UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM (UCOC)

MINUTES

September 5, 2018

2:00-3:30 pm

****ACC 205****

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION (UCOC Chair, Chi Mak)

Mak welcomed the committee and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve as UCOC chair another year. He introduced and thanked Lawrence (Larry) Green, who will co-chair the Arts and Humanities Subcommittee alongside Brian Head. Mak asked the remaining attendees to introduce themselves.

- *Attachments: UCOC 2018-2019 Roster*
  UCOC 2018-2019 Full Membership

II. UCOC MAY 2018 MINUTES

- *Attachment: UCOC May 2018 Minutes*

➔ **APPROVED**

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. USC Attendance Policy and Documentation (Ginger Clark, Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET))

DISCUSSED, SEPTEMBER 2018 Clark reported that instructional designers who work in the CET regularly find that instructors award course points for attendance. Efforts to guide the instructors effectively are hindered because the materials that refer to attendance on the Curriculum Office website are neither definitive nor entirely clear. Clark noted that, as an instructional design best practice, points that count toward completion of a course should be attached to an assignment or activity – not for attendance – though there may be a struggle to conform within some of the professional schools that teach their own best practices related to attendance and participation as part of their curriculum. Brian Head, AHS co-chair, noted that the policy is understood to mean attendance may not count as a basic assessable component of the grade, but that non-attendance may be used as basis for docking the overall grade when stated in the syllabus. He pointed out the a justification and potential value for docking a grade for attendance relates to an effort to cultivate a community setting and to secure the benefits thereof, while not necessarily considering attendance an assessable competent as strictly.

Robin Romans, Associate Vice Provost, pointed out that the confusion, especially concerning CET's work and perspective, may result from USC simultaneously disallowing attendance to be a graded component while also allowing a final grade to be docked for non-attendance. He contended that this is appropriate, however, to support cases in which the instructor needs the flexibility to lower the overall grade beyond a grade reduction in any one assignment – for instance, when a course is set up such that if the final exam is missed then the student will not be allowed to pass. Romans explained that in his experience, such attendance policies as stated in the syllabus may well never be called on to be enforced, but being present in the syllabus does act to promote the notion of community participation and to convey most clearly what is expected of the student.

Additional points were discussed, such as attendance considerations related to the contact hour policy, excused versus unexcused absences, and variations among USC's uniquely diverse range of disciplines and needs. Ultimately, Clark maintained that, whether or not UCOC and CET will take a closer look at USC's position on grading attendance, in the meantime a necessary first step would be to establish consistency across all posted materials and documents. John DeMartini, Curriculum Coordination Office, agreed and noted that there has been an uptick in academic units asking for a policy that is stated in a definitive and accessible way.

Mak thanked the committee for the thorough input and agreed that the initial step will be to work to make materials and documentation consistent. He asked DeMartini to research previous instances of attendance policy language and present the findings at a future meeting for further review.

B. Procedures Related to Programs with Zero Enrollment (Matt Bemis, Associate Registrar, Degree Progress and Curriculum Services)

DISCUSSED SEPTEMBER 2018 Bemis explained that while compiling accurate reporting data for financial aid purposes, he discovered that of the greater than 800 degree programs at USC, about one-quarter of them have zero student enrollment in the past several years. Bemis suggested a way to handle this would be to recommend to the school deans that these programs be sunsetted and removed from the catalogue with the option of an expedited and simplified reimplementation process in the future, if desired.

Brian Head, AHS Co-Chair, questioned the harm in keeping these programs in the catalogue, noting that there is an advertisement component that may be useful. Mak wondered if it might be the case for many programs that the department is merely unaware of these circumstances.

Romans claimed that that, previously, enacting such procedures would not have been an issue for accreditation reasons, but more recently he is not so sure. It might be worth considering options beyond fully terminating programs because to reestablish them they would need to be considered completely new programs for the purposes of accreditation and the Department of Education. He said this should not halt the discussion, but wondered if USC could assign an "inactive" status for these programs instead of terminating them fully.

Bemis replied that the POSTs are either considered active or expired, so the programs would need to be fully terminated and because of this there may or not be value to implementing these procedures. If UCOC would recommend moving forward with this, a plan for implementation and messaging can be developed.

IV.   INFORMATION ITEMS

    A. GE Memos

       - *Attachments: UCOC GE Memo 5-31-18*
                        UCOC GE Memo 6-25-18

    B. Scheduled Special Topics Report

       - *Attachment: Summer-August 2018 Special Topics*

Members Present	**Members Absent**	**Guests**
Matt Bemis (Assoc. Registrar)	Diane Badame	Valerie Sas
Steven Bucher		
Megan Chan (Financial Aid)		
John DeMartini (Support Staff)		
Donna Garcia		
Judy Garner		
Lawrence Green		
Brian Head		
Chi Mak (Chair)		
Danielle Mihram		
Robin Romans		
Geoffrey Shiflett		