

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE FOR GENERAL EDUCATION

MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 6, 2022

VIA ZOOM, 2:30 PM – 3:45 PM

Present: Angela Anderson, Aaron Ansell, Sara Arena, Stephen Biscotte, Molly Hall, Earl Kline, Victoria Lael, Greg Novack, Annie Ronan, Hannah Shinault, Alireza Shojaei, Zack Underwood, Sparkle Williams

Absent: Brian Collins, Ainsley Cragin, Janet Hilder, Nicole Pitterson, Anita Walz

Guests: Jenni Gallagher

Call to order by Hannah Shinault at 2:30 pm

Announcements

- 2022-23 committee assignments: committee members were asked to let Jenni (jennigal@vt.edu) know if they will be returning to UCCGE next year.
- The 2022 Summer Institute will be held May 16 – May 18, with the Pathways-specific sessions scheduled for Wednesday. UCCGE members are encouraged to attend. Registration details will be sent out soon.

1. Possible Program Improvements

A. Waive Pathways requirements for entering students who already have a Bachelor's

The advising subcommittee presented a resolution (linked [here](#)) that students who already hold a bachelor's degree be exempted from Pathways general education requirements.

The committee voted unanimously to adopt the resolution.

B. Changes to Pathways Minors

The committee continued last month's discussion about potential changes to Pathways minors. Topics for consideration included potentially instituting a maximum credit hour cap, requiring minors that exceed a certain number of hours be required to meet more than three core concepts, and requiring minors to cross multiple colleges. The committee noted the importance of 1) gathering data as the first step to inform whether these changes should be pursued and 2) engaging current minor leads in the conversation.

It was suggested that a small working group could begin analyzing the data and reaching out to current minor leads for their input.

C. Alternative Pathway

Noting that the alternative Pathways option has never been used, and that it often causes confusion among students and advisors, the committee voted unanimously to eliminate the option.

D. Curricular Program Changes (SLOs, rubrics, etc.)

The committee discussed potential program revisions, using an example proposal (see Appendix A) to open the discussion. Members raised numerous issues for consideration:

- While this proposal does decrease the number of SLOs per outcome, it may not have resulted in the most appropriate outcomes being removed.
- Some stakeholders may prefer to use different criteria to streamline the SLOs or may wish to rewrite them altogether.
- If a concept's SLOs are rewritten, courses aligned with those concepts would need to go back through governance.
- Stakeholders will need to be engaged throughout the process, potentially starting at the 2022 Summer Institute. Pathways instructors could review the example proposal and provide feedback.
- Resources on writing measurable SLOs will need to be provided.

In preparation for engaging other stakeholders, J. Gallagher will modify the Pathways Program Revision document (Appendix A) to include a third column in the SLOs table for the working groups to record ideas for alternative methods of revising the SLOs. She will also add information on what percentage of courses are currently aligned with each of the SLOs.

The committee plans to engage stakeholders over the summer and early fall to create a program revision, with the hopes of having a resolution ready by mid-fall 2022.

2. Subcommittee Reports

- Advising

The advising subcommittee welcomed UCCGE's new student senate rep, Ainsley Cragin, to the subcommittee. The student senate would like to see the creation of a minor's fair, which would be a great opportunity to showcase Pathways minors. Ainsley will be reaching out to Kim Smith to share the idea.

The subcommittee also put together the resolution on waiving Pathways requirements for students entering with bachelor's degrees (see item 1.A. above), and a graduate assistant has started creating a table of popular Pathways courses that are in Pathways minors. The subcommittee will use this information to make suggestions to advisors about which Pathways courses they might recommend to their students.

- Assessment

No report.

- Collaboratory

The collaboratory subcommittee has been working on adding new entries to the Collaboratory and finalizing the licensing language (linked [here](#)) that will be provided to faculty who provide materials for the site.

Meeting adjourned by Hannah Shinault at 3:37 pm.

Minutes compiled by Jenni Gallagher

APPENDIX A
Pathways Program Revision
UCCGE Meeting, 4/6/22

With the end of the Spring 2022 semester, the Pathways program will have been in effect for four full academic years. This milestone offers an opportunity for UCCGE to review the program and discuss potential improvements.

