

Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee

September 23, 2016

Summary Notes

Approved by UEAC April 21, 2017

Members present: Brett Millán (co-chair), Ann Kenimer (co-chair), Melissa Armentor, Steven Daniell, Nancy Martin, Esther Rumsey, Emily Wilson, Bill Adams, Janna Chancey, Edward Byerly, Julie Penley, Sarah Maxwell, Reginald Bell, Elizabeth Garcia, Richard Miller, Shelia Amin Gutierrez de Pineres, Sonia Flores

Members absent: Kimberly Beatty, Yvette Bendeck, L. Joy Gates Black, William Harlow, Jerry King, Stephanie Legree-Roberts

Visitors: Larry Abraham, UT Austin, Cynthia Ferrell, Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC), Rissa Potter, Texas Council of Public University Presidents and Chancellors (TCPUPC), Janet Tareilo (SFASU), Norma Perez (HCCS)

Coordinating Board staff: Reinold Cornelius, Assistant Director, James Goeman, Assistant Director, Melissa Humphries, Program Director, Doug Jansen, Program Director, Melinda Valdez, Program Director

1. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Co-Chair Ann Kenimer, who asked all members and visitors to introduce themselves.

2. Consideration of Summary Notes From the April 22, 2016 Meeting

The summary notes were accepted unanimously after Steven Daniell moved and Melissa Armentor seconded the motion for consideration.

3. Update on the Coordinating Board's Advanced Placement Examination Study

Doug Jansen presented an overview of initial findings regarding a study on Advanced Placement (AP) and the requirement of Texas Education Code Section 61.0518 (House Bill 1992, 84th Texas Legislature) for institutions of higher education to grant course credit for AP exams with a minimum score of '3.' An institution's chief academic officer may determine, based on evidence, that a higher score is required to ensure a student is sufficiently prepared for a course for which the AP exam would give credit as prerequisite. The statute requires the Coordinating Board study and compare academic performance, retention rates, and graduation rates of students who complete coursework at an institution of higher education to students receiving course credit for an AP score of '3' or higher.

Dr. Jansen reported on the methodology and initial findings for the AP study. Data shows that in the fall of 2016, 44 of 54 community colleges and 19 of 34 universities accepted a score of '3' or higher on all AP exams for course credit. In 2013-2014, a total of 20,745 students out of a cohort of 289,487 received credit from AP exams, claiming 73,750 course credits. The top five most reported AP subject areas were English, history, Spanish, mathematics, and physics. Persistence to fall 2015 for students with AP credit versus all first-time in college students showed less than a one point percentage difference: 52.3 vs. 53.0 percent for community

colleges and 81.2 vs. 80.7 percent for universities.

A progress report will be given to the Coordinating Board at the December meeting of the Committee on Academic and Workforce Success (CAWS) with the recommendation that institutions of higher education should document AP exam subject titles and scores corresponding to each course for which course credit is awarded. Members discussed possible considerations to the proposed recommendation including whether the reporting of AP scores should be mandatory or whether the data should be transcribed. Staff said that the goal is not to transcribe the data but to retain the information at the institutional level. Melissa Humphries said that there was no plan for inclusion of this data in Coordinating Board Manual (CBM) reports. Ann Kenimer summarized the discussion: (1) members of UEAC are not, at this time, sufficiently informed to offer feedback, (2) it might be of benefit to interface with IT departments, admissions offices, and registrars to determine what information needed to be extracted from recorded AP data to determine if a common format to collect data can be useful.

4. Discussion and Consideration of the 2014 Texas Core Curriculum: Assessment Reports, Course Review

Reinold Cornelius introduced the topic of Texas Core Curriculum (TCC) assessment by stating that the assessment focuses on the TCC's six core objectives. The assessment reports are due every ten years, at the same time an institution's compliance certification report is due to the Southern Association of College and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Staff would send a memo to chief academic/instructional officers as a reminder to prepare their assessment report every 10 years. The assessment report contains two components, 1) assessment of the core objective, and 2) evaluation of the assessment process. The process to submit the report was discussed. A link is provided on the TCC website detailing guidelines for the assessment report process. TCC assessment reports should be submitted through the Coordinating Board's document submission portal (<https://www1.theccb.state.tx.us/apps/proposals/>). Reinold Cornelius informed members that the Coordinating Board had received, so far, assessment reports from five different institutions.

The Committee discussed core curriculum courses. There is variability of the number of core curriculum courses at institutions. The average number is 90. Sixteen courses are offered at 75 institutions.

The Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) lists courses for funding at community colleges and contains course outline and learning outcomes for many frequently used courses. Certain courses in the ACGM are intended for skills attainment of the individual and do not fulfill the general education requirement of the TCC. Some courses contain both skills attainment and scientific/academic understanding, where the latter must outweigh the former to align with the TCC purpose.

Members were presented with a list of about 40 "skills development courses" that predominantly provide individual skills attainment. About 200 of those courses had been previously approved for the TCC, out of approximately 10,000 courses in total. The courses are being re-evaluated for consideration in the TCC. There are 49 institutions, out of 88, that have one or more of the courses in their TCC. Dr. Cornelius reported that about two-thirds of institutions with such courses have three or less courses, while a few have 10-20 courses, involving mostly sequences of introductory language courses.

