

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
University Committee on Undergraduate Education
DRAFT MINUTES

Thursday, January 25, 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, Alissa Hakim, Amanda Idema, Marissa King, Mark Largent, Emilia Marcyk-Taylor, Helen Mayer, Justin Micomonaco, Vashti Sawtelle, Linda Sayed, Steve Shablin, Robin Silbergleid, Joy Speas, Alexandria Thrubis Stanley, Emily Tabuteau, Antoinette Tessmer, Ethan Voss, Patty West

Absent: Steven Gray, Andrea Kelly, Jairahel Price, Antonio White

The agenda was approved.

The minutes were approved as amended to correct the spelling on “HIPAA” for January 11, 2024.

Comments from the Chairperson

Chairperson Tessmer had no comments and reminded members of UCUE’s next meeting on February 8.

Comments from the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

Vice Provost Largent informed members that the Exploratory Business preference has been fully implemented. Students in the Exploratory Business preference will not be advised by Broad College, however, they will be advised by University Advising.

Vice Provost Largent shared persistence data as a result of COVID. Data was shared regarding spring 2024 persistence conditional on today’s enrollment and graduation compared to historical persistence rates. He indicated that although we may start to see graduation rates slow down due to COVID, long-term persistence rates look very good.

UCUE is interested in learning how widespread the use of digital learning platforms by faculty is in complement to D2L (e.g., Loncapa, Tophat, Flip...) (Discussion Item)

Are those complementary digital learning platforms supporting student success?

Does the use of multiple digital platforms create accessibility and affordability barriers for students?

Jason Beaudin, Executive Director, MSU Educational Technology

Stephen Thomas, Assistant Dean, STEM Education Teaching and Learning, Undergraduate Education

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

Mr. Beaudin spoke about D2L capabilities and some of the reasons why users may decide to use another platform or one in coordination with D2L. He indicated a focus should be on what is MSU’s digital learning strategy, and is it up to students or the institution to purchase complementary programs?

It was noted that faculty are free to use whatever teaching platform they prefer however the environment should be maintained. Mr. Beaudin indicated that a steering committee is being formed to lead reviews of existing tools and will include representatives of various teaching and learning stakeholders.

Dr. Van Hof commented about the importance of academic freedom and maintaining the choice for the educator. He commented on the difficulties of students having to learn several different platforms for different classes instead of being able to spend their time meeting the class objectives. It was noted that high-quality technical support greatly contributes to a student's success.

A discussion was held regarding Loncapa and other learning platforms as well as rationales for numerous systems. It was noted that D2L could be used administratively for students to view their grades throughout the semester by using "Gradebook."

A discussion was held if UCUE has a role in helping to determine what platforms are complementary to D2L. Mr. Beaudin welcomes feedback to reflect what students and educators need. Dr. Van Hof indicated a priority this semester is to create an advisory committee, that would include a couple of UCUE members, with the goal being to set the annual trajectory of the teaching center. He will reach out to Chairperson Tessmer when the advisory committee is being formed.

Update on Bachelor of General Studies (BGS), proposed new degree program

Jim Lucas, Assistant Dean, Global Education & Curriculum, Undergraduate Education

Assistant Dean Lucas shared a presentation updating a proposed new degree program, the Bachelor of General Studies (BGS), which was first shared with UCUE in September, 2023. Kathleen Gallo, Amanda Idema, and Antoinette Tessmer volunteered in September to work with Assistant Dean Lucas.

Assistant Dean Lucas shared that the working group has focused on four primary considerations: flexibility, coordination, cost/benefit, and organization. It was determined that a centrally offered degree would be piloted and may be called Liberal/Professional Studies. The working group has determined that adult learners would be the main population for this degree and will be piloted with Apple Academy students.

Assistant Dean Lucas encouraged UCUE members to email him with feedback on this effort.

Roundtable

Dr. West provided updates on the Student Perceptions of Learning Survey (SPLS) indicating the implementation team is working with MSU IT to allow college designees access to the SPLS data via the dashboard.

Alissa Hakim indicated MSU's current Incomplete policy should be revisited.

Dr. Green stated that the Academic Advising Recognition Awards are being held on Monday, February 5 in the Union Ballroom.

Submitted by Lynne Frechen.