme content areas with faculty who would review *all* the ELOs and some who would have disciplinary expertise who would be able to say that this is cutting edge, or it is peripheral. A course would need to be interpretable by everyone in the Subcommittee to pass rather than only needing to be legible by experts in the discipline.
		+ Vankeerbergen: I will also say that in the case of the REGD Subcommittee, it is a cohesive group. At times, that has been missing for the Themes Subcommittees because of floating members and members who roll off because their term is over. Under the new configuration, each Themes Subcommittee would be more of a working group of people that have the same standards.
	* Committee member comment: I do not necessarily understand how the conflation of the group necessitates an expansion beyond the college, beyond what is already established.
		+ Daly: It does not in the sense that it is now five ASC faculty and one non-ASC faculty on each Themes Subcommittee. We are talking about keeping this proportion similar.
		+ There is flexibility in the exact numbers, but we will increase the number of members to maintain the ASC representation so that no single college will control a Theme. Under the current configuration, it is actually more likely that one college could control a Theme. We want to make space for there to be opportunities for units outside of ASC; they just have to understand that they are committing to all of the meetings and will be doing work outside of their narrow discipline. We will probably not have takers for all of the possible spots because it is a large workload.
	* Committee member comment: Being on these Subcommittees does serve an informational purpose back to units and back to colleges. One person rarely is able to just take over the opinions of 12 other people, but they do get feedback about what exactly the GE is and what we think of as Themes. There is an educational component for the faculty members as well.
		+ Daly: I think when we have had non-ASC faculty chairing a TAG, they have learned so much and their colleges have benefited in a way that the quality of course proposals are more aligned. ASC really sets the standard for the GE.
	* Committee member comment: In the contexts of ULAC and the ASC Faculty Senate, there is a feeling of frustration from faculty about the number of Subcommittees that touch their course and the different cycles of feedback and revisions that they have to go through. With this proposal, we are going from three separate review processes for a new course to two, and I think this will streamline the process and reduce frustration among our colleagues.
	* Committee member comment: This is a fundamental change and yes, based on the rules of the university, ASC has control over the General Education. It is important that we actually have a formal vote on the document that goes forward.
		+ Committee member comment: I support the idea of a formal vote. Having been involved in this committee when we were first developing these structures, the actual breakdown of representation on those committees was very important to us. I think it should be not just proportion, but laid out very clearly how many members from other colleges will be represented.
		+ Daly: I would encourage us to not be super prescriptive. I think proportions are practical because not every college has the bandwidth to have a member be a part of the process.
		+ Committee member comment: Maybe there is a contingency where if someone chooses not to have a seat at the table, we know how this will be handled.
	* Committee member comment: The ASCC Subcommittees are under the patterns of administration of the Arts and Sciences Faculty Senate. As we make this change, we need to be aware that there are other parties involved.
	* Committee member comment: I would like to reiterate that the Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Diversity Subcommittee has had a very minimal workload and anything that can secure the longevity of REGD within our GE is important. My proposal would be to include a member of the REGD Subcommittee on the new Themes Subcommittees that will review GEN Theme Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World courses so that the “Diversity” aspect of that Theme is well represented and to have a bridge with the REGD Foundation. Considering that we need to realign the Themes Subcommittees’ structures because of streamlining and workload, how can REGD Subcommittee members be of use and how can we affirm Foundational expertise within the Theme?
		+ Committee member comment: I would push back on the idea of encoding any of the particular Foundations into the Themes Subcommittees. If no one were available, could we then still have that Subcommittee? Can one of the Foundations be required to have expertise and the others not? We have many Themes and Foundations, and it becomes an administrative nightmare if we start having those overlap.
		+ Daly: One proposal could be that instead of a service commitment to only REGD, faculty would do part of their service time on REGD and part on the Themes Subcommittee that includes Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World. Also, usually faculty members can only serve on one Subcommittee at a time. It may be appropriate to have someone from REGD act as a non-voting consult that attends meetings when Citizenship courses are discussed to make sure that aspects of diversity along with foundational concepts are covered.

In terms of the reduction in workload for the REGD Subcommittee, units have done hard work for almost four years and are taking a moment to see where there are gaps in their curriculum.

* + Vankeerbergen: Does this all need written up to be voted on? What exactly is next?
		- Daly: We have the motion that was presented at ULAC. We could add friendly amendments to it pertaining to how you want to staff the Themes Subcommittees.
		- Vankeerbergen: We can take the draft minutes from ULAC and share them with this committee at the next meeting.
1. Informational Item: World Language and the GEN (I. Nagar)
	* Nagar: Courses taught in a world language are eligible to be GEN Foundations or Themes courses, and departments offering appropriate courses are encouraged to consider whether participating in the GEN will support their programmatic goals. These courses cannot be restricted to specific majors or minors or be unavailable to students who are heritage speakers of the language. Because of the expectation that GE courses be accessible to a broad and general audience, proficiency or prerequisite expectations cannot exceed the GE Foundation three course sequences.
