THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number SD5423S
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Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

IDC 2: Establishment of Task Force to Review the Liberal Arts Core

Rationale: The last systematic review of the Liberal Arts Core was begun in 2011, with the current LAC established over the course of 2013 and 2014. As such, it has been a decade since the LAC has been systematically and holistically reviewed. The current SACS accreditation process has also highlighted that regular assessment of the curriculum's current SLO's has not been occurring, and annual reports from the LAC Advisory Committee and Institutional Effectiveness Committee have not been made in nearly five years. As such, this is an opportune time to establish a task force to do a thorough review of the LAC and its assessment models. The faculty senate has also recently approved a proposal for a new university mission, and a review will ensure that the LAC aligns with the current goals, values, and priorities of UNCA. Likewise, the university's recent emphasis on recruitment and retention, as well as questions of transfer credit articulations, and their possible connection to the core curriculum has yet to be fully studied. In light of the federally mandated Course Program of Study, as well as new guidance from deans that courses with fewer than 8 enrolled students may be cut, new concerns about the personnel and budget implications involved in the delivery of the LAC have been raised, and this task force will research and address these resource questions. Similarly, there are a number of unique, university resources that are not currently incorporated into the LAC (e.g. the Key Center, Office of Sustainability, Career Center, Study Abroad, NEH funding for digital competencies, vel sim). Examination of how the curriculum, mission, and resources interrelate will be an important consideration of this task force. Finally, there is a perception that the current LAC, which can take 46-56 hours to complete, is too large and overly rigid. While some analysis of this claim has been undertaken, a more thorough consideration of the size and format of the LAC bears consideration. For all of these reasons, the current task force is being proposed.

It is important to note that this task force will not have any policy making authority. Rather, it will regularly submit suggestions and recommendations to the Faculty Senate for further consideration and potential adoption. Likewise, this review does not assume that revision of the LAC is necessary; rather, through a series of carefully delineated tasks, it will examine whether changes might be needed or whether the current LAC should be maintained. Finally, this task force does not replace work done by other standing committees, such as the LACAC and IEC. Such committees will continue to fulfill their charges, and, in an effort for mutual support, the proposed task force is required to consult with these and other stakeholders on campus.

Tasks:

- 1. Examine the description/mission of the Liberal Arts Core and determine if the LAC's SLO's align with this description/mission.
 - a. If the LAC does not have clearly defined SLO's, compose these SLO's and submit for senate approval.
 - b. If the LAC has clearly defined SLO's that do not align with the description/mission of the LAC, edit the current SLO's, LAC description/mission, or both and submit for senate approval.
 - c. If the LAC has clearly defined SLO's that align with the description/mission of the LAC, proceed to task 3.
- 2. Determine whether the mission/description of the LAC and its SLO's align with the university mission and values.
 - a. If these do not align, revisit task 2, make appropriate edits, and submit for senate approval.
 - b. If these do align, proceed to task 4.
- 3. Determine whether the current LAC meets the SLO's of the LAC and its stated mission as well as the SLO's of the university and its stated mission.
 - a. If the current Liberal Arts Core does not meet the SLO's and missions of the core curriculum and the university, redesign the LAC to align with these documents and submit for senate approval.
 - b. If the LAC meets the SLO's and missions of the core curriculum and the university but is in need of revision, revise the existing LAC and submit to Faculty Senate for approval.
 - c. If the LAC meets the SLO's and missions of the core curriculum and the university and is in no need of revision, proceed to task 5.
- 3a. Develop an effective, feasible, and sustainable assessment model for the LAC that aligns with its SLO's and mission. Submit policy for senate approval.
- 3b. Determine personnel and budget implications for any LAC that results from this review.
- 4. Establish a policy of regular review and revision for the LAC (e.g. every 10 years staggered with SACS review, *vel sim*. Submit policy for senate approval.

Composition of Task Force:

- 1. Provost (co-chair).
- 2. Representative from IREP with an emphasis on assessment.
- 3. 9 faculty representatives, 3 from each division (of these 9 total faculty representatives, at least one member needs to be of lecture rank and one of pre-tenure rank).

- a. Faculty members will be chosen by election in a manner similar to faculty senate elections. All faculty can self-nominate to be considered for this task force.
- b. Task force will elect a second co-chair from among the participating faculty members.
- c. All faculty members who nominate themselves for a position on the task force must submit a candidate statement.
- 4. Senate committee chairs (FWDC, IDC, APC).
- 5. Representative from the registrar's office.
- 6. Representative from student success.
- 7. Student representative chosen by SGA.
- 8. Task force is required to consult with stakeholders on campus that include, but are not limited to, Athletics, Study Abroad Office, Key Center, Office of Sustainability, Student Affairs, Admissions, Marketing, deans, chair and program directors, Institutional Effectiveness Committee, Humanities Program Director, Arts & Ideas Program Director, First Year Symposium Coordinator, Writing Program Administrator, Diversity Intensive Coordinator, Liberal Arts Core Advisory Committee, Diversity Intensive Committee, SGA, the student body, the Student Success and Retention Task Force, etc.

Duration of Task Force:

- 1. Per faculty handbook <u>section 10.6</u>, this task force is designed to complete its stated tasks within 1 year.
 - a. Task force must report to faculty senate at least once per semester.
 - b. The one year clock for the task force will begin upon its first meeting after the election and selection of its members. The first meeting is to occur no later than October 1, 2023.