Curricular Affairs Committee
Year End Report for 2014-15
Submitted by Brian Cook, Chair
April 30, 2015

Summary:
The Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC) primarily focused its attention on the proposals from the General Education Revitalization Committee (GERC) to revise UAF's Core Curriculum. One part of GERC's proposal has been passed by the Senate: the capstone requirement, due to take effect in Fall 2016. We have drafted motions for changing the O/W requirement and for removing the PHC required courses in favor of lists of courses to fulfill the humanities, arts, and social science GERs. We have discussed all of the remaining proposals, but have not yet drafted motions. Revitalizing UAF's Core is a decade-long process that is nearly complete and needs to be a strong priori-16 as the registrar's office

ify discrepancies or inconsistencies

Items Completed, Pced by 3. New Minor in Forest Management – Passed by Senate, December 1, 2014
4. New Minor in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages – Passed by Senate, February 2, 2015
5. New Master's Degree in Security and Disaster Management – Passed by Senate, February 2, 2015
6. New Minor in Aerospace Engineering – Passed by Senate, March 2, 2015
7. Clarify DF Grading Policy – Passed by Senate, April 6, 2015
8. Update Senate Policy on Academic Credit Hour – Passed by Senate, April 6, 2015

Items Completed, Senate vote not required:
1. Motion to amend academic policy regarding transfer of credits as it pertains to national exams. The underlined statement was added to the catalog. (for details, see minutes from CAC meetings on December 10, 2014 and January 12, 2015. The motion was approved by the Administrative Committee on January 21, 2015 and did not need to go before the full Senate for consideration.)

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Substitutions) also apply to course   credit received through a National Exam.

2. <u>Minor Catalog Changes</u>**:** (changes do not impact current procedure; they clarify and record in the catalog what is ALREADY BEING DONE.)
   a. Minor Change to page 129 of the 2014-15 Course Catalog:
      i. Concentrations
         A concentration is an area of emphasis including the major core courses within a student's degree program. Some programs at UAF require a concentration, others do not. A student may only earn one degree in a specific discipline once. Using different concentrations within a degree program to count as different degrees is not allowed. Double concentrations [[may be]] <u>ARE</u> permitted [[but must be petitioned through the standard undergraduate petition process]] <u>WITH DEPARTMENT APPROVAL</u>.
   b. Minor change to page 86:
      i. General University Requirements
         You must earn at least 9 semester [[hours]] <u>CREDITS AT THE 100 LEVEL OR ABOVE</u> for an occupational endorsement.
   c. Minor change to page 94:
      i. General University Requirements
         You must earn at least 30 semester [[hours]] CREDITS

Motions drafted, but pending:

1. Resolution on GER (to be taken up by the Senate on May 4, 2015) - This resolution declares the Senate's intent to convert to the "classification list" or "bucket" system during the 2015-16 school year. The full text reads:

   WHEREAS, the University of Alaska Fairbanks Faculty Senate recognizes the need to revise the Core Curriculum; and

   WHEREAS, the Senate wishes to widen student choice in the university's general education; and

   WHEREAS, the General Education Revitalization Committee has proposed a "classification list" system (lists of approved courses which fulfill arts, humanities, and social science general education requirements) to replace the current Perspectives on the Human Condition (PHC) courses;

   THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that during the 2015-2016 academic year the UAF Faculty Senate will adopt a classification list system that will meet general education requirements in arts, humanities, and social sciences in lieu of the currently-mandated PHC courses, with the new system to take full effect as of the 2016-17 Course Catalog.

2. Motion on O/W change to communications outcomes - This motion is the first expected to be brought forward by CAC to the Administrative Committee in 2015-16, hopefully for discussion in September and for a vote in October. The text of the draft motion is current as of the date of this report:

   The Faculty Senate moves to replace the upper division Oral (O) and Written (W) requirement with the requirement that each degree program must satisfy the following Communications Learning Outcomes within the degree program:
   UAF undergraduates will demonstrate effective communication when they are able to:
   x   Explain disciplinary content using a variety of modes of communication.
   x   Communicate to audiences in the discipline using appropriate disciplinary conventions.
   x   Translate disciplinary content to audiences outside the discipline, making disciplinary knowledge relevant to broader communities.
   x   Integrate feedback from others to enhance or revise communication.

   Each baccalaureate degree program must submit a Communications Plan that demonstrates how students will achieve each of the learning outcomes as part of the requirements of the major or degree program. Not all courses or requirements need to support every outcome; however, all the outcomes must be met by the completion of the degree.

   EFFECTIVE: Fall 2016

   RATIONALE: The GERC committee and Curricular Affairs, as part of the work to revise UAF's core requirements, propose replacing the current W/O designators with a requirement that students achieve the Communications Learning Outcomes that are integrated into each baccalaureate degree program and major.

   1. The responsibility for ensuring that students achieve these Communications Learning Outcomes is being moved from the University level (via specific O and W courses) to the department level (via the requirements of the degree programs), and from a specific degree requirement (taking two Ws and one O) to a requirement that is achieved by the student completing the degree requirements associated with their program.

2. To ensure student achievement of these Communications Learning Outcomes, each department will demonstrate how their program addresses these learning outcomes by developing a Communications Plan that integrates communication into each degree or program, typically via a collection of lower and/or upper level courses and/or new curricular degree requirements chosen to meet the needs of the particular program. This should be done in such a way that all the outcomes are met somewhere in the courses required for the completion of a degree. The Communications Plan for each degree will describe the collection of courses (both in and

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- New accreditation guidelines from NWCCU will place more emphasis on SLO as a main way to assess mission fulfillment
- Currently, assessment of the UAF Core is spotty and inconsistent, and some courses are not routinely assessed
- Each program should also be regularly assessed. Alex says that currently all programs now have a plan for assessment, though not all are equal in the depth to which they assess. Also, some departments are behind in submitting their SLOAs.
- Each program's faculty should design their assessment plans and complete the assessment of their own programs. Someone (currently it's Alex's office) is supposed to review both the plans and assessments and offer guidance and ways to improve the means of assessment and to ensure that what is supposed to be assessed is actually being assessed.
    o Faculty are supposed to be heavily involved in the assessment review process, but that is not currently happening.
- If the current proposal for changes to the O/W system is passed, assessment will be especially important in ensuring that communications learning outcomes are being delivered.
- One idea is to have each college and school designate at least one (and in some cases more than one) faculty member to serve as the college's assessment advisor. This person or group of people would receive training on how to develop assessment plans and would work with programs in their college to improve their SLOA plans. They would also make sure that the plan is actually assessing learning outcomes and make sure that programs are completing their SLOAs on a regular basis.
- These people would also serve on a campus-wide "Assessment Advisory Committee" that would assist with reviewing the Core and assist with other campus-wide assessment and accreditation tasks.
- The Core Review Committee would be tasked with the regular assessment of the Core (or GER) with oversight from the AAC.