	* Committee member question: Could someone describe a scenario where a GE course could be taught in another language in terms of course numbers?
		+ Nagar: We have the Hindi 1101-1103 sequence, but Hindi 2104 is currently not offered at our institution. It is offered through the Big Ten Academic Alliance. For students who have completed Hindi 1103 or students who are heritage speakers, I could propose a new course that is a GEN Theme Traditions, Cultures, and Transformations class taught primarily in Hindi.
	* Daly: This is also an equity issue for students in the languages, especially because the languages are very popular with double majors. Facilitating overlap with the GE for languages really should help students who are double majoring build their proficiency through GE courses.
	* Committee member question: Was there any talk in these former discussions about how these courses could be considered a High-Impact Practice?
		+ Daly: There was conversation about the high-impact component, but there was also concern about requiring language courses to be four credits. What if someone wants to teach a children’s literature course in Italian and they just want to keep teaching that three credit course that is LVPA aligned? Does it now have to be realigned to a Theme? They do not *have* to go that route, but they certainly could enrich a Themes course with culturally relevant language content for that extra credit.

This will also be a way to pull enrollment and support students. For example, military associated students can only take courses if they count towards their degree and if they are not majoring in a language, they are not taking language courses beyond degree requirements. Making these more degree applicable expands the pool of students.

* + Vankeerbergen: When I shared this at a staff meeting, someone brought up a hypothetical scenario where a bilingual professor of engineering might want to teach a course in Spanish. We have assumed teaching in a foreign language is for the language departments because they know the pedagogy, but once you open this door it will be interpreted differently.
		- Daly: I think that would be amazing if there was enrollment. They would just need to obtain concurrence from the language department. These courses can originate in other departments, but they need concurrence. There will also be expectations for these courses in terms of the student experience and pedagogy beyond simply teaching in a language.
		- Committee member comment: If an instructor does not have expertise teaching in that language, they should not be able to do so without the proper training. I think it is important to include the notion that you may be an expert in your field and be bilingual, but that does not mean that you can *teach* a language. Instructors teaching these courses should be from the World Language departments to ensure proper training in the pedagogy of language instruction. While I would expect that most students in these courses will have a high proficiency, one of the components here is that the courses should be open for students who have simply passed the 1103 language course and are now expected to deal with complex issues while perhaps also struggling with the language.
		- Daly: This clarification should be taken back to ULAC as an amendment to the decision.
1. Informational Item: Update to the Translation and Interpretation Certificate (I. Nagar)
	1. Nagar: The Translation and Interpretation Certificate is adding a course to their core courses. This will make availability of courses more flexible, offer students a broader palette of courses, and offer a language specific option to fulfill the core courses requirement for the certificate.
2. Discussion of writing pre-requisites in Themes courses (I. Nagar)
	* Nagar: The Themes Subcommittees are receiving courses that have substantial writing and research requirements (e.g., a 15- or 20-page paper) with no Writing and Information Literacy prerequisite (or English 1110). Generally, we discourage GE courses from having prerequisites, but should we be asking these courses to have a writing prerequisite since they are requiring students to write so much?
	* Committee member comment: In order to take a Themes class, can we require or recommend this Foundational course that students already have to take anyway?
		+ Martin: I think that, when appropriate, this is an opportunity to scaffold the Foundations into the Themes, because the Foundations are at a lower level.
	* Committee member comment: We had this conversation in Themes 1, and there are departments who basically have dropped writing prerequisites and assume that students come in with that knowledge. We have had courses where 75% of the grade was writing assignments with no prerequisite or evidence that the student would receive any writing instruction other than sending them to the Writing Center. I think this is unacceptable for a course at the Themes level and I am not sure that a recommendation is sufficient. There should have to be at least a statement that a foundational writing course is a prerequisite. Otherwise, instructors will spend a lot of time working with the potentially few students who are not properly prepared, and they have to teach those students proper writing.
	* Committee member question: Who determines if the prerequisite is necessary? Would it be the instructor or faculty in the curricular review? And could it then be a contingency?
		+ Nagar: It would be the Themes Subcommittees that decide this and potentially the instructor if they are already aware.
	* Committee member question: If the Themes Subcommittee sees this, are we allowed to make it a contingency?
		+ Committee member comment: We already make a point of saying that if there is substantial research in a Themes course, it must be specified where a student is learning the necessary skills. We have said that this can be addressed through prerequisites or including it as an element of the class. I think this situation is exactly the same.
	* Committee member question: So where is the Advanced Writing Embedded Literacy in all this?
		+ Martin: All departments are required to have their majors take an Advanced Writing Embedded Literacy course. If departments are strategic, these courses that have substantial writing components would be the Advanced Writing Embedded Literacy. This is an opportunity to create a course with writing instruction that builds on the Foundation.
