CUSA was charged by the Dean to engage in a range of 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 – BGS degree requirements

Examine how the Bachelor of General Studies (BGS) degree with departmental majors supports the overall undergraduate educational mission of the College and determine the degree specific requirements needed to distinguish it as a separate degree.

Historically, BGS degrees were developed across the US in the 1970s and 1980s as universities sought to engage with non-traditional students and provide a more flexible avenue for degree completion. There is little agreement on the specific qualities common to a BGS degree, and not all colleges and universities offer them. The inclusion of a major in KU’s BGS degree differentiates us from other institutions. In the context of KU, recent iterations of the BGS degree were justified as offering students more flexibility given the extensive demands of the General Education requirements. With the implementation of the KU Core, however, all CLAS students now have more flexibility, with even those pursuing the BA now having greater flexibility than was ever offered to BGS students. The implementation of the KU Core in particular requires that we reconsider the BGS and reshape it to best serve the population we believe most benefits from it. With this in mind, over the last three years, CUSA has undertaken discussions of the scope, purpose, and place of the BGS degree amongst the other degrees offered by CLAS. The Bachelor of Science (BS) offers depth; the Bachelor of Arts (BA) balances breadth and depth. For the BGS to remain a distinct degree, CUSA believes that the BGS must emphasize breadth while maintaining the educational rigor that puts it on par with both the BA and BS. In order to re-imagine the BGS within the new landscape created by the KU Core, CUSA undertook sizeable information-gathering tasks, with the support of Student Academic Services staff members, in an attempt to gather information regarding (a) the general profile of students typically pursing the BGS degree and (b) the opinions and objectives of various stakeholders regarding the BGS degree. CUSA’s ultimate goal was to revise the BGS degree in such a way that it best serves a particular student population and maintains credibility both at KU and for outside stakeholders. CUSA identified several characteristics of a large proportion of BGS students based on the available data:

- The BGS degree accounts for at least 34% of the total undergraduate majors (min 0%, max 67%) for approximately 75% of CLAS departments.
- The majority of students who choose the BGS enter the workforce immediately after graduation, rather than pursuing graduate or professional school.
• Students often choose the BGS late in their careers at KU; many choose it as a way to graduate more quickly.
• Although students are drawn from a range of achievement levels and preparation, the average incoming test scores and KU GPA of BGS students are lower than those of BA and BS students.
• Half of the students who choose the BGS do so because they want to avoid the 4-semester BA language requirement.

Following this deliberation, CUSA decided that the current BGS degree requires revision in order to meet the unique needs of students who typically pursue this degree at the University of Kansas. Specifically, it appears that the proper place of the BGS degree within the degrees offered by the College is one that (a) offers elements of both breadth (similar to BA degree) and depth (similar to BS degree), (b) preserves educational rigor valued by the College, and (c) specifically prepares students for the workforce with intellectual flexibility and expertise in a variety of areas.

It was decided that the BGS is best suited to prepare students for the workforce with a variety of intellectual tools and skills. With this in mind, we recommended and passed the following as requirements for students pursuing a BGS degree in the CLAS.

**BGS Degree Requirements**

1. Fulfillment of the KU Core
2. CLAS Major
3. One of the following: Second degree (offered by CLAS or other), CLAS second major, minor (offered by CLAS or other), or two certificates (offered by CLAS or other).
4. Career preparation course(s) resulting in a minimum of 3 credits.

Because the career preparation course was a new course designation in the CLAS, CUSA next engaged in careful deliberation and communication with CLAS stakeholders to establish guidance language for delineating when a course would meet this fourth requirement (career preparation course) within the BGS. CUSA passed the adoption of two options for this requirement and criteria for determining when a course can be counted as a Career Prep Course.

