To:  Jaqueline Wright,
Secretary for Academic Governance

From:  Cynthia Taggart
Chair, University Committee on Undergraduate Education

Re:  UCUE Report for 2013-2014

Below, the “Committee” refers to the “University Committee on Undergraduate Education.”

1. The Committee agreed to allow the chairperson the authority and autonomy to call additional meetings. (9/12)
2. The Committee agreed to allow the UCUE chairperson the flexibility to craft final language for motions and documents and to take votes by email on issues already discussed with the provision that, if any one member objects, the issue will return to the agenda at the next meeting. (9/12)
3. The Committee agreed to allow the chairperson to grant and remove voice for visitors to UCUE meetings without a formal committee vote. (9/12)
4. The Committee agreed to continue to use the Procedure Regarding Public Comment as approved by UCAP on November 19, 2009, to guide public comment in UCUE meetings 2013-14. (9/12)
5. The Committee agreed that member substitutes--i.e., members of faculty or students who are a part of the same constituency as the elected member--shall be allowed the same voting rights as the committee members at that meeting. Constituencies will determine how committee substitutes are chosen. (9/12)
6. The Committee, in its consultative capacity to the Provost, had no concerns about the following: A. Request for a New Linked Bachelor of Arts Degree in Advertising and Master of Arts Degree in Health and Risk Communication; B. Request for a New Linked Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communication and Master of Arts Degree in Health and Risk Communication; C. Request for a New Linked Bachelor of Arts Degree in Journalism and Master of Arts Degree in Health and Risk Communication; D. Request for a New Linked Bachelor of Arts Degree in Media and Information and Master of Arts Degree in Health and Risk Communication. (9/12)
7. The Committee, in its consultative capacity to the Provost, had no concerns about the request for an extension on the moratorium on admission to the undergraduate specialization in Canadian Studies. However, the committee suggested the unit consider bringing the new curriculum forward as a minor rather than a specialization. (10/3)
8. The Committee, in its consultative capacity to the Provost, had no concerns about the request for a moratorium on admission to the specialization in African American History and Culture. However, the committee suggested that if the unit chooses to bring a revised curriculum forward at the end of the moratorium, they should consider proposing it as a minor rather than a specialization. (10/3)
9. The Committee discussed, agreed upon, and began to implement the review process of Associate Provost Estry. (10/3, 10/17)
10. The Committee, in its consultative capacity to the Provost, had no concerns about the request for a new linked Bachelor of Science degree in Materials Science and Engineering and Master of Science degree in Materials Science and Engineering. (10/17)

11. The Committee, in its delegated capacity, approved the request for a change in the admission requirement and the list of courses, which currently require a grade of 2.0 in the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social Work. (12/5)

12. The Committee, in its consultative capacity to the Provost, recommended the following requests with no concerns: Request for a Moratorium on Admission to the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Geography, Request for a Moratorium on Admission to the Bachelor of Science Degree in Geography, Request for a New Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Geography, and Request for a New Bachelor of Arts Degree in Human Geography (12/5)

13. The Committee, in its delegated capacity, approved the request for a grade-point average requirement in the Bachelor of Science degree in Geographic Information Science. (12/5)

14. The Committee, in its consultative capacity, had no substantive concerns with the new Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Education. Editorially, UCUE recommended the following: 1) In the second paragraph of item #1 under Requirements, the word “complete” be changed to “completion.” 2) Make clear what portion of the degree requirements apply to TE students vs. those not in a TE program. (1/9)

15. The Committee voted to forward the new minor in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages to the Provost, without reservation, but with the recommendation that the unit consider either: a) requiring TE 150 and 250 or b) incorporating the relevant principles from these courses into the newly developing course LLT 496. UCUE did question whether LLT 496 has been submitted for approval. If not, that will have to be done prior to implementation of the minor. (1/9)

16. The Committee, with its delegated authority on the use of grades and grade point averages, approved the minimum GPA requirements for admission to the Bachelor of Science Degree in Urban and Regional Planning. The committee noted the following correction in the catalog language: As STT 201 is listed as an entrance requirement the catalog statement on page 4 of 6 should read “The completion of Statistics and Probability 201 may be used to satisfy the University mathematics requirement.” The word “…..referred in item 3.b. below may also…..” should be stricken as it no longer applies. (1/9)

17. The University Committee on Undergraduate Studies, in its consultative capacity to the Provost, discussed and had no concerns about the request for a new Bachelor of Arts Degree in Film Studies. (1/23)

18. The Committee, in its consultative capacity to the Provost, discussed and had no concerns about the request to change the admission as a junior in Business Administration to admission to the college in the Eli Broad College of Business. (1/23)

19. The Committee, in its consultative capacity to the Provost, discussed and had no concerns about the request to change the graduation requirements for the Bachelor of Arts degree in the Eli Broad College of Business. (1/23)
20. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the request for a linked Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemical Engineering and Master of Science Degree in Chemical Engineering.

21. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the request for a new minor in Musical Theatre. (2/6)

22. The Committee unanimously approved the Grief Absence Policy and voted to forward it to the Provost and Steering Committee for their review, comment, and action. (2/20)

23. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the request for a Moratorium on Admission to the Agricultural Technology Certificate in Organic Farming. (2/20)

24. The Committee completed its role in the review of Assoc. Provost Estry. (3/13)

25. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the Option to Declare a Major at 28 Credits.