	* Committee member question: Are there any other prerequisites that have existed for GE courses or is this the first scenario? Also, what about classes that have already been approved? Do we give a blanket announcement to faculty or units who are teaching these courses to touch base and think about implementing a prerequisite?
		+ Steele: There is a significant number of Themes courses that have a prerequisite or require the completion of a Foundation. They are not banned in the GE.
	* Committee member comment: To my second point, given that the New GE is less than five years old, perhaps it would not be too cumbersome to reach out to those other courses that have already been approved.
		+ Martin: The challenge might be figuring out which courses those are. It might be more of a blanket email saying we are encouraging this prerequisite for courses with high writing demand if units want to implement it.
	* Vankeerbergen: This mostly affects History courses which were previously requiring English 1110. The Department of History is gradually removing that prerequisite as they submit courses. This internal departmental decision affects all their courses at the 2000 and 3000 level, whether or not they are Themes courses.
	* Nagar: Is it possible that this becomes a recommendation to courses that are already approved and a contingency for courses that are coming in with significant writing demands?
		+ Committee member comment: I would be more comfortable with it as a recommendation if the submitting faculty disagree that they need the prerequisite.
	* Committee member comment: I respect if the faculty in History decide that they do no want this as a prerequisite, but then they also have to consider including an instructional component in their courses and I think it is fair to ask for that evidence. It could that many of them are already doing this and just have not updated the syllabus.
	* Nagar: I have reservations about putting more pressure on faculty when they are proposing courses. I come from a department that constantly struggles with enrollments. To ask our GE courses to have prerequisites does put extra pressure on us. I am not denying that students need to be more informed about writing, but I want us to be conscious of other factors here.
	* Committee member comment: I would vote that this be a recommendation because we can always revisit this later if we do not think that is enough.
	* Committee member question: What is the definition of writing intensive? If the Themes Subcommittees are determining this, we need to ensure consistency when we apply the recommendation.
		+ Committee member comment: It is going to be situational because if the writing support is done within a course, we will not be concerned. It will be different with each syllabus as we look at what is being asked of the students and if they will be prepared for it.
	* Committee member comment: Coming back to the idea of approved courses, I would like to know if there is an option for units to opt in to this idea of a prerequisite for their writing intensive courses. I do not think that the number of people who are going to do this will be as huge as one might imagine, but this gives people the option to think about it. This also helps with the issue of figuring out which courses need this prerequisite.
		+ Martin: I can also raise this at the next Director of Undergraduate Studies meeting just as an announcement.
	* Committee member comment: Data around how students move through the GE would be very helpful here.
		+ Daly: We can see that once students graduate, so we should start getting data on these things beginning this summer. Unfortunately, we can only see this retroactively.
	* Committee member question: How big of a problem is this? Are students already taking their Writing and Information Literacy Foundation before their Themes courses? I would not want to make this a contingency if this is a problem for a really small number of students.
		+ Steele: Most students take English 1110 in their first two semesters if they do not come with credit for it, which a lot of students do.
		+ Committee member comment: The students that come with credit are often the ones that struggle because they are taking a Themes course in their first year and need a lot of instruction. Still, I would in some sense prefer that this becomes just a recommendation that support is built in around writing.
3. Update on RSI (I. Nagar)
	1. Tabled.
4. Concurrence (I. Nagar)
	1. Tabled.
5. Subcommittee Updates
	* Arts and Humanities 1
		+ Comparative Studies 3007 – approved
		+ French 3503 – approved
		+ German 3510 – approved
		+ Music 2471 – approved
		+ Music 2475 – approved
		+ Music 3580 – approved
	* Arts and Humanities 2
		+ ACCAD 7893 – approved with contingency
		+ Art Education 5797.04 – approved
		+ CLLC 3191 – approved
		+ History of Art 4030 – approved
		+ Music 6850 – approved
	* Natural and Mathematical Sciences
		+ Biology 1111 – approved
		+ Biology 1112 – approved
		+ Chemistry 3573 – approved
		+ Earth Sciences 2207 – approved
	* Social and Behavioral Sciences
		+ Political Science 4322 – approved
		+ Psychology 2750S – approved with contingency
	* Race, Ethnicity and Gender Diversity
		+ Comparative Studies 2342 – approved with contingency
	* Themes I
		+ AAAS 3080 – approved with contingency
		+ History 2202 – approved with contingency
		+ History 2220 – approved with contingency
		+ History 3080 – approved with contingency
	* Themes II
		+ Comparative Studies 4597.02 – approved with contingency
		+ French 3803 – approved
		+ History 2272 – approved with contingency
		+ History 3252 – approved with contingency
		+ History 3570 – approved
		+ South Asia Studies 3635 – approved
		+ WGSS 4404 – approved with contingency