ANNUAL REPORT, ACADEMIC YEAR 2014-2015
COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES AND ADVISING (CUSA)

Chair: Dr. Ruth Ann Atchley, Psychology
Dean’s Office: Associate Dean Bob Goldstein
SAS: Karen Ledom, Interim-Director

This year, CUSA's work was focused on the maintenance of KU College of Liberal Arts and Science (CLAS) curriculum. Additionally CUSA was charged by the Dean to engage in a range of additional tasks. The charges are provided below, along with a short narrative regarding the specific work executed in response to each charge.

First Dean’s Charge – CAC related procedural change

Propose guidelines for CAC review of significant proposals from CUSA.

After discussion by the full CUSA committee it was decided that formal change to CUSA policy was not needed to address the concerns that lead the Dean to make this charge. It was uniformly agreed that CUSA practice should be such that any significant proposals that would be forwarded to CAC for approval must first go through a “first read” process by which the proposal would be presented to CAC without a vote during one meeting, allowing CAC to make suggestions or raise concerns. The CUSA chair would then ask CAC to vote on the significant proposal during the subsequent CAC meeting. It was agreed that though this process would extend the time needed to adopt significant policy changes, this delay was needed to allow for careful consideration and for CAC members to properly execute their duties.

Second Dean’s Charge – Dean’s Student Advisory Council’s proposal

Modify appropriately and develop implementation plan for the Dean’s Student Advisory Council’s proposal calling for syllabus standards across departments, and standardized grading scales in courses numbered 299 and lower. Solicit appropriate feedback from departments to build support and ensure effective implementation.

Prompted by initial conversations and suggestions provided by the Academic Policies and Awards (APA) subcommittee, CUSA considered the recommendation of the Dean's Student Advisory Council concerning consistency of +I- grading and requirements for syllabi. It was decided that these policies are up to individual departments. However, it was considered appropriate for the Dean's Office to make recommendations to departments on these issues. Additionally, CUSA made recommendations to add information to the CLAS website. Specifically it was recommended that one new web page, oriented to students, would provide information on Accommodation, Nondiscrimination, Religious Observances, Academic Misconduct and Intellectual Property. A second page would be oriented towards faculty and
Third Dean’s Charge – Undergraduate certificate programs

Part 1: Create a streamlined process for the approval of new undergraduate certificate programs within the College. Additionally, CUSA will have to work with the University Core Curriculum (UCCC) to develop an approval process for certificates at the university level.

Part 2: Extend the curriculum requirement to allow for appropriate discipline-based certificates, for example a GIS (Geographic Information Systems) certificate based in Geography.

This charge was assigned to the Academic Policies and Awards subcommittee. Part 2 of this charge was executed by the APA subcommittee and by the full CUSA body. By the end of September, CUSA was able to bring forward to CAC changes to the CLAS Undergraduate Certificate Policy that allowed for discipline-based certificates. Critical policy language now indicates that: (1) A certificate program should be a focused collection of courses that either spans multiple disciplines, complementing one or more majors, or develops specialized expertise beyond the major. (2) For approval by CUSA a certificate proposal must demonstrate evidence that the coursework addresses a common theme through multiple disciplines or that it develops specialized expertise that will benefit students in graduate or professional studies or careers.

Developing an approval process for certificates took longer to accomplish. It was eventually established that the certificate approval process previously adopted by the Provost’s office would be utilized for all certificates in the University. Once this decision was made, it was possible for CUSA to move forward with adopting new certificates. The first four undergraduate certificates in the CLAS were approved by CUSA and CAC in their May meetings.

Fourth Dean’s Charge – Dual degrees between CLAS and Professional Schools.

Part 1: Propose policy changes that will enable dual degrees between CLAS and professional schools.
  i. Identify key areas of student interest
  ii. Identify actions to remove obstacles
  iii. Project enrollment benefits to departments with additional upper-division, major course enrollment.

Part 2: Reframe the BGS proposal in light of the goal of increasing the number of dual degrees.

