

Minutes for the Called *Carolina Core Meeting*
June 8, 2016, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Thomas Cooper Library, Room 204

Members Present:

Joseph Askins, Susan Beverung, Mary Ann Brynes, Rob Dedmon, Helen Doerpinghaus (Administrative Co-Chair), Kris Finnigan (ex-officio), Augie Grant (ex-officio), Brian Habing, Chris Holcomb (Faculty Co-Chair), Kathleen Kirasic (ex-officio), Clifford Leaman, Eugene Luna, Manton Matthews, Alfred Moore, Ed Munn Sanchez

Members Absent:

Pam Bowers, Sara Corwin, Ron Cox, Jim Cutsinger, Daniel Freedman, Andy Gillentine, James Kellogg, Chris Nesmith, Brian Shelton, Nicole Spensley (ex-officio), Andrea Tanner

Specialty Team Chairs Present:

David Hitchcock, Sara Keeling (for Sam Hastings), Adam Schor, Kathy Snediker, Shelley Smith,

Specialty Team Chairs Absent:

Pat Gehrke, Mary Robinson, Francisco Sanchez, Jeff Wilson

Guests:

Jed Lyons, Aaron Marterer, Claire Robinson, Kathy Snediker, Sharon Verba, Sasha Yankovsky

After introductions, Helen Doerpinghaus expressed thanks to everyone for their passionate engagement with *Carolina Core* issues, and her hope that consensus could be reached at today's meeting. Hard copies of several proposals were distributed. Those not in attendance had emailed their views and/or votes. If consensus is not forthcoming today, a vote will be held. Only *Carolina Core* Committee (CCC) members, and not Specialty Team Chairs, have a vote. The *Carolina Core* Committee is a University committee that represents all colleges; Arts and Sciences gets three (3) votes due to being the heart of the *Core*.

The group agreed to begin with discussion of Brian Habing's proposal, followed by Joe Askins', Cliff Leamon's, and Adam Schor's.

Brian's primary concern was that instituting big changes too quickly now might force bigger changes in the future. All future courses coming in with the same title and designation as an existing USC course should transfer in as that course. Any new *Core* courses should be proposed with that in mind. While we know the *Core* can be problematic for transfer students, many native students don't always know how the *Core* works. Discussion at the called CCC meetings has touched on a number of alternatives for demonstrating competence in VSR/CMS/INF, ideas which need to be vigorously explored in the coming Fall. For example, if a major course in History already meets INF learning outcomes, it may be better to allow that course to fulfill the INF requirement, even if it is an upper-division course. If there are five courses that each contribute a little toward meeting the INF learning outcomes, perhaps a course "portfolio" could be considered for meeting requirements. There might be new courses designed for non-traditional students.

The most problematic courses are those three or four that look like they don't get taught elsewhere. STAT 112 and BIOL 208, for example, are pretty much standard everywhere. We should have ENGL 102 be required of transfers, and create ENGL 103 as our unique USC course to carry both the CMW and INF outcomes. We should treat all the USC courses that are "non-standard" this way, in terms of transfer in. Bulletin changes will be needed, to adjust references to "ENG 101 and [102 or 103]". This can be a

smooth transition, and while it might not necessarily eliminate all confusion among advisors and students (there will always be some), at least it would clarify up front what courses transfer and how. Transfer students already jump through a lot of hoops, and opening up more possibilities to satisfy VSR/CMS/INF would help address the “social justice” problem.

Mary Ann Byrnes liked a lot about Brian’s proposal, despite its curriculum change implications, and urged consideration of how today’s decisions affect the future. There is no problem with one-for-one transfers with courses meeting only one *Core* learning outcome. The problem is courses that meet two learning outcomes. In 2012 when the first overlays were being approved, Specialty Team #1 evaluated a course in isolation from Specialty Team #2. The outcome of these totally independent evaluations was a set of courses significantly altered from before. Much team effort and substantial Arts & Sciences funding was invested in the overlay effort. The resulting courses, like ENGL 102 and Engineering Ethics retained much of the same content, but assumed very different pedagogical approaches. The process took a year to achieve, and thus one cannot assume for example that Georgia Tech’s Engineering Ethics course is the same as USC’s.

