

Academic Requirements Committee (ARC) 2020-21 Annual Report

Date: May 26, 2021

Members 2020-21

Suwako Watanbe WLL (CLAS-AL) Chair
Ari Douanpanya ACS (AO)
Veronica Hotton UNST (OI)
Debra Lindberg CCJ (CUPA)
Laura Marsh ACS (AO)
Ashley Storey ACS (AO)
Vacant (Faculty member)
Vacant (Student member)

Consultants:

Rebecca Ingersoll ACS
Nicholas Matlick RO

Support Staff:

Jill Borek

The Responsibilities of the Academic Requirements Committee are:

- 1) Develop and recommend policies regarding the admission of entering freshmen.
- 2) Develop and recommend policies regarding transfer credit and requirements for baccalaureate degrees.
- 3) Adjudicate student petitions regarding such academic regulations as credit loads, transfer credit, and graduation requirements for all undergraduate degree programs. Adjudicate student petitions regarding initial undergraduate admissions.
- 4) Make recommendations and propose changes in academic requirements to the Faculty Senate.
- 5) Report to the Senate at least once each year.
- 6) Act, in all matters pertaining to policy, in liaison with the chairpersons of the Scholastic Standards and Curriculum Committees, and with the chairperson of the Graduate Council.

The ARC met regularly (about twice per month) via Zoom from September 2020 through May 2021. We reviewed 205 petitions, of which 190 were approved (through May 10, 2021). The number of petitions has increased from previous years. This increase is attributed to hardships experienced by many students across campus because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The University Studies Cluster Requirement remained the most common focus of the petitions this year. The average turnaround time for petitions from submission to implementation has remained at 10 days, which is similar to previous years.

The Committee has been working with one faculty position vacant throughout this year. Currently we are missing the faculty's perspective in the areas of Sciences and Fine Arts, and we hope that these areas will be filled next academic year.

Significant issues that we worked on:

Review of Proposals for Area Distribution

The ARC reviewed three cases of area distribution. In fall 2020, Systems Science program requested that their UG courses be designated as Social Science or Science; in winter 2021, the Anthropology department requested that their Archaeology courses be designated as Science with lab/fieldwork; and in spring 2021, the School of Social Work requested their SW courses be designated as Social Science. ARC reviewed the requests and approved. Subsequently, the motions for the three cases were submitted to the Faculty Senate, and they passed.

Collaboration with the ARC-UCC Joint Taskforce on BA/BS Requirements

At the request of Michele Gamburd, the FS presiding officer, Nick Matlick, Becki Ingersoll, Cindy Baccar, and Suwako Watanabe served on the ARC-UCC joint taskforce to review the current BA/BS requirements to streamline the matriculation processes in terms of the content of the requirements and administrative processing. The taskforce administered a survey among the advisors and faculty involved in advising and contacted concerned departments to gain insights as to the essential components of the BA and BS requirements. They concluded that the basic framework of the BA/BS requirements should remain the same and recommended that (1) the current requirement of 28 credits be reduced to 23 to accommodate transfer credits without changing the spirit of the requirements for BA and BS respectively, (2) the requirement of 72 upper division credits be reduced to 62 credits, (3) the residency requirements of 45 out of the last 60 be changed to 45 out of 75, and (4) PSU accept the Humanities and Social Science designations for courses of Oregon community colleges listed in AAOT General Education List. ARC and the Steering Committee jointly submitted the proposals for the four recommendations, and they were approved at the Faculty Senate in April.

Review of Proposals related to University Requirements

The Committee was asked to give feedback on the following three proposals related to the university-wide requirements.

- (1) Chuck Knepfle, Vice President for Enrollment Management, joined the ARC meeting in January and explained that PSU would lower the required GPA for admission from 2.50 to 2.00, and the ARC expressed its support for the change.
- (2) The ARC invited the group working to propose the Race and Ethnic Studies requirement in April and asked about processing transfer credits that may fulfill the RES requirement, the RES course designation procedure, and requiring students to take at least one course at PSU. The motion to add the RES requirement has been submitted to the Faculty Senate in May and is expected to be voted on in June. The ARC was initially requested to write the motion, however, there was confusion as to who is leading the proposal, i.e., whether it is the group of faculty who had been working on the requirement, the steering committee, or ARC. More frequent communication among the governance units and committees and familiarity with the entire processes of submitting a motion to the Faculty Senate at an initial stage will be helpful.
- (3) Two proposals from UNST. Albert R. Spencer, UNST Council, requested the ARC's feedback on the two proposals to change the UNST requirements. One proposal is that the number of required Sinq will be reduced from 3 to 2. The other is to eliminate the requirement for students to take the Sinq that matches Junior Cluster. Based on the types and natures of the petitions related to UNST that ARC receives, they concluded the changes will help reduce UNST-related petitions. ARC reported that the committee has received quite a few petitions involving a mismatch among clusters and suggested that the cluster requirements should be another area that could be enhanced for students to meet the UNST requirements.

The committee wishes to thank Becki Ingersoll, Nicholas Matlick, and Jill Borek for their excellent support of our work.