

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL

Minutes of September 13, 2022

Attending: M. Welsh (chair); P. Klein (vice-chair/temp minutes recorder); M. Larson; B. Markowsky; J. Park; S. Youngs; N. Matchett; L. Beyers; K. Clavir; C. Couch; E. Pepmeyer; C. Sonnentag plus S. Franklin and M. Somero submitting ideas through emails.

Absent: B. Blair, L. Henson, S. Rose.

Call to Order - Chair Welsh began at 3:30 pm. Everyone briefly introduced themselves.

Approval of Agenda - Approved without objection.

Approval of Minutes from April 12, 2022 - Approved without objection.

Chair's Report/Announcements (*Welsh*)

- APC has sent questions back to UGC regarding the S/U Grading Policy as approved by UGC in April (included under *New Business*).
- Reported on progress of establishment of new Osteopathic Medicine College.
- Noted that a major proposal to restructure the academic schedule with the aim of having classes confined to 4 days to enable field courses and other experiential learning is in its early stages.

Reports from Councils

- Welsh asked for volunteers to serve as UGC's reps to LAC and the Assessment Council. Youngs volunteered to attend LAC meetings; Markowski volunteered to report from Assessment Council.
- **LAC** (*Matchett reporting this time*)
New curriculum process on LAC's website; indirect assessment of syllabuses will continue this year and we will also pilot direct assessment.
- **Assessment Council** (*Markowski*)
Three faculty Assessment Fellows will coordinate assessment efforts in different areas.

Special Report

- Welsh asked for 2 volunteers to join her on the committee to select Commencement speakers at the 3 undergraduate ceremonies held in December and May. This is one of the designated tasks for the UGC. Larson and Markowski volunteered.
- UG commencement speaker application materials are live on the UGC website; early October is the application deadline for interested students. <https://www.unco.edu/undergraduate-council/>

Unfinished Business

- ***Policies surrounding expectations for Canvas use***
Due to time sensitivity of the CORE Initiative item below, Welsh tabled discussion of this policy. She asked everyone to review the document with the status of UGC's thinking on this from discussions last year. (See "Policy for Canvas Shell" draft emailed to all ahead of this meeting.)
- ***Short term loans for students***
Turns out that Financial Aid got what they needed from UGC on this last Spring, so this is no longer unfinished. Somero confirmed this via email during the meeting.

New Business

- ***CORE Initiative*** – APC requests UGC's recommendations for this new policy. Matchett provided copies of a slide deck from the State ("CORE Overview for APC") explaining the new law enabling baccalaureate-granting universities in Colorado to "award" (but not "offer") Associate's degrees to

eligible students. The goal is to recognize students who earned significant college credit (70+ hours) but were unable to finish a bachelor's degree *and* have not been enrolled for over 1 year. Awarding these students this degree would increase their earning potential; the lawmakers hope this award would lure some students back to complete their BA/BS. Some 800 former UNC students are eligible, among roughly 19,000 across the State, going back 10 years. All 4-year universities in the State are eligible to participate; none are required to do so. APC has voted in favor of UNC participating, given our role and history of attracting non-traditional and first-generation students, who are likely to comprise many of those eligible.

The State has funds available until later this autumn, up to \$42K per school, to help universities defray the costs of setting up this program. That's what makes this decision time-sensitive. There is no direct benefit to the Universities for awarding these Associate's degrees except in the instances where non-completers are enticed back. The State wants a good-faith effort to locate these students but is not expecting universities to find everyone. There is also concern with how this new program can be set up, *without* implying that UNC offers programs *leading to* an Associate's degree. That remains the domain of community colleges, so our UG Catalog cannot mention this. The State is working with the HLC for them to grant blanket approval to UNC and other 4-year schools in Colorado for the awarding of Associate's degrees (currently not allowed).

Matchett provided drafts of 2 recommended policies for review. The first would award just the minimum degree (Associate of General Studies; AGS) to those students with more than 70 hours but only 15 of the State's required 31 hours of LAC credit. Should those students elect to return, they would still be required to complete their remaining LAC credits. There was little debate on this.

The second recommendation generated more discussion. Eligible students who have completed the State's required 31 hours of LAC could be awarded AA or AS degrees (general degrees, not for any specific discipline). Matchett's proposal offered a way to differentiate which degree would be awarded, but the Council expressed concern that this would lead to processing complexity. Clavir confirmed that the Registrar's office would have to process that differentiation manually, taking staff away from degree audits for current students. Cognizant of that problem, Markowski moved (Klein seconded) that all eligible students be simply awarded an AA. This would waive any requirements for those students to take further LAC courses but would still require them to finish coursework for a BA or BS, should they return. The motion passed among the voting faculty present, 5-1.

During discussion about how this new program could be explained to those eligible, Pepmeyer raised the question of why eligible students would receive letters informing them of this initiative instead of simply awarding everyone their AGS or AA at the start, with an invitation to re-enroll. Matchett said the State had decided the sequence but that she would explore the idea. In a separate email to Welsh, Franklin noted that the messaging to students should use the term "BA or BS degree" rather than "4-year degree," since there's no guarantee that a student could finish their requirements within 4 years if they had a lot of coursework remaining in a major.

- ***S/U grading option***

APC has requested additional recommendations from UGC, but no time to discuss today.

Comments to the Good of the Order - skipped

Adjournment - Welsh closed the meeting at 5:05 pm.