Dr. Cornelius explained that having some of these courses at some of the institutions doesn't work well for transfer students and that it is a large enough issue impacting transferability so

that it needed to be addressed. He put forward a plan that institutions with courses of the skills development type would resubmit the core courses in question, staff would eliminate the courses, and would issue a new information sheet. When asked he said that institutions would be informed in the near future to begin the reevaluation process.

Members discussed how the skills courses do not align with the core curriculum's Foundational Component Areas (FCA), even though they may work for a degree requirement. The courses in question may be required for a degree program but not at all institutions. Intermediate language courses are frequently approved for the TCC because at that level the course may look at cultural impact, etc., allowing the student to access the required learning foundation of the TCC. Even though an introductory language course is a prerequisite to an intermediate course, students can be placed into an intermediate course without taking the introductory course, if they have the foundation.

Four-year institutions have more flexibility in course offerings since they are not bound to ACGM standards. For example, an art course syllabus can include the components of the FCA definition but the institution cannot declare the course to be equivalent to a course listed in the ACGM. Members asked if it was possible to redesign a course based on the TCC guidelines and resubmit for consideration. Dr. Cornelius replied yes, but cautioned such a course may already be in the ACGM as a different course.

Members asked if this was the only revisit of appropriateness in the core curriculum or if more were to come. Staff could not confirm at this time. For example, the occasional upper division course may have to be re-checked for prerequisites or other individual issues, but it was unlikely that the scope of issues was such that courses would have to be checked in a group, as was the case with the "skills development courses."

Members discussed the timeline. They asked staff to inform institutions early and requested a fall 2018 effective date, to allow schools two years to adjust. Sheila Amin Gutierrez de Pineres moved to make a motion for an effective date of fall 2018, and Nancy Martin seconded the motion. The committee approved unanimously.

5. Update on the Pathways Project, Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC)

Co-Chair Brett Millán introduced Dr. Cynthia Ferrell, Executive Director of the Texas Success Center at the Texas Association of Community Colleges. She provided an update on the Texas Pathways Project. The Pathways Project, funded fully by grants, focuses on building capacity for Texas community colleges to design and implement academic and career pathways for all students. Its purpose is to contribute to increasing credentialed young Texans to 60 percent by 2030. The program is an approach to student success based on intentionally structured educational experiences, informed by available evidence, that guide students from the selection of their high school degree program (HB 5 endorsements in five academic/career areas) to attainment of high-quality credentials for postsecondary enrollment.

Currently 38 percent of young Texans have a postsecondary credential. Only one in five 8th grade students in Texas achieves this goal within six years of finishing high school. There are also substantial disparities across racial and gender subgroups. White students' rates of earning a college credential are two to two and a half times higher than those of Hispanics and Blacks. And less than nine percent of Hispanic and Black 8th grade males earn any postsecondary credential within 11 years.

The Texas Success Center will provide lessons from the project to inform and support the Texas Association of Community Colleges and the Texas Student Success Council on state policies that enable colleges in implementing Pathways at scale. Additionally, the annual Texas Success Center Board of Trustee Institutes will inform and challenge institutional policy and engage community college trustees in enabling successful Pathways adoption.

She reported that the project's goals also assists undecided students, aiding in career exploration. It is committed to strengthening high school advising by requirement. She explained the core of the project is culminated into six institutes, each 2.5 days in length, designed to engage five to seven-person college teams of varying composition. The first of which will be held in Austin/Bastrop on November 2-4, 2016.

She asked if UEAC is open to the idea of project leaders to make a presentation of their work, to which members agreed. Members asked for a map of all community colleges currently involved in the project. Reginald Bell asked if the Coordinating Board could provide gender enrollment and graduation data from the last 10 years.

6. Discussion of "Designing Texas Undergraduate Education in the 21st Century" (2009 report by the Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee)

Co-Chair Ann Kenimer introduced Dr. Cornelius to present a discussion of the recommendations from a 2009 UEAC report. He introduced Tracey Armstrong, Coordinating Board Director of Innovation. She presented four areas of focus for student success: 1) national and statewide financial literacy; 2) open educational resources; 3) college readiness success department; and 4) tech mediated advising systems. She explained there have been 125 vendors promoting technical advising systems, an increase from 25 three years ago. Reinold Cornelius invited members to reply to an email he will send asking for input on this topic.

The Committee had a broad discussion how goals and recommendations of the 2009 report could be connected to the four goals of the new strategic plan *60x30TX*. Some critical issues were pointed out: 1) the strong focus on college readiness for first-year students and a drop in emphasis for the second year experience; 2) a heavy focus on at-risk students that might overlook the non-typical 18 year-old student; 3) the need to consider all races/ethnicities and genders; 4) a substantial focus on STEM advising impacting advising in other subject areas; and 5) student confusion over which marketable skills they're learning in each course. The possibility of a white paper was discussed, guidelines for experimental learning transcripts, and the necessity to include parents of high school students in the discussion.

7. Consideration of Future Work and Meeting Dates

Meetings are now planned one year in advance: the third Friday in April and September: April 21, 2017 and September 15, 2017. Reminder was given to members regarding sending an email for the survey of UEAC costs.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.