

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE  
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number 8614S  
Date of Senate Approval 4/03/14

-----  
Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

**FWDC 11:                   Articulation of Transitional Oversight for the Liberal Arts Curriculum and Establishment of the Transitional Faculty Liberal Arts Core Committee (LACC)**

**Rationale:** Among the factors leading to the revision of our ILS curriculum was the heavy workload of faculty oversight, especially for its designated curricular “intensives,” which required committee evaluation and approval as well as help with analysis, assessment, and improvement. That oversight employed 19 faculty members in its ILSOC intensive and colloquium subcommittees. Another 19 faculty members served as Topical Cluster coordinators. The new LAC curriculum eliminates the topical cluster requirement and reassigns Writing and Information Literacy intensives to the departments, thus reducing the need for the same number of faculty and the same amount of work for those components of the curriculum.

ILSOC has been responsible for the oversight of the entire ILS curriculum. For most of ILS, ILSOC had both an evaluative and formative role, even for the approval of Learning Foundation courses, including Natural Science and Foreign Language. Oversight for LAC is less centralized. Approval of courses meeting the Laboratory Science designation, for example, falls to the Chairs of the Natural Sciences in collaboration with the Dean of Natural Sciences, and approval of Foreign Languages belongs to the chairs of the Department or Programs in which the language is taught and tested in collaboration with the Dean of Humanities.

The reassignment of Writing and Information Literacy learning outcomes to departments means that departments will determine the form of demonstration and the method of evaluation of Writing and Information Literacy competency. Like the oral competency, which we evaluate by department without coordinators or liaisons, departments will create measures for evaluating their own learning outcomes in the areas of Writing and Information Literacy. As we transition to this format, we need two transition coordinators for the first two years of the new LAC to bring the experience of the Writing and Information Literacy subcommittees under ILSOC to assist departments with the development of appropriate student learning outcomes and assessment measures.

The signature feature of LAC is the distribution of core learning outcomes and assessment throughout all departments and programs. There is a clear benefit in sharing our core learning more broadly throughout major and core curricula, and this was a goal of LAC. It will require more participation from more of the faculty, because it is clear that the integrity and cohesion of the system depends on the willingness of the faculty to accept common learning outcomes and assessment focuses.

Two elements of LAC, namely the Diversity Intensive and the First Year Colloquium, need more formative and evaluative oversight. The Diversity Intensive will remain a university-wide requirement, and will require approval from the LACC. The coordinators for these two areas will advise the development of new courses, serve as assessment liaisons, and foster connections among disciplines and faculty and students.

Assessment of the following components of LAC will be done similarly to the modes used in the former ILS curriculum: HUM, Arts & Ideas, Diversity Intensive, First Year Colloquium, Laboratory Science, LANG 120, Foreign Languages, and LS 479/LA 478. Writing and Information Literacy will be delivered and assessed within the departments. Quantitative Perspectives will be assessed by the Math Department. Two new assessment liaisons will be created for Social Sciences and Scientific Perspectives upon the recommendations of the chairs and deans of the respective areas.

All those with oversight will work with both the Academic Policies Committee and the Associate Provost and Dean of University Programs to ensure the determined standards of the core curriculum are met and to generate courses that conform to LAC program charges.

### **Articulation of Oversight for Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC)**

| <b>Requirement</b>        | <b>Oversight</b>  |
|---------------------------|---|
| HUM Program               | HUM Program Director & Course Coordinators                                    |
| Arts and Ideas            | Arts and Ideas Director   |
| Writing                   | Writing Transition Coordinator (2 years)                                      |
| Information Literacy      | Information Literacy Transition Coordinator (2 years)                         |
| Diversity Intensive       | Diversity Coordinator   |
| First Year Colloquium     | First Year Colloquium Coordinator   |
| Laboratory Science        | Natural Sciences Chairs in consultation with Nat. Sci. Dean                   |
| Social Science            | Social Science Chairs in consultation with Soc. Sci. Dean                     |
| Scientific Perspectives   | Natural Science and Social Science Dept. Chairs with Deans                    |
| Language 120              | First-Year Writing Director   |
| Foreign Language          | Foreign Language/ Classics/ International Studies Chairs and Program Director |
| Quantitative Perspectives | Math Chair  |
| LS 479/LA 478             | 479/ 478 Coordinator  |

### **Description of Diversity and First Year Colloquium Coordinator Positions:**

These coordinators will initially be selected by FWDC from recommendations by a faculty committee formed for the purpose of reviewing applications. The term of these coordinators will be three years, and may be renewed.

1. Diversity Coordinator: The Diversity Coordinator and the DI sub-committee (membership to be determined by FWDC) will approve proposed DI courses according to DI learning outcomes. The coordinator collects syllabi and information on courses proposed as Diversity Intensive; communicates expectations; helps develop and assess Diversity Intensive SLOs; develops, administers and gathers results from assessment instruments for Diversity Intensive courses; and encourages best practices in Diversity courses across the disciplines. The Diversity Intensive coordinator will also work with department chairs and program directors to see that a sufficient number of DI sections are offered.