Over the last couple of meetings, the committee has expressed a willingness to explore streamlining the student learning outcomes (SLOs), reducing them from the current number of 39. The goals of this potential revision include:

1. increasing faculty participation in assessment,
2. improving the accuracy of the submitted data, and
3. better demonstrating the value of assessment to the university community.

In order to open a more in-depth discussion of this potential revision, this document offers details on one possible avenue for streamlining the Pathways SLOs. The committee will discuss this proposal at the April 6th meeting. **Prior to that meeting, please take a few minutes to review the Pathways assessment data that has been collected to date.** The data reports can be found on the Pathways website (linked below).

https://www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/content/pathways_prov_vt_edu/en/assessment/pathways-data.html

After reviewing the assessment data, please review the proposal information below with the following questions in mind:

1. Overall, do you think decreasing the number of SLOs per concept would help achieve the goals listed above?
2. What are the benefits of the specific solution offered below?
3. What are the potential liabilities of this specific solution?
4. Are there other/better avenues for achieving the same goals?
5. Looking at the SLOs most related to your particular field, do the proposed SLOs adequately cover the content that should be taught in a gen ed course?

Example Proposal

Institutional Effectiveness has identified one potential avenue for achieving the goals listed above. **Please note that this is only an example.** It is being put forth to demonstrate what is possible and begin a productive discussion about 1) whether there is support for streamlining the SLOs, and 2) if so, what criteria should be used to determine the new SLOs.

Under this example proposal, the number of SLOs per concept has been decreased to three each. Currently, the number of SLOs per concept ranges from three to six, with instructors needing to submit assessment data for a majority of the outcomes (except for Discourse, which requires all

five SLOs to be assessed). In the example proposal, instructors would need to submit assessment data for two of the three SLOs for each concept associated with their course.

The outcomes chosen for removal were determined by 1) frequency of use and 2) minimizing disruption to current Pathways courses (e.g., the courses wouldn't have to select new SLOs). A comparison of the current SLOs (left) and the example proposal (right) is below.

<p><u>Discourse</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discover and comprehend information from a variety of written, oral, and visual sources. 2. Analyze and evaluate the content and intent of information from diverse sources. 3. Develop effective content that is appropriate to a specific context, audience, and/or purpose. 4. Exchange ideas effectively with an audience. 5. Assess the product/presentation, including feedback from readers or listeners. 	<p><u>Discourse</u></p> <p>Three of the five current outcomes, to be chosen by Pathways stakeholders.</p>
<p><u>Critical Thinking in the Humanities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify fundamental concepts of the humanities. 2. Analyze texts and other created artifacts using theories and methods of the humanities. 3. Interpret texts and other created artifacts within multiple historical, intellectual, and cultural contexts. 4. Synthesize multiple complex sources and create a coherent narrative or argument. 	<p><u>Critical Thinking in the Humanities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify fundamental concepts of the humanities. 2. Analyze texts and other created artifacts using theories and methods of the humanities. 3. Interpret texts and other created artifacts within multiple historical, intellectual, and cultural contexts. – OR - Synthesize multiple complex sources and create a coherent narrative or argument.
<p><u>Reasoning in the Social Sciences</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify fundamental concepts of the social sciences. 2. Analyze human behavior, social institutions and/or patterns of culture using theories and methods of the social sciences. 3. Identify interconnections among and differences between social institutions, groups, and individuals. 4. Analyze the ways in which values and beliefs relate to human behavior and social relationships. 	<p><u>Reasoning in the Social Sciences</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify fundamental concepts of the social sciences. 2. Analyze human behavior, social institutions and/or patterns of culture using theories and methods of the social sciences. 3. Identify interconnections among and differences between social institutions, groups, and individuals.

