

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
University Committee on Undergraduate Education
DRAFT MINUTES
Thursday, Feb.22, 2024
10:15 A.M. to 12:00 P.M., via Zoom

<https://msu.zoom.us/j/96531712347>
Passcode: 849464

Present: Gary Blanchard, Kathleen Gallo, Nicole Geske, Ebony Green, Amanda Idema, Andrea Kelly, Becky Keogh (attending for Steve Shablin), Marissa King, Mark Largent, Emilia Marcyk-Taylor, Helen Mayer, Justin Micomonaco, Vashi Sawtelle, Linda Sayed, Robin Silbergleid, Joy Speas, Alexandria Thrubis Stanley, Emily Tabuteau, Antoinette Tessmer, Patty West

Absent: Steven Gray, Jairahel Price, Steve Shablin, Ethan Voss, Antonio White

The minutes for February 8, 2024 were approved as amended by adding Morgan Shipley, College of Arts and Letters, to agenda item number 6. Emelia Hammond and Jeff Judge, James Madison College were added to agenda item numbers 8 through 11. (Att A) (Action Item)

Comments from the Chairperson

Chairperson Tessmer had no comments and reminded members of UCUE's next meeting on March 7, 2024.

Comments from the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

Vice Provost Largent shared that he has been partnering with the Office of Admissions and speaking to hundreds of undecided students each week in the MSU Union sharing how the University functions and how they can succeed at MSU.

Vice Provost Largent reminded members that President Guskiewicz will be starting on March 4 and will be doing college visits as well as formal and informal meet and greets across campus.

Some challenges with the Department of Education were shared including that they are redoing the FAFSA which will delay financial aid distribution. The Department of Education also has placed a hold on MSU's implementation of new academic programs.

Request for a New Minor in Digital Storytelling (Att B) (Action Item)

Jeremy Steele, Associate Chairperson, School of Journalism, College of Arts and Sciences

Associate Chairperson Steele shared a brief slide deck indicating career paths that students can work in after obtaining this Minor such as film, television, corporate communications, and digital advertising. Benefits of this minor include opportunities for students to utilize their digital storytelling skills in their own subject matter expertise in areas such as advertising, business, and public policy. The minor will be 15 credits and allows students to mix and match depending on their core interests.

The following motion passed unanimously.

The University Committee on Undergraduate Education duly considered and endorsed the Request for a New Minor in Digital Storytelling.

Request for a New Bachelor of Arts Degree in Nonprofit Leadership, Religion, and Social Change (Att C) (Action Item)

Morgan Shipley, Associate Professor, College of Arts and Letters

Associate Professor Shipley indicated that this BA degree will provide students the opportunity to develop a deeper knowledge of nonprofit organizations, charitable actions, and develop careers in service in the context of religious agencies. There are five areas of primary focus: (1) nonprofit/philanthropic, (2) NGOs and examples of social change, (3) values/ethics in relation to global cultural and religious knowledge, (4) human/ecological flourishing in civil society, and (5) organizational innovation in global religious and cultural contexts.

Editorial comments and redundancies were noted regarding credit counts and headings. It was indicated that Associate Professor Shipley could bring these items to the attention of the University Curriculum Committee (UCC).

The following motion passed unanimously.

The University Committee on Undergraduate Education duly considered and endorsed the Request for a New Bachelor of Arts Degree in Nonprofit Leadership, Religion, and Social Change.

Request for a New Minor in Screenwriting (Att D) (Action Item)

Kaveh Askari, Director of Film Studies, College of Arts and Letters

Dr. Askari informed members that screenwriting has been taught in the English department since the late 70s. He noted that courses are operating at capacity and additional sections are often added. It was noted that faculty have been offering Independent Studies in order to accommodate students. The Request is to formalize the work that is already being done in the department. Dr. Askari noted that a new advanced topics course to increase offerings at the 400 level has been created and new faculty members have been hired to teach screenwriting courses.

The following motion passed unanimously.

The University Committee on Undergraduate Education duly considered and endorsed the Request for a New Minor in Screenwriting.