**CLAS and Department Classroom Course Option (minimum 3 credits)**

• Classroom instruction in CLAS and CLAS departments that is either general or discipline specific.
• In-class instruction and out-of-class learning to build basic knowledge and skills in career preparation, entry, and development.
• Students are taught to select careers (e.g., discerning personal values and goals), secure positions (e.g., researching, searching, interviewing), or succeed in the workforce (e.g., oral and written communication, interpersonal skills, responsibility, ethics).
• Courses document student learning of knowledge and skills with formative evaluations and mastery with summative evaluations (e.g., learning outcomes, rubrics).
• Sample courses: LA&S 470, LA&S 475, LA&S 485, LA&S 490, COMS 320, COMS 330, AMS 552
Department-Specific Experiential Course Option (minimum 3 credits)

- On-site practicum or internship instruction in CLAS departments.
- Supervised on-site instruction to build discipline-specific knowledge and skills for career preparation, entry, and development.
- Students are mentored in selecting careers (e.g., discerning personal values and goals), securing positions (e.g., researching, searching, interviewing), or succeeding in the workforce (e.g., oral and written communication, interpersonal skills, responsibility, ethics).
- Courses document student learning of knowledge and skills with formative evaluations and mastery with summative evaluations (e.g., learning outcomes, rubrics).
- Sample courses: AAAS 496, ABSC 675, ABSC 676, ABSC 677, ABSC 678, ABSC 680, ABSC 682, ABSC 685, ABSC 690/691, ABSC 694, COMS 530 POLS 494, POLS 495, POLS 496, POLS 497

It was established that departments must nominate courses to CUSA to meet the career preparation requirements in these options, much as they nominate courses to CUSA to meet the CORE course requirements.

Second Dean’s Charge – Changes to curriculum approval process

Assess current curriculum approval procedures for simple course changes to determine how to create a more streamlined process that will allow the larger CUSA committee time for discussion and development of larger curriculum and policy issues.

After careful deliberation, it was established that no CUSA or CAC bylaw changes would be proposed to address this charge. Instead it was decided that the CUSA would utilize a modified procedure when making changes to courses and curriculum that would both reduce the amount of time taken in discussion of routine course and curriculum changes and allow for more time to address broader issues of importance in these committees.

It was decided that at all levels (in the Subcommittee for Curricular and Degree Requirement Changes, in the full body of CUSA, and when reporting out to CAC) that the CUSA committee would utilize a Consent Agenda strategy so that routine changes to all aspects of curriculum could be adopted via consent in the meetings (when deemed appropriate by the committees), thus limiting meeting time used to discuss matters that have been readily adopted either by the subcommittee members in advance, and/or by the current committee members in advance of the meeting. A strategy was discussed and endorsed by CUSA that characterized what agenda items would be “action items” vs. “consent agenda items” in the subcommittee and CUSA agendas. This strategy and change to normal procedure was then shared with members of CAC as a point of information.

Third Dean’s Charge– Retention and persistence

Review current Academic Standing Policy and propose changes that can help contribute to students’ retention and persistence, especially with populations that may be impacted before a true assessment of their potential is achieved under the current policy.
Prompted by initial conversations and suggestions provided by the Academic Policies and Awards (APA) subcommittee, CUSA discussed and adopted a number of changes in the Academic Standing Policy.

These changes include:

- **A good standing warning stage**: When a student is in good academic standing but the term GPA is below a 2.0 the student will be required to meet with an advisor before their next enrollment. This warning is not noted on the transcript.

- **Notice semester**: CUSA created the "Notice Semester". Students that fall below a 2.00 KU cumulative GPA for the first time will be placed on notice. Students are required to participate in programming that will allow for students to get support and make changes without threat of dismissal. Additional support provided to help students either return to good standing or have better success during probation semester. The program will include intensive advising outreach, including required advising and additional programming (e.g. LA&S 150). Students will only receive one notice semester.

- **Probation**: Changes were also made to the "Probation semester(s)". Students who continue after a notice term or have had a past notice term with less than a 2.00 KU cumulative GPA. (Students with less than 45 KU attempted hours are required to earn a 2.00 KU term GPA. Students with 45 or more KU attempted hours are required to earn 2.50 KU term GPA.) Students on probation are required to participate in programming. Students will be allowed to continue on probation provided they earn their required KU term GPA. The KU term GPA shifts from a 2.00 to a 2.50 once a student has attempted 45 or more KU hours. This is to ensure that students are on track to return to good standing after giving them roughly three semesters to adjust their academic performance. Failure to return to good academic standing or meet the required KU Term GPA during a fall or spring semester will result in academic dismissal.

