

Curriculum Council

2020-2021 Annual Report

The following represents the activities, discussions, and actions undertaken by the members of the Curriculum Council during the 2020-2021 academic year ending June 30, 2021.

Curricular Proposals

As of June 7, 2021, the Curriculum Council had reviewed and approved the following:

- 234 course proposals in CIM
- 239 full program proposals in CIM
- 1 Miscellaneous proposal in CIM
 - ❖ Additionally, 215 course proposals and 110 program proposals were "Expedited" such that the Curriculum Council had courtesy FYI notice, but without approval role.

Of the approved program proposals, nine were presented to the Faculty Senate Executive Council and the full Faculty Senate for approval.

Throughout 2020-2021, the Curriculum Council worked closely with the College of Engineering with regard to a curriculum redesign of their 19 undergraduate engineering programs. These program changes, which included the adoption of a new first-year course and curricular path updates for all undergraduate majors, were approved in Spring 2021.

In Fall 2020, Co-Chairs Sanchez and Scott worked to redesign Curriculum Council review and approval procedures and create new training and workflow materials. The primary change was to assign two or three primary reviewers to each curricular proposal, and have those reviewers focus on substantive curricular concerns, rather than formatting or procedural requirements that could be reviewed by APA. This streamlined and efficient system resulted in a more even division of work among Curriculum Council members, as in previous years one or two motivated reviewers often did the bulk of the review work. It also allowed members to focus their attention on more substantive curricular matters. The increased efficiency also made it possible for the Curriculum Council to direct attention to review of new policy issues.

Academic Policies and Issues Discussed

- Reviewed and approved Academic Programs and Assessments (APA) revision of Syllabus Minimum Requirements and Syllabus Minimum Requirement templates to support faculty (on-campus, Bacc Core and WIC templates).
- In response to a frequent complaint by faculty that syllabi are weighed down with standardized language, the Council discussed the possibility of moving several required syllabus policies (including notice of the academic calendar, DAS link, academic integrity policy, and the Reach Out for Success language) to a centralized web page. While this would provide some benefits, there was also concern raised that students may be less likely to find this information. In conjunction with the Academic Success Center, the Curriculum Council is working on a pilot program that would place a link to these policies within the Canvas ecosystem in an easy-to-find button. This link will be active in Fall 2021. It will run parallel to the requirement for such policies to be located within syllabi but should be reassessed in 2021-2022 to see if this is a viable alternative to requiring this language to appear in all syllabi.
- In Fall 2021, a workgroup consisting of Curriculum Council members, representatives from APA, and representatives from the Academic Success Center created a new policy to distinguish expectations for upper division courses from lower division courses. The Curriculum Council adopted the policy and APA is currently working to update CIM accordingly.
- After significant discussion, and to align with most public schools in Oregon and Linn-Benton Community College (which had been waiting for OSU to take action before they made their own change), the Curriculum Council voted to increase the credits for WR 121 from 3 to 4. One concern that was raised was the need to ensure that there would

not be a requirement for transfer students with three credit courses to take an additional course to satisfy the new requirement. While there is not a clear way to articulate this as a matter of policy, the expectation was that the School of Writing, Literature, and Film and Admissions would not make such a requirement and transfer students would not be harmed by the adoption of this new credit requirement.

- Academic Regulations 25, 26 and 27 revisions:
 - AR 25: Set maximum number of credits applicable to Baccalaureate Degrees and restricts students from majoring and minoring in the same academic program concurrently.
 - AR 26 & 27: Restricts undergraduate students from completing a minor in an academic program from which they have completed a major, regardless of conferring institution.
- Revision of repeatability policy: Curriculum proposals will include repeatability limits (credits) in the catalog Course Description.
- Revision of Special topics courses. Special topics courses require a New Course Proposal to become an established course but do not require a syllabus in CIM.
- A topic that had been raised in previous years was requirements for in-person instruction to actually take place in person. Meaning, that a course would have to be taught according to the modality in which it was listed, so students registering for an "in- person" course would not receive asynchronous or remote coursework. This issue was significantly complicated by the pandemic, as courses shifted from in-person to remote and often included a blend of asynchronous and synchronous activities. Co-Chair Scott engaged with representatives from the Registrar's Office, the Office of Financial Aid, Accreditation and the Center for Teaching and Learning, to develop modality expectations (largely expressed in resumption planning documents) that would further the goal of ensuring students signing up for in-person classes were taught in that modality, but also allowing some amount of blended learning using asynchronous activities to take place. The Curriculum Council may wish to revisit this in the future.

Undergraduate Academic Program reviews:

- American Studies Program Review Action Plan: Reviewed, discussed, and approved.
- Environmental Sciences Undergraduate Program Review Action Plan: Chairs engaged unit in extensive conversations spanning entire academic year. The final action plan was still not completed by June 2021, so a letter to Dr. Gitelman reflected the Curriculum Council's concerns.