<p><u>Reasoning in the Natural Sciences</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the foundational knowledge of a particular scientific discipline. 2. Apply principles and techniques of scientific inquiry. 3. Evaluate the credibility and the use/misuse of scientific information. 4. Analyze the reciprocal impact of science and society. 	<p><u>Reasoning in the Natural Sciences</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the foundational knowledge of a particular scientific discipline. 2. Apply principles and techniques of scientific inquiry. 3. Analyze the reciprocal impact of science and society.
<p><u>Quantitative and Computational Thinking</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the application of computational or quantitative thinking across multiple knowledge domains. 2. Apply the foundational principles of computational or quantitative thinking to frame a question and devise a solution in a particular field of study. 3. Identify the impacts of computing and information technology on humanity. 4. Construct a model based on computational methods to analyze complex or large-scale phenomenon. 5. Draw valid quantitative inferences about situations characterized by inherent uncertainty. 6. Evaluate conclusions drawn from or decisions based on quantitative data. 	<p><u>Quantitative and Computational Thinking</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the application of computational or quantitative thinking across multiple knowledge domains. 2. Apply the foundational principles of computational or quantitative thinking to frame a question and devise a solution in a particular field of study. 3. Draw valid quantitative inferences about situations characterized by inherent uncertainty.
<p><u>Critique and Practice in Design and the Arts</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and apply formal elements of design or the arts. 2. Explain the historical context of design or the arts. 3. Apply interpretive strategies or methodologies in design or the arts. 4. Employ skills, tools, and methods of working in design or the arts. 5. Produce a fully developed work through iterative processes of design or the arts. 	<p><u>Critique and Practice in Design and the Arts</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and apply formal elements of design or the arts. 2. Apply interpretive strategies or methodologies in design or the arts. 3. Employ skills, tools, and methods of working in design or the arts.

<p><u>Critical Analysis of Identity and Equity in the U.S.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze how social identities, statuses, space, place, traditions, and histories of inequity and power shape human experience in the United States (particularly or in comparative perspective). 2. Analyze social equity and diversity in the United States (particularly or in comparative perspective) through multiple perspectives on power and identity. 3. Demonstrate how creative works analyze and/or reimagine diversity in human experiences in the United States (particularly or in comparative perspective). 4. Demonstrate how aesthetic and cultural expressions mediate identities, statuses, space, place, formal traditions, and/or historical contexts in the United States (particularly or in comparative perspective). 5. Analyze the interactive relationships between place, space, identity formation, and sense of community in the United States (particularly or in comparative perspective). 	<p><u>Critical Analysis of Identity and Equity in the U.S.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze how social identities, statuses, space, place, traditions, and histories of inequity and power shape human experience in the United States (particularly or in comparative perspective). 2. Analyze social equity and diversity in the United States (particularly or in comparative perspective) through multiple perspectives on power and identity. 3. Demonstrate how aesthetic and cultural expressions mediate identities, statuses, space, place, formal traditions, and/or historical contexts in the United States (particularly or in comparative perspective).
<p><u>Ethical Reasoning</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain and contrast relevant ethical theories. 2. Identify ethical issues in a complex context. 3. Articulate and defend positions on ethical issues in a way that is both reasoned and informed by the complexities of those situations. 	<p><u>Ethical Reasoning*</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain and contrast relevant ethical theories. 2. Identify ethical issues in a complex context. 3. Articulate and defend positions on ethical issues in a way that is both reasoned and informed by the complexities of those situations.
<p><u>Intercultural and Global Awareness</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify advantages and challenges of diversity and inclusion in communities and organizations. 2. Interpret an intercultural experience from both one's own and another's worldview. 3. Address significant global challenges and opportunities in the natural and human world. 	<p><u>Intercultural and Global Awareness*</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify advantages and challenges of diversity and inclusion in communities and organizations. 2. Interpret an intercultural experience from both one's own and another's worldview. 3. Address significant global challenges and opportunities in the natural and human world.

*Note: for the sake of uniformity (maintaining three outcomes per concept, with 2/3 being assessed) no changes were made to Ethical Reasoning or Intercultural and Global Awareness, since they each already have only three outcomes. However, these could be reduced to two outcomes each, with 1/2 being assessed, or – just as with any of the other concepts – they could be changed entirely.