The way forward is to address the disconnect between the conceptual CCC discussions and actions, and what advisors on the ground dealing with students are struggling with. Any new *Carolina Core* transfer overlays need to be routed to both Specialty Teams, in her view. USC courses *are* special. We had to work hard to make them so.

Ed Munn Sanchez said that he likes Brian’s proposal and would support something close to it. However, he is nervous about voting on a proposal that did not contain a list of courses that would be affected, and did not address some of the many details that need to be worked out. Waiting to act is not an option. We will have one year at least with different requirements for transfer and non-transfer students, which is a really bad idea. His preference would be to get the requirements right this second time around. We need to identify every single course than meets two requirements, talk to the relevant departments, and so forth. Brian’s proposal is the backbone of what we need to do.

Cliff Leamon made clear that his proposal stems from the fact that what we can do right now is limited. He is not opposed to what Brian is suggesting.

Augie Grant disagreed with a timetable that stretched over a year. In order to get the changes into the Fall 2017 bulletin, we need a solution by November. At least two committees need to vet it. It is critical that we know long term where we want to be. Exceptions made over the next year need to be guided by where we are headed long term. We don’t necessarily know that the process has to take a lot of time, and the Faculty Senate entities want to work with the *Carolina Core* Committee as efficiently as possible.

Adam Schor asked Cliff whether the changes agreed to today could be effective in Fall 2016. The changes would not be part of the bulletin until Fall 2017; however Aaron Marterer pointed out that the decision whether to implement degree applicability changes before then is in the hands of the colleges, according to academic regulations. Adam said he supported Brian’s proposal as a package, and thinks we are over-estimating the amount of time needed. K.C. Kirasic agreed, but noted the problem of meeting timing.

Aaron said this would be one of the most impactful changes we could implement, which is why significant lead time is needed. Helen acknowledged the magnitude of the change, along with the limitations of repurposing or recycling course numbers. The institution has an obligation to students to make things clear, according to Aaron, who also noted the CHE degree audit system we are required to participate in. To USC administrators and faculty, the reasons behind our actions on the *Core* might seem clear, but to parents and students, they are not.

Allowing different standards for transfer students would be an appalling move, in Manton Matthew's view. Rob Dedmon saw three basic issues at stake: fairness, clear communication, and meeting all learning outcomes. He said that Brian's proposal provides clarity and meets the outcomes, and also helps a bit with the fairness issues.

Aaron said the external audience doesn't understand the complexity of the transfer process as a form of currency exchange. The problem is that there are actually two exchanges: a course-to-course exchange, and a course-to-outcomes exchange. We need to find a way to make it a one-to-one exchange with both sets of currency. Rob added that the only way he could see this happening would be to do away with the concept of overlays, and go ahead and add 4-6 course hours to students' degrees. Aaron wondered if the CCC could say, "this is where we want to get to," and go ahead and decide today.

Mary Ann asked whether there were lists of transfer equivalencies, to which Aaron responded with the following data: there are 1337 equivalencies for ENGL 102 (CMW only), 418 for POLI 201 (GSS only), 53 for WGST 112 (GSS only), and 4 for HIST 108 (GHS only). Mary Ann noted that really only two courses are a problem. The POLI course was redone to sharpen the focus on values. She hasn't seen INF in most ENGL 102 transfers in. However, Chris Holcomb said inclusion of the INF component was largely discipline driven. Over the past ten years digital technology in research-based writing has received increasing scholarly attention. He asked which of the 1337 transfer equivalencies in essence DO meet the INF competency. When he evaluates transfer courses, he always assumes it won't meet INF, but in some cases the course does have research components.

Mary Ann asked if we could take a sample of equivalencies, to be able to say with some confidence whether the disciplinary changes are being reflected in ENGL 102 courses around the state. Aaron said he has the list and can identify the top twenty transfer-in institutions for ENGL 102. Mary Ann asked for Joseph Askins to review syllabi from these institutions as well, noting that we could use the findings to document assessment of the *Core* to SACSCOC. Any new courses transferring in that seek to fulfill both outcomes of an overlay should be reviewed by both Specialty Teams, before CC transfer credit is allowed.