Continuing development of Unit Review process:

- It is the understanding of the Co-Chairs, after meeting with Phil Mote, Vice Provost and the Dean of the Graduate School, that the unit review process is undergoing additional review and development in an iterative process. There is an expectation that the Curriculum Council will play a role in future unit reviews, but it is not clear what that role will be. It will be important for future Chairs to reach out to Dr. Mote and others with regard to this development process, as they may not be contacted for participation but should be engaged in the discussion.

Standing Rules Revisions

The [Standing Rules](#) were updated to:

- emphasize and encourage cooperation and liaison between and among units,
- remove mention of Curricular Procedures Handbook, formerly created jointly by the Curriculum Council and APA,
- include formulation of appropriate curricular policies as one of the Council's responsibilities,
- insert acknowledgement of Curriculum Council cooperative work with APA to conduct periodic review of curricular programs and to report results to the Provost, and
- correctly identify units with ex-officio representatives.

Outstanding Policy Revisions Needing Follow-up

- An ongoing issue of dispute has been the question of whether faculty must submit a proposal through CIM and receive approval before changing course learning outcomes.

Some believe this is already required, while others do not. There are a number of reasons why changing learning outcomes is a matter of significant concern: foremost, learning outcomes are reviewed and often updated or improved through the curricular review process to ensure they are student-centered and measurable. If faculty are not required to submit proposals for review, this essential part of the curricular review process will be significantly undermined. In addition, if individual faculty can change learning outcomes, there will be no assurance that students taking courses in different modalities (i.e., online v. in person) or at different campuses will receive equivalent course content, undermining programs' ability to assess student progression and maintain prerequisites. On the other hand, when this issue was brought to the EC, concerns were raised that faculty would feel that this was an inappropriate encroachment on their academic freedom and would result in an administrative overload for the Council that could slow down the review of curricular proposals. A proposal from the Office of Undergraduate Education for a new policy was tabled for review in 2021-2022.

- An issue that has been raised in previous years that was not addressed by the Council in 2020-2021 is whether it is appropriate for hybrid courses to be treated like Ecampus courses for Education & General (E&G) purposes.
- In 2020-2021, the School of Writing, Literature, and Film program completed its overhaul of courses that had a credit mismatch. Some were turned into hybrids after faculty underwent training with the Center for Teaching and Learning. If faculty did not complete the hybrid training, they were not eligible to turn their course into a hybrid and were then required to reduce the credit hours for the course to meet the course meeting times.
- Expedited Review Policy
 - In Fall 2020, Co-Chairs Sanchez and Scott suggested to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (EC) that a review be undertaken of the current expedited review procedure, and an initial meeting was held, but there were no subsequent discussions. Under current policy, courses being extended to a new campus or modality do not get reviewed by Curriculum Council. This year, 215 course proposals were approved without review based on this policy. Similarly, program proposals for extension to Ecampus do not receive review under the expedited program policy. This year, 110 programs were approved without review based on this policy. While there may be many good reasons for this policy, we note that it has been raised as a subject of concern in both directions -- i.e., multiple chairs and members of the Curriculum Council have raised concerns about the lack of oversight and review of these programs and courses, and the OSU-Cascades campus has raised concerns that they are not eligible for expedited program reviews as is Ecampus, and have shared their feeling of mistrust and frustration related to the review process. We continue to urge the EC to conduct a thorough review of this policy.
- Definition of a Laboratory: This issue carried from last year – Draft definition continues to be developed by the Baccalaureate Core Committee.

2020-2021 Membership

Notes:

- Discussion and consideration of if, how and when OSU-Cascades representation should be increased as Colleges/Programs/Departments become established at that campus and as their course proposals increase with the enrollment growth.
- The number of members in 2021-2022 likely needs to be increased if Policy is enacted to require a full or partial CIM proposal for changes in Learning Outcomes of existing courses.

Dana Sanchez, Co-Chair '22	College of Agricultural Sciences
Inara Scott, Co-Chair '22	College of Business
Ping-Hung Hsieh '21	College of Business
Kate Lajtha '21	College of Agricultural Sciences
Manoj Pастey (v. Klopfenstein) '21	College of Veterinary Medicine
Seri Robinson '21	College of Forestry

Eric Skyllingstad (v. Harte) '21	College of Earth, Ocean, & Atmospheric Sciences
Arup Indra '22	College of Pharmacy
Allison Davis-White Eyes '23	College of Liberal Arts
Eric Ianni '23	College Engineering
Carol McKiel '23	College of Education
Yumie Takata '23	College of Public Health & Human Sciences
Lan Xue '23	College of Science
TBA (v. Ossiander) '22	

Student Members:

- Candice Clark
- TBA

Ex-Officio Members:

Ecampus – Cyndie McCarley
Graduate School – Rosemary Garagnani
Registrar – Rebecca Mathern
OSU Libraries – Hannah Rempel
Undergraduate Education – Janice Nave-Abele

Liaison Members:

Academic Advising Council – Mary Chuinard
Instructional Technology – Weiwei Zhang
OSU-Cascades – Kara Witzke (Fall 2020); Rachael Schuetz (Winter 2021)

Curriculum Council Representation (appointed annually):

Online Education Committee – TBA (Ex-Officio, Non-voting)

Executive Committee Liaison – Shannon Riggs