It is important to recognize the difficulty of teaching DI courses. Therefore, in addition to approving DI courses the Diversity Coordinator will be a resource for teachers who guide students through difficult subject matter and often meet many forms of resistance. During the first year of transition, the DI student learning outcomes from the ILS DI courses will be used. However, these SLOs may be revised, contingent upon the needs of our learning community and the results of assessment.

2. First-Year Colloquium Coordinator: Collects syllabi and information on First-Year Colloquium courses; communicates expectations; helps departments develop and assess SLOs, encourages best practices in First-Year Colloquium courses across disciplines, and works with Advising to assist with matters of student retention and success. The First Year Colloquium coordinator will also work with department chairs and program directors to see that a sufficient number of colloquia are offered.

### **Description of Transition Coordinators for Writing and Information Literacy**

Two transition coordinators will serve to help departments develop student learning outcomes and assessment measures as these responsibilities are transferred to the departments. A Writing Transition Coordinator and an Information Literacy Transition Coordinator will initially be selected by FWDC from recommendations by a faculty committee formed for the purpose of reviewing applications.

1. Information Literacy Transition Coordinator: Communicates expectations; helps departments develop and assess Information Literacy SLOs and competency, fosters a culture of best practices in Information Literacy courses across disciplines, and helps write department-specific language for the catalog; works with the Director of CTL to select, develop and make accessible resources for faculty use.

2. Writing Transition Coordinator: Communicates expectations; helps departments develop and assess Writing SLOs, competency, and state writing requirements, fosters a culture of best practices in writing courses across disciplines, and helps write department-specific language for the catalog; works with the Director of CTL to select, develop and make accessible resources for faculty use.

**Structure of the Transitional Liberal Arts Core Committee (LACC):**

The particular needs of coordination, oversight and assessment of the Liberal Arts Core will emerge more clearly from the first year of its implementation. Consequently, for the first year, the Liberal Arts Core Committee (LACC) will be a transitional body whose primary responsibility will be to determine more specifically the administrative needs of the LAC and the work with FWDC to create the standing committee to begin in fall 2014. The transitional LACC includes eleven voting faculty members and two ex officio members. A chair from the voting members will be elected at the first meeting of the academic year, whose responsibilities will be to call and lead meetings, report annually to APC, and file a committee report. If votes are necessary, voting may occur whenever seven of the eleven voting members are present:

1. The Diversity Coordinator
2. The Information Literacy Transition Coordinator
3. The Writing Transition Coordinator
4. The First-Year Colloquium Coordinator
5. HUM Program Director
6. Arts & Ideas Director
7. Foreign Language Representative
8. First Year Writing Director
9. Math Representative
10. Representative Chair or designee from the Natural Sciences, elected by Natural Science Chairs
11. Representative Chair or designee from the Social Sciences, elected by Social Science Chairs
12. One member of APC, chosen by APC (ex officio, without vote)
13. Associate Provost and Dean of University Programs (ex officio, without vote)

**Duties:**

- 1) The primary responsibilities of the transitional LAC Committee are a) to evaluate the specific needs for faculty oversight during the first year of operation of the LAC. And, given the broader distribution of responsibilities, LACC will also b) make specific recommendations for the need for and nature of a standing LACC that will follow. To this end, the transitional LACC will observe, collect information, evaluate, and advise. APC is responsible for component charges and criteria of LAC and any changes to them. The Dean of University Programs is responsible for faculty development and course development related to the LAC. The responsibility for determining courses that fulfill the relevant components

- belongs to the individuals and groups named in the oversight table above. Assessment responsibilities belong to the respective liaisons and departments as articulated; LACC will receive assessment reports as part of their information.
- 2) The transitional LACC will evaluate the needs for faculty oversight, make recommendations to and work with FWDC to establish the standing LAC oversight that would begin for fall 2015. By the end of February 2015, the transitional LACC will have a set of clear recommendations for FWDC regarding the responsibilities for LAC oversight and the selection process for future coordinators.
  - 3) The transitional LACC will also evaluate the functions of the LAC itself and make recommendations to APC as needed. However, these functions will not be exercised through course proposals or evaluation of individual courses. LACC recognizes the current system of evaluation as outlined in the Faculty Handbook as sufficient to determine the quality of LAC courses and the current system of assessment as sufficient to measure learning in those courses, with the addition of assessment measures for Social Science and Scientific Perspectives requirements. In addition, the transitional LACC will also examine some of the open questions of the CRTF that are not addressed in LAC, such as the role of interdisciplinary clusters or minors, Health & Wellness, credit limits within majors, and make recommendations to APC about their suggestions, if these issues are not addressed by other members of the faculty.
  - 4) The chair of the transitional LACC will report to APC and FWDC at the end of fall semester 2014, providing information about work done by the committee during that semester, with rationale if necessary. In this report, they may also identify areas of concern with regard to clarity and specificity of component charges, the delivery and availability of LAC sections, the oversight of LAC, or any other issues.

**Impact:**

The oversight of LAC is likely to reduce committee assignments significantly, entrusting faculty with the development and delivery of the curriculum. The four faculty members who serve as continuing and transition coordinators will have a substantive role and should receive reassign time or stipends for their work. It is expected that the overall reduction in faculty workload will be of benefit to the majority.