Due to the similar nature of the following four Requests, it was determined that the Requests would be discussed and voted on together. Presenting for James Madison College are:

Emelia Hammond, Academic Advisor, James Madison College

Jeff Judge, Assistant Dean, James Madison College

Request for a New Bachelor of Arts Degree in Comparative Cultures and Politics-Secondary Education (Att E) (Action Item)

Request for a New Bachelor of Arts Degree in International Relations-Secondary Education (Att F)

Request for a New Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Theory and Constitutional Democracy-Secondary Education (Att G) (Action Item)

Request for a New Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Relations and Policy-Secondary Education (Att H) (Action Item)

Emelia Hammond provided background for the four Requests listed below from James Madison College.

The Requests represent a shift in the teacher education pathway from a 5-year to a 4-year program. James Madison College (JMC) had been substituting teacher certification courses into JMC major requirements.

It was noted that by creating new majors, this allows JMC to formally standardize the requirements and communicate degree expectations to students at the beginning of the degree program. With the creation of these new secondary education specific versions of the majors, it will allow for degree audits which will help students stay on track toward their intended major. A discussion was held on the importance of the existing and new courses that have been added to the majors and providing a path to completion within 4 years.

Editorial comments were recognized where credits were totaled incorrectly and text could be simplified. It was noted that two of the majors totaled 140 credits and two majors totaled 143 credits. A discussion was held about the difficulties and inequities of having an undergraduate degree exceed the standard 120 credits. Some concerns were extra time and expense for the student and that financial aid often does not pay for any credits over 120. After a discussion, it was determined that the Requests should be reviewed to try to bring the total required credits down to 120.

A Motion was made and approved to table the four Requests below and refer them back to James Madison College for further consideration.

Steering Committee Charge to UCUE: Campus Survey on the Usage of Digital Learning Platforms (Discussion Item)

Antoinette Tessmer, Chairperson, UCUE

Chairperson Tessmer shared information that University Council voted in favor that an ad hoc committee be formed to oversee a campus survey to determine what digital learning platforms are being used on MSU's campus.

A discussion was held regarding the membership of the committee and the best way to design the survey to support future guidelines on the use of digital learning platforms and to support future resource allocations. Dr. Van Hof suggested that in order to streamline the process, there could be an "authorship" group and an "advisory" group. Chairperson Tessmer will continue work on this task and report back to UCUE at the next meeting.

Pending Changes to Shared Programs – Undergraduate to Graduate (UG2G) (Information Item)

Becky Keogh, Senior Associate Registrar

Melissa Del Rio, Chief of Staff, Graduate School

Elizabeth Elliott, Project Manager, Accreditation, Assessment, Curriculum and Compliance

Becky Keogh shared slides explaining the Undergraduate to Graduate Shared Program about enabling undergraduate students to earn up to 9 credits that are shared with the graduate degree prior to being graduate students. MSU's current policy was explained indicating the issue that students are not eligible for financial aid for graduate-level and undergraduate-level courses at the same time.

Boilerplate Language for a Centralized Syllabus (Information Item)

Jeremy Van Hof, Director, Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation

Due to time constraints, Dr. Van Hof agreed to present at UCUE's April 11 meeting.

Subcommittee Report:

New Student Perception of Learning Survey (SPLS)
Patty West, Assistant Professor, College of Nursing

Dr. West provided the following updates:

- The zoom meeting with department chairs, directors, and those directly responsible for evaluating teaching was held on Feb. 15th. The recording and PowerPoint can be found at this link on the SPLS website: <https://spls.msu.edu/administrators>
- It was noted that fixed-term faculty with term appointments, lose access to SPLS once their contract date is completed. Again, the SPLS team recommends fixed-term faculty with appointments that vary over semester terms throughout the academic year to download their data right away when they receive the email the data is ready for access.
- Lastly, there was some discussion on teaching evaluations in higher education and the work that still needs to be done around the country in this area... not just relying on quantitative numbers for evaluation/RPT. There was a recommendation to share the article below:
McMurtrie article: <https://www.chronicle.com/article/teaching-evaluations-are-broken-can-they-be-fixed>

Roundtable

There were no items shared during the Roundtable.

Submitted by Lynne Frechen.