UO Committee on Courses
Meeting Minutes

Date: January 11, 2012
Present:

☑ Boss, Jack* ☑ Crosiar, John ☑ Engelking, Paul* ☑ Eveland, Sue ☑ Imamura, James*

☒ Jefferis, Mike ☑ Merskin, Deb* ☑ Eveland, Sue ☑ Scott, Skelton
ox Wahlstrom, Andrew ☑ Warden, Kathy ☑ White, Frances*

* Voting members

Next meeting: January 18, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Owyhee River Room

I. Announcements
No announcements.

II. Discussion

Administrative Actions: Mike Jefferis discussed all of the Winter Term UOCC administrative actions for course changes. The Committee approved all administrative actions on the Winter agenda for the courses listed below:

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANTH 424/524</td>
<td>COLT 370</td>
<td>LAS 299</td>
<td>PHYS 203</td>
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<td>ANTH 469/569</td>
<td>HIST 417/517</td>
<td>LAS 410</td>
<td>DSC 609</td>
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<td>BI 214</td>
<td>HIST 435/535</td>
<td>PHYS 157M</td>
<td>CFT 401</td>
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<td>BI 486/586</td>
<td>HPHY 381</td>
<td>PHYS 201</td>
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<td>CH 157M</td>
<td>LAS 199</td>
<td>PHYS 202</td>
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SPED Courses: Paul E. made a brief report on the four SPED courses that were rolled forward from Fall Term. Handout included. SPED 440/540 and 441/541 need more detail with the differential between graduate and undergraduate students. SPED 442/542 and 443/543 need corrections on P/NP bringing them in-line with UO standards. P needs to be C or above, NP needs to be D or below.

Winter Term Course Assignments:
**Honors Courses**: Paul E. reported that the Undergraduate Council would like him to draft criteria for honors courses. Handouts (2) included. The three main points of discussion were:

- GTFs do not teach Honors courses
- There needs to be a differential submitted to explain why the course should be an honors course
- The number of students enrolled in an honors course

The Committee decided they want to use the Honors College as a model for class size. The Committee voted and approved unanimously the following criteria:

- Honors courses to enroll no more than 20 students
- Honors lab to enroll no more than 12 students

**III. Action Items**

- Paul Engelking: Draft criteria for honors courses
SPED 440/540: Syllabus states that grad students will spend an additional 20 hours reading but additional readings are not listed (one list is provided and no distinction is made b/t undergrad and grad reading). Differential b/t graduate and undergraduate students is a bit vague: “Research Assignment (30 pts) Students will identify evidence-based strategies to support early literacy instruction.” Instructor should provide more information on what the “research assignment” entails. Details should also be provided on how grad students will be spending extra time (compared to undergrads) in “online interaction” and “fieldwork.”

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SPED 442/542: This course was approved by graduate school.
Undergrad NP equivalent to C grade or lower. (Univ. policy requires P for C- and above.)

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Undergrad NP equivalent to C grade or lower. (Univ. policy requires P for C- and above.)
Hello Cathy,

cc: Ian, Karen

Here are 2 items for distribution to the Undergraduate Council. Feedback welcome.

In our last meeting we discussed various aspects of honors program proposals. One topic was class size.

Paul invited suggestions for rewording item 3, which now reads — “Class size should be small enough to promote intensive student participation.”

We discussed whether appropriate class size should be specified — 12 students, 20 students, etc. I suggested that given substantial variances in size and structure of UO programs, schools and departments, it would be a good idea to avoid trying to come up with a one-size-fits-all number. The group seemed to embrace the idea of looking at a particular proposal within the context of that department’s curriculum.

Combining aspects of current items 3 and 4 might capture the sentiment of the Council, at least as I perceive it. Item 4 now reads “The faculty member(s) teaching the course should be available for close advising outside of class.”