---

**Fourth Dean’s Charge – Policies for online courses**

*Discuss and possibly develop policy and procedures to address the increased use of online courses and how that may impact our Lawrence and Edwards campus students and the departments offering the courses.*

After consultation with key community members (most particularly academic advisors and the Office of Online and Professional Training) and discussions both in the Academic Policies and Awards subcommittee and in the full CUSA, it was decided that no policy or procedural changes are needed for online courses at this time. First, it was perceived that our instructional efforts in the online arena have generally been conducted with the same care and diligence that KU faculty take when teaching in the face-to-face manner. So, at least at this time, there are no problems that need to be addressed. Additionally, it was agreed upon that CUSA does not generally regulate course delivery method. Our role is to ensure that courses have appropriate scope, content, and rigor. But CUSA has not traditionally made comment on the pedagogical approach or teaching methods utilized to teach CLAS courses. We intentionally leave this to the discretion of the faculty who are executing the courses. It was decided that decisions regarding online instruction fit within this broader principle. The only issue that did arise this year regarding course delivery that CUSA did address was when we learned that a course was asking students to complete a significant portion of the course’s assignments during the semesters preceding and following the period during which the course
was actually offered. CUSA voted to disallow this particular practice on the grounds that students might be disadvantaged because they could not plan their workloads appropriately.

Fifth Dean’s Charge- Certificates

*Continue to develop and market the College’s new certificate options. Find ways to develop curriculum that gives students an appreciation of the Liberal Arts and Sciences.*

At the outset, through consultation with Interim-Dean Steeple, CUSA adopted the goal of passing 10 new undergraduate certificates in the 2015-2016 academic year. A total of 5 new certificates were adopted and 6 new certificates are “in-process” and close to being voted on. We feel that this progress is a bit behind what we had strived for, but does allow for a healthy number of CLAS undergraduate certificates to be available to students soon. We are also encouraged that many departments are engaged and discussing certificate development including work happening in the online environment, at the KU Edwards camps, and involving professional school partners.

Sixth Dean’s Charge- Decline in student credit hours

*Over the past ten years we have seen a significant decrease in credit hour production. While there may be factors that contribute to this that cannot be helped we must strive to find ways to address this shortage. CUSA should explore ways to maximize some of the initiatives already started such as the KU Academic Accelerator Program and course redesign. Additionally, consider options that appeal to students across all programs and find ways to help students see the value of courses by connecting them to internships, service learning or perhaps career development.*

The goals expressed in Charge 6 were clearly influential in how the BGS degree was redesigned. The BGS takes advantage of the availability of undergraduate certificates, which allow students to more overtly select areas of academic emphasis from within the CLAS as they pursue the BGS degree requirements. It also explicitly requires that students take a course in career development to prepare them for entry into the job market.

CUSA was also influenced by ongoing campus conversations surrounding the need for course work focused on the issues of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We would argue that the efforts made to provide effective training in this important domain can also meet the goal of encouraging students to take CLAS courses because it is the researchers and instructors in the CLAS that can make a significant contribution to the training needed to help student appreciate diversity and engage in inclusive behaviors. An example of this was CUSA’s strong and rapid support of changes to the Psychology degree programs when they added a required course in Diversity, Inclusion, and Ethics into their BA, BGS, and BS requirements.

It is important for CUSA to continue to work in this important area, and we are not in any way satisfied with the progress that was made this year. More work has to be done to build the courses and programs needed to help students be successful in a changing work environment and to provide greater opportunity to connect to internships, service learning or perhaps career development.
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. Additionally CCDR continued to review KU Core course nominations on behalf of CUSA.

   a. New Courses: 116
   b. New Programs: 2
   c. Course Changes: 159
   d. Program Changes: 29
   e. Course Deletions: 39
   f. New Certificate Programs: 1 (total of 5 but some were included in last year’s end of year totals)
   g. Other 8
      (elimination of restricted major admission requirements)