Manton commented that substantial changes to ENGL102 would not have happened without INF, but Chris disagreed, noting that it is not unusual to see a transfer course with a research component. Ed Munn said he was more concerned about AP/IB/Cambridge equivalencies than transfers, and that was particularly true for POLI201.

Susan Beverung asked if there were a way to separate the INF component from ENGL102, and take it to a course in the major. In the College of Nursing, there is a specific Nursing Research course. Joseph said he feels this is where it belongs in most majors, in research courses that already exist, but simply need to be approved as *Core* courses fulfilling the INF component. Susan said that if ENGL102 is such a big problem, removing its INF component would make it a clean course with no overlay, and could solve the problem. Chris objected that he would not want to see INF removed from the course, to which Susan replied that the course with INF could become ENGL103. Aaron said however that it would be a record-keeping train wreck to make such a change. Manton stated that we broke articulation agreements already with ENG2 by making it equivalent to ENGL102.

Aaron relayed data on enrollments in LIBR 101. Of the 5941 students who took LIBR 101 between Fall 2013 and Spring 2016, 3045 were seniors and 2139 were juniors. Helen said the most likely semester to for students to take LIBR101 is Spring semester of the senior year. The way LIBR 101 is functioning now is not optimal. In response to the argument that we worked hard to create special courses, she noted that most institutions in the nation have something special about their curriculum. The national mandate

is that institutions have to talk to each other. How do we best do this? --- by putting the INF component into a course in each major. She cited the data collection efforts by Pam Bowers, and the possibilities of documenting evidence of all ten learning outcomes among seniors.

Mary Ann said she would very much like to see data on whether transfer courses contain the INF component. She doesn't want to see ENGL 102 without both CMW and INF, referring to the native students doing ENGL 102 here at home. Helen asked for opinions on where the "teeth" should be, to enforce transitioning the INF component to major courses. Perhaps annual reports to the Faculty Senate and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies could be required. The CCC would need to support Joseph's work visiting each unit and identifying/assessing the most INF-appropriate course. Joseph remarked that creating a number of new separate overlay courses may be a bridge too far. The only way we can succeed with that type of proposal would be to expand INF into major classes. He worried that if we vote on a proposal without also making allowances for expansion into other classes, we will ensure the death of this overlay. Starting as soon as possible, if ENGL102 contains both components, we need to have INF spread out elsewhere. If we go with a more succinct proposal, we need to tell the faculty and the Faculty Senate that we are committed to spreading INF.

Augie commented on the tension in that idea. He really liked the notion of removing overlays, and turning the component over to the college, as a potential resolution of that tension. It is not a goal of this committee to take 31 hours and cram 37 hours' worth of work into it, but rather to consider the simpler solution of taking the overlay pieces into the major. Alfred Moore warned of the need to keep such a requirement flexible for every degree program. Pharmacy has no jurisdiction over undergraduate courses their pre-Pharm students take. The INF component would have to be taken in the 3rd or 4th year by PharmD students.

Manton asked whether some colleges were granting credit for INF, and Helen said yes, but that this was being applied heterogeneously within a few colleges. Rob stated that Education does not do this. Jed Lyons said Engineering has never waived it but will sometimes accept a syllabus, for example, from USC Aiken's course in critical inquiry, on a student-by-student basis. Alfred said Pharmacy had not in ENGL 102, but had sometimes granted exceptions with POLI 201.

Aaron provided additional information on the students enrolled in LIBR 101: 5946 have taken it since Fall 2013, and of those, 1123 were enrolled in 17+ hours and had to pay extra tuition. The current resident tuition rate is \$80/credit hour; nonresident is \$208/credit hour. A suggestion was made that LIBR 101 become a 0 credit course, but Aaron reminded the group that instructor payment is tied to credit hour load.

