

To: Faculty Senate Executive Committee
From: University Curriculum Committee
Date: September 19, 2015
Re: UCC Report on Integrated Work with DCAC/2015-2016 Goals

In spring 2015, Faculty Senate endorsed a process for revising the charges of the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) and the Drake Curriculum Analysis Committee (DCAC). This endorsement requires UCC to “review and amend (as necessary) any proposed changes and forward a report to Senate Exec” by October 2015. Here is the required report.

The original motion stated two main goals: to “make the work of the two Committees more integrated, intentional and meaningful” and to “stress the importance of service on these two vital committees.” To begin a conversation about these goals, the incoming chairs of DCAC and UCC, Eric Manley, Associate Professor of Computer Science, and Megan Brown, Associate Professor of English, met with Associate Provost Arthur Sanders; Director of Institutional Research and Assessment Kevin Saunders; and Assessment Coordinator Michelle Rogers. The group discussed several possibilities for coordinating meetings, workload, and processes for UCC and DCAC, and then talked about options with UCC and DCAC members.

The original motion suggested a series of steps in support of the goals outlined above. Below is a response to each of these steps.

1. **Establishing a set meeting time.** At a September 2015 joint meeting of UCC and DCAC members, the group noted that because the members of the group were already set by the time we began discussing a set meeting time, we could not determine a time that would work for everyone this academic year. ***We encourage Faculty Senate to set 2016-2017 UCC and DCAC meeting times (example: non-Senate Wednesdays at 3:30pm) and then determine committee membership based on availability at those times.*** This strategy will also emphasize to new members the importance of these committees and attending meetings.
2. **Establishing joint annual meeting(s) of the two Committees.** As indicated above, the 2015-2016 UCC and DCAC members have already met together this fall. The chairs proposed the possibility of meeting jointly throughout the 2015-2016 year, but members of both committees were concerned about the group’s combined size leading to (a) inefficiency and (b) difficulty scheduling meetings. Also, UCC members expressed concerns about combining the committees and shrinking the size of the combined group, including possible workload and conflicts of interest. (For example, members felt that curricular decisions should remain separate from assessment-related decisions.) ***Instead, we suggest that Senate***

ask UCC and DCAC chairs and vice chairs to meet over the summer or early in the semester to coordinate committee efforts. Also, the two groups should exchange meeting minutes to improve communication and to continue coordinating their work throughout the academic year.

3. **For UCC: Changes in processes that will streamline the review of individual course approvals for AOIs and FYS, and make those processes more outcome- (instead of input-) driven.** In previous years, members unable to attend regular UCC meetings sent their input and votes to the chair for discussion and tabulating. This process suggests that some individual course proposals could be vetted electronically, thus freeing up meeting time for discussion of “big picture” issues. ***We propose a work schedule that will allow this flexibility. Except under special circumstances, such as FYS scheduling in late spring, professors wishing to have a proposal considered at a specific UCC meeting will need to submit their full and complete proposals by two weeks prior to that meeting. The UCC chair will email committee members for feedback and votes on proposals about one week before the meeting, and, if no one writes back with concerns, will tally the electronic votes. If UCC members express any concerns about a proposal, that proposal will be discussed and voted on at the meeting itself instead of electronically.***

4. **Establishing an ongoing Calendar of Review for reporting and recommendations to Senate that will break the "End of Year" cycle by allowing Senate to review, vet, and discuss proposed changes much earlier in the AY.** We are currently operating within a culture of uncertainty, with possible revisions to the general education curriculum in the future, but we also know that accreditation is looming. Therefore, ***we support the idea of discussing AOI descriptions and outcomes that are unlikely to change even if the curriculum is revised.*** Also, in response to commentary from the Wabash representatives who examined Drake’s assessment practices, ***UCC and DCAC could work together on efforts to revise and streamline outcomes, including revising the “course must meet two of the four outcomes” language that makes AOI assessment so difficult. For example, Kevin Saunders, Michelle Rogers and DCAC could provide UCC with information about their writing assessment efforts from summer 2015, and UCC could then revisit the phrasing of the Written Communication AOI description and outcomes. UCC could also consider the Global and Multicultural Understanding AOI, some version of which—given the university’s stated commitment to internationalization—is likely to survive any future revision of the general education curriculum. In this way, UCC’s work can inform DCAC’s work and vice-versa: UCC can use DCAC’s data to examine AOIs, and UCC’s revisions of AOI outcomes can help DCAC develop***

assessment instruments and processes.