

Undergraduate Council  
October 17, 2008  
Minutes

The Oct. 17 meeting of Undergraduate Council was called to order at 10 AM by Dr. Joanne Arhar, Assoc. Dean, EHHS.

Attending were: Joanne Arhar, Chair; Donna Bernert for Dianne Kerr, ACHVE; Natalie Caine-Bish, FCS; Swathi Ravichandran, FCS; Natasha Levinson, EFSS; Averil McClelland, EFSS; Lettie Gonzalez, SELS; Alicia rowe, TLCS; Alexa Sandmann, TLCS; Mark Krumm, SPA; Lisa Fronling for Charity Snyder, EHHS; Philip Wang for Andy Lepp, SELS; Frieda Boland, ACHVE, and Mary Tipton, IRC. Absent was David Dees, Regional Campuses.

Online Student Evaluations

Mary Tipton, IRC, was first on the agenda with a discussion of the creation of student evaluations specific to online, I-link and video teleconferenced classes. The proposal was twofold: 1) the posting of student evaluations online for online classes and 2) the possibility to creating additional questions specific to each class. The general idea presented was to take the current SSI and add between 8 – 15 questions specific to each class, customizing the evaluations to the program area. She is hoping to pilot the new process this semester. The forms would be developed by Brian DeHoff and faculty members would notify students of the online evaluation via e-mail. The survey would be available to students the last week of classes.

Mary shared that two important challenges of developing the online evaluations included keeping the evaluations anonymous and increasing the percentage of responses to the evaluations. There was also an issue of some questions on the survey that are required by the university, yet inappropriate for online classes. Those questions would remain even though they don't apply to web-based courses. She provided a list of faculty consulted for input into the development of the online evaluations. All those consulted either teach or have taught online classes.

During discussion, Undergraduate Council members voiced concerns about the validity of the survey since it included inapplicable questions and whether the required questions should be separated from the optional questions added by specific departments. Alicia Crowe shared that she believes it is important to separate the faculty driven questions from the course evaluation questions. Lettie Gonzalez also had concerns about the vague nature of some of the questions.

A question was also asked regarding where the data extracted from the surveys would be housed and who/how would access be granted. Mary responded that the electronic reports would be stored in the EHHS Portal and that faculty and others (as needed) would be granted access.

In response to a question of how the pilot program would work, Mary said that the program would be created, shown to faculty and then sent to students. The tentative goal was to have the survey to students by the end of this semester, Fall 2008. Joanne Arhar asked if university providers might already have standardized questions. Mary responded that this evaluation would be an official EHHS form, not a KSU form and that EHHS is not currently under contract with anyone to do evaluations.

Another question raised (Joanne) concerned the attachment of data collected to faculty members' tenure and promotion files or if the additional information was informational only for faculty. Lettie said

this question is very important and asked, because of the question, if perhaps the additional questions should be asked separately from the standard questions.

Lettie also asked for clarification of the reason for the pilot – is it to increase the response rate or gather additional data? Averil McClelland responded that is important to get information about online teaching because it is very different than classroom teaching. She believed that faculty probably needs to develop in this area? Mary responded that there are three goals of the project: 1) increase response rates, 2) decrease mailing costs associated with sending hard copies to students' homes, and 3) collect additional data about online classes.

Natalie Caine-Bish asked if the pilot should try in various ways – through the student portal, via e-mail, and via hard copy and assess the results. She said that electronic systems are sometimes time consuming to navigate and that that this might also impact response rates.

Lettie also asked if the survey would be a part of SSI or something separate.

Donna Bernert also said that she believes it is valid to ask students if they had the appropriate technology for the class and that the response rates are a key issue, but she believes there is potential for the results to be skewed – that the students most likely to respond will have either really liked or really disliked the class.

Alexa Sandmann asked what the benefits are for students who take the time to complete the surveys. She wondered if the university could offer incentives for completion of the surveys. Mary and others responded that offering incentives are not permitted. Lisa Froning added that students are frequently surveyed and sometimes don't respond well because of this.

Joanne suggested that perhaps this project could be recreated as a research project and treated as separate from SSI.

Natalie asked if department faculty members needed to approve supplement questions prior to their addition to the survey. Donna believed that the additional questions needed to be presented to departmental faculty members for approval prior to distribution of a survey. Swathi Ravichandran agreed.

Mark Krumm asked how the additional data would be used and if a disclaimer should be added to the form. Lettie then suggested that perhaps only the SSI should be put online first. Averil said that the additional questions are important in gathering data for online learning. Alexa also believed the need for additional data should be considered.

Natalie put forth the motion: "I propose that the additional questions, subject to editing, will be added to the SSI and placed online, and additionally that 1) optionally additional questions may be linked to the SSI, and 2) the data collected will be stored in two separate files." The motion was seconded by Averil.

After a vote, the response was: Yes, 3; no, 4, abstain 2.

Alicia then put forth the motion: "I propose that Mary puts the SSI online for students in Fall 2008 and that optionally, faculty may add additional questions, based on departmental approval for Fall 2008."

After a vote, the response was: Yes, All in favor.

Joanne added that the council should consider what the questions might be for departmental faculty members. The following questions were listed.

- What are the additional questions which may be added?
- This change applies to online courses only
- What is the purpose of the additional questions?
- The online survey will be piloted in Fall 2008

Joanne also added that the tenure/promotion discussion may not be an appropriate topic for Undergraduate Council. The ultimate goal may be for the questions to be included in tenure/promotion in the future and the faculty discussion should take place after Graduate Council and CAC discussions are held.

Second on the agenda was Natalie Caine-Bish, FSC, with a proposal to make curriculum changes including the addition of two new core nutrition requirements (NUTR 23112 and NUTR 43512), the addition of one new elective (NUTR 43532), the removal of one core requirement (HDFS 24011) and course revisions to three courses (NUTR 43512, NUTR 43013 and NUTR 43514). Through discussion it was determined that NUTR 43013 is a designated Writing Intensive Course and this course revision must also be approved by URCC.

Averil put forth the motion: "I propose that UGC accept the proposal, contingent upon URCC approval of the revision of the writing intensive course." Averil also stated that the two meeting rules should be waived. The motion was seconded by Swathi .

After a vote, the response was: Yes, all in favor.

Joanne then asked for approval of last month's minutes. All voted to approve the minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 12:01 PM, Oct. 17.

Recorded by Hilda Pettit, EHHS.