The Curricular Changes and Degree Requirements (CCDR) subcommittee did considerable work in considering the proper way to execute Part 1 of this charge. The final outcome, after
much deliberation by the CCDR subcommittee and also by the full membership of CUSA, was
two significant changes to CUSA policy and to language in the CLAS catalog. First the “Hours
for Graduation” language in CUSA policy was changed to remove the requirement that “100
hours must be completed in Liberal Arts and Sciences/School of the Arts course work.” The
committee elected to completely remove this language, thus allowing students to graduate with
a CLAS degree simply by completing the required 120 hours divided into 4 categories: the KU
Core, College specific degree requirements, major, and elective requirements. The description
of a Dual Degree was also altered so that it now reads: Students who wish to work
simultaneously for a degree from CLAS and a degree from one of the professional school may
do so, with the expectation that the student will complete the KU Core, the specific degree
requirements for both degrees, major requirements for both degrees, and elective
requirements. The pursuit of any pair of degrees that are in the CLAS and a professional
schools will all be considered Double Degrees, even when the degree earned is of the same
type in both Schools (for example if a student is earning a BA in the CLAS and a BA in a
professional school). It is the opinion of CUSA’s membership that these changes to CLAS
policy accomplish the goals outlined in Part 1 of the Dean’s charges.

After discussion in both the subcommittee and by CUSA it was decided that part 2 of Dean’s
charge 4 was too significant to be addressed in the time remaining in the academic year.
Therefore, the committee asked that that charge be added to the work assigned to the 2015-
2016 CUSA committee.

Additional CUSA Work

CUSA also addressed, discussed, and supported a new proposal brought to the committee by
the Associate Dean for Online and Professional Education, Dr. Paul Atchley. This proposal,
titled the “Plus 12“ Program, is designed to provide past KU students who invested heavily in
their KU degree, a chance to finally earn their KU degree. To help graduate these students, the
AD and his staff designed a program that is of high quality and consistent with the CLAS
mission. The “Plus 12“ program includes 4 courses: (1) Careers Course: Requiring a careers
course is in line with making sure KU students who graduate with the LA&S-BGS degree are
equipped with the skills they need to turn their academics into career-facing skills to ensure the
best graduation outcome. (2) Ethics Course: Requiring an Ethics course is in line with Goal 5
of the KU Core. A course on ethics can provide students with a learning outcome applicable to
the many careers the may already be in, or be looking to start. (3) World Culture Course:
Requiring a World Culture course keeps the Plus 12 program in line with the standing
requirements for the LA&S-BGS degree, as well as Goal 4 of the KU Core. (4) Capstone
Course: This course has been specially designed for students in the LA&S-BGS degree
program. Upon completion of the “Plus 12“ students become Liberal Arts and Sciences BGS
graduates. CUSA engaged in careful consideration both in aid of developing this program, but
also in considering critical eligibility criteria, acceptable exceptions to this policy, and a time
limit for the duration of this program (specifically the program will be run for five years from the
semester it is approved to begin). It was also a key point of agreement that If 12 hours or less
are needed and/or KU can meet the student’s remaining requirements with online (or on-
campus if possible for the student) courses, we will do that first. Otherwise, students will be
required to take these 4 courses, or an advisor will work with them to find the courses they
need to finish their intended degree/major under normal criteria.
Additional Subcommittee Work

1. **Academic Policies and Awards.** APA worked on several curricular projects for CUSA and completed their regular work which includes the awarding of the below listed scholarships and awards:
   - a. Award of Excellence in Undergraduate Advising
   - b. Paul Lawson Scholarship
   - c. Hilden Gibson Scholarship
   - d. Betty Wahlstedt Student Memorial
   - e. Veta B. Lear Award
   - f. Van Eekeren Family Scholarship students
   The APA subcommittee also addressed a request to reconsider the recommendations given to students for how they might petition for a Special Major. The outcome of this work was to add language requiring students to consult with SAS staff and specific language was generated for guiding what information should be included in any Special Major petition.

2. **Curricular Changes and Degree Requirements.** CCDR experienced its usual high volume of curricular changes this year in addition to their work on the Dean's charges. Part of the volume of Course and Program changes was necessitated by changes to key Math courses. These changes to the Math curriculum were in response to requests both from the Kansas Regents and from faculty and administrators in both CLAS and Professional School departments. Additionally CCDR continued to review KU Core course nominations on behalf of CUSA.
   - a. New Courses: 84
   - b. New Programs: 4
   - c. Course Changes: 143
   - d. Program Changes: 51
   - e. Course Deletions: 12
   - f. New Certificate Programs: 4

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