26. The Committee approved the request for a new minor in Environmental Science, Resource Management and Practice. (3/27)

27. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the request to phase out and discontinue the Specialization in Canadian Studies. (3/27)

28. The Committee duly considered and approved the request to change the course listing which requires a grade of 2.0 in each course in the Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Theatre. (3/27)

29. The Committee considered the request for a name change for the Department of Zoology. It raised the following issues to forward to the Provost for consideration when making a decision:
   • Integrative has different meanings. Other biology departments also consider themselves integrative. This is a potential source of confusion for the students.
   • Concern was expressed that this is a potential step in being able to consolidate the multiple biology groups to have a more general name and structure. Chairperson Getty was clear that this was not the case.
   • Committee members questioned whether this name is consistent with other CIC institutions. Chairperson Getty stressed that there were very few zoology departments left in the country.
   • Committee members questioned whether it would be better to construct a more descriptive department name that includes the word Zoology in it. Chairperson Getty stated that this was his preference too, but that this was tried and rejected by the University in the recent past.
   • Concern was expressed that this name change may negatively affect student recruitment at the undergraduate level because of the lack of specificity of the name.
   • Chairperson Getty stated that the name change probably will be followed by a subsequent change in the undergraduate degree programs offered. Some committee members expressed that it might be better to change the name of the department and the program at the same time although others thought that a slow transition was best in order to help students understand that integrative biology did include zoo animals and other animals. (3/27)

30. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the proposed amendments to the Academic Freedom Report, renamed Michigan State University Student Rights and Responsibilities with a concern that Owen Graduate Association and the University
Apartments Council of Residents should have representatives on RHA and the suggestion that the University Academic Hearing Board have its name changed to University Academic Grievance Hearing Board. (3/27)

31. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the request to Phase Out and Discontinue the Agricultural Technology Certificate in Organic Farming. (4/10)

32. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the request to Phase Out and Discontinue the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communicative Sciences and Disorders. (4/10)

33. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the Request for a Moratorium on Admission to the Undergraduate Specialization in Spatial Information Processing. (4/10)

34. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the Request to Phase Out and Discontinue the Bachelor of Arts Degree in American Studies. (4/24)

35. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the Request to Phase Out and Discontinue the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communicative Sciences and Disorders. (4/24)

36. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the Request for a New Linked Bachelor of Science Degree in Physiology and Master of Science Degree in Physiology as amended in discussion. (4/24)

37. The Committee duly considered and endorsed the request for a final extension on the moratorium on admission to the Bachelor of Arts degree in Classical Studies; the Committee further requests Provostial attention to the availability of ancient language instruction, which is a cross-college issue. (4/24)


39. The Committee discussed the work of the MOOC subcommittee and provided the following concerns/suggestions to the Provost for her consideration.
   • UCUE members did not believe that university credit should be granted for MOOCs. Accepting them would undercut the financial interests of the institution. In addition, MSU would have proof of completion rather than evidence of learning for those students who have engaged in MOOCs. When MSU accepts credit through a vetted program such as AP, the learning has been verified through achievement on an examination that has been developed by multiple individuals in higher education to provide content validity. In addition, there is some evidence of the longitudinal predictive validity of those test scores. This is not the case with MOOCs.

   • UCUE members expressed the view that defining a successful MOOC will not be easy, as it will depend upon the purpose of the MOOC, which will vary from one to another. For instance, for some MOOCs, dropping in and shopping around in a particular topic is useful and is a perfectly viable and valuable use of the MOOC but will result in a low completion rate. Trying to establish a single set of standards may not be an appropriate goal.

   • UCUE is supportive of MSU’s development of additional MOOCs and believes that we should have a presence in this market. MOOCs may result in the recruitment of students to degree programs and in institutional branding and visibility. They may be useful in keeping alumni involved in the University. They also present possibilities for reaching international populations. However, we should be ever mindful of the cost-benefit ratio. When developing MOOCs, MSU should consider the purpose of
each MOOC and should segment the population for which each MOOC is intended carefully and intentionally. Members of UCUE suggested that MSU should not be reinventing MOOCs that are offered by other universities. Rather, MSU should seek niches for MOOCs that are not currently being filled and that resonate with what MSU does well. Following are some possibilities that seem like they might be a good fit for MSU:

Professional development programs for those who are already graduated and employed.
Programs that connect to our initiatives in Africa: Perhaps a MOOC related to development (ethics, sustainability, agriculture)?
Short courses on specific topics with our most eminent faculty as a means of branding and developing name recognition. These also could be used as resources in blended or flipped for-credit classes.
Also, UCUE members also do not believe that the citation above provides meaningful data on student learning. The claims made in the statement above regarding gathering data, at present, do not seem to be supportable.

• UCUE members are concerned that the benefits of engaging in MOOCs may not balance the cost. This would need to be considered carefully, and the costs would need to be contained.

• UCUE members expressed concern that MOOCs often, because of their massive nature, are forced to adopt the “sage on the stage” model of teaching and learning, which is not being born out in educational research as the most effective model of instruction. Do we want to be known for this? Any development of MOOCs should not compromise or detract from the humanistic elements of teaching and learning that are strengths at MSU.

• UCUE members also expressed concern about the claim earlier in the document that MOOCs reach underserved populations. In examining the research surrounding MOOCs, it appears that underserved populations are the least likely to complete MOOCs, perhaps because those populations need more scaffolding and individualized instruction than “sage on the stage” learning opportunities can or do provide. In addition, MOOCs do not appear to be useful for remediation. (4/24)

Projected and Ongoing activities:
1. Completion of a Grief Absence Policy for Students: Convene a working group with members from all interested University committees to consider the following: logistics of implementation, definition of family, how or it this should apply to graduate students
2. Consideration of mid-semester formative feedback
3. Consideration of lifting moratorium on admission to Economics BA and forthcoming curricular considerations