Council members – what would you think of replacing items 3 and 4 with something like this? >>

Honors program classes must be distinctly and substantively different from corollaries in the regular curriculum. The Committee on Courses will look for a student experience that is deeper and more intense than what is provided in conventional classes. Typical considerations will include class size, the structure of the class, faculty-to-student ratio, and increased availability of faculty for feedback, counseling, and mentoring.

On a related topic, I cited provisions of my own department’s proposal that address how existing courses could be restructured for an Honors Program. Some members wanted to see the examples, so here they are-—-

**J397H Honors Media Ethics**

Media Ethics (J397) is currently offered as a mass lecture (120+ students), twice a year. As such, the course is reliant on in-class slide-show/lecture presentations, out-of-class readings, multiple quizzes, and computer-graded exams. Although in-class discussion is encouraged, via case studies, it is extremely difficult to engage such a large class on a regular basis.

The proposed Honors section would be limited to 25 students, allowing for more depth and variety in readings, discussions instead of lectures, and concentrated application of ethical concepts via intense case study evaluation. In addition, short essays will replace quizzes, and a term paper will replace a final exam. This approach has worked well in 400-level specialized ethics courses such as J495: Ethics of Strategic Communication.

**J387H Honors History**

Communication History (J387) is also taught as a mass lecture (typically 160), once a year. As with the ethics course, classroom lecture, quizzes, multiple-choice exams, and two short essays comprise the overall approach. A smaller class (25 limit) would allow for detailed readings instead of the broad-brush-textbook approach—individualized in part for student interest. Small essays would substitute for quizzes, with a longer essay at mid term, and a final paper instead of a final exam. The final paper would reflect the student’s interest.

The smaller class size and ability to tailor each course to the needs and interests of the students will make these Honors courses more in-depth and infinitely more enriching. [end of excerpt]

Tom Wheeler
Journalism

twheeler@uoregon.edu
Thanks Cathy. Sorry I was unable to be there for the discussion.

I much prefer the approach outlined by Tom that considers all the complicated factors that make a class “honors” rather than just being prescriptive about class size. The LCB Honors program has been running for 13 years with a 35 student cohort. As such, they take 9 Honors courses together as a cohort. Within that structure, we have been successful at providing a “deeper and more intense” experience in a number of ways (team learning, project-based learning, projects with actual organizations, tougher case studies). One way we describe it to faculty is to teach the classes more like an MBA graduate class (which often have class sizes of 40+). In addition, because they are in a cohort where the students are bright and dedicated to learning, even a class of 35, with the right teaching approaches, provides a rich environment for discussion and analysis of the content.

We could probably do some things in a class of 20-25 that we can’t in a class of 35, but I don’t think there is a magic number beyond which we necessarily lose the ability to make a class deeper or intense enough to qualify as honors. It’s what faculty do with the students in and out of the classroom that makes the difference.

Thanks for your work on this.

Ron

Ron Bramhall
Lundquist College of Business
Director - Honors Program | http://www.uoregon.edu/AS/Asp/Honors.aspx
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From: Cathy Kraus <ckraus@uoregon.edu>
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Subject: FW: for the Undergrad Council: Honors Programs

Dear Undergraduate Council-

Here are Tom Wheeler's comments and cited examples pertaining to the discussion on Honors Courses during the last meeting. I am happy to forward the exchange. However, if you would like to comment among yourselves directly, I have attached the roster with email addresses for your convenience.

-ck

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Division of Undergraduate Studies
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Ph: 6-1221
Fax 6-6277
SPED 440/540: Syllabus states that grad students will spend an additional 20 hours reading but additional readings are not listed (one list is provided and no distinction is made b/t undergrad and grad reading). Differential b/t graduate and undergraduate students is a bit vague: "Research Assignment (30 pts) Students will identify evidence-based strategies to support early literacy instruction." Instructor should provide more information on what the "research assignment" entails. Details should also be provided on how grad students will be spending extra time (compared to undergrads) in "online interaction" and "fieldwork."

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