Jed said the problem is using one course number for more than one course. It can't work to waive it the INF component for one year, because in effect it becomes eight years, while students finish their degree. He felt that the current requirements could stay in the Bulletin, even after creating ENGL 103.

Helen summed up the discussion thus far by saying that she is not hearing that we want a one-year fix. The possible solutions she is hearing are:

1. Have full transfer equivalency, so that for the long term, ENGL102 is ENGL102. Make commitments to ensure that transfer and native students both fulfill all ten learning outcomes.
2. Look at a renumbering of courses – no commitment to full transfer and equivalency at this time.

Ed said he thought everyone wanted one-for-one equivalency. But what do we do then, he asked, and how do we get to full transparency? Chris commented that full transparency doesn't necessarily resolve

how we get there. Joseph perceived two choices: we can develop full transferability, but require students to take INF; OR we can develop full transferability and not require students to take INF. The decision now is what problem do we want to fix next, and what changes will have to be made.

Cliff read the short text of his proposal, and Helen suggested it might serve as the long term vision for addressing the transfer issue. Jed objected to the implied differential treatment of transfer and native students, and said he could not support Cliff's proposal. Mary Ann posed the likely scenario of what the proposed action would lead to, namely that enrollment in the "courses that do two things" will contract, due to their very high standards. The transfer review process has to be coherent; the standards have to be the same for all student populations. Chris suggested instituting a process for periodic review of the transfer equivalency tables. Aaron said that prior to Banner, this was done by the colleges for their students. Now in Banner, there is a Transfer Evaluation System, through which courses are sent to the unit content experts. Some, like Brian, have worked out the possible transfer equivalencies for their departments, and have given the Registrar authority to act accordingly.

Chris asked how courses that get added or removed from the tables are handled. Aaron said the Registrar's office reviews them. They have established over 200,000 course equivalencies since 2013, looking at course title, description, and sometimes the syllabi. The Registrar's office obligation is to turn a decision on a transfer course around quickly. USC policies are highly transfer-inclusive. He asked whether we are making sure transfer students get all learning outcomes from *programs*, as well as courses.

Gene Luna commented that he believed INF is embedded in 80% of courses students take. Students are getting feedback all four years. Content experts can get at this in more depth, but how we demonstrate the competency is more of a challenge. We need to be moving more deliberately toward a competency-based environment that permits evaluation of achievement. Sharon Verba disagreed, arguing that people *assume* students are getting the competency elsewhere in the curriculum, but instructors of LIBR 101 have hard evidence that they are not..

Manton asked how the English department feels about a hypothetical new ENGL103. Chris said it would feel a little clunky, with ENGL 102 and 103 being very similar except for one component. It is difficult to wrap one's mind around. Manton suggested that taking this step would show leadership to technical schools; however Helen said that the tech's aren't looking to USC for leadership for doing something costly and confusing. Manton queried whether ENGL102 was necessary, noting that he personally thinks it should be required. Chris said that ENGL102 is the foundational writing course, with a sustained focus that is content driven more than skills driven. Manton then said he wished to propose the creation of a new introductory course ENGL103 as a course that includes the INF component. He recommended maintaining ENGL102 as fulfilling the transfer articulation function performed by the old 102.

Helen read the contributions of CCC members not in attendance, beginning with Brian Shelton, who alluded to deeper transferability issues for advisors, and noted that it never made sense to him that POLI 201 did not transfer 1 for 1. Andy Gillentine felt we need to make USC transfer friendly, and agreed with Cliff's and Ed's proposals/comments. Andrea Tanner is too new to the CCC, and abstained from voting. Sara Corwin favored fully accepting transfers, and stated that more discussion is needed, as all students need instruction in the overlay areas. Ron Cox, who deals with a large number of non-traditional students, supports Cliff's proposal. Chris Nesmith, Dan Freedman, and Pam Bowers all support full transferability.

Helen asked if the group was ready to vote. Ed asked whether the emailed contributions could be considered votes, and noted that those individuals had not had the chance to evaluate Manton's new proposal. Aaron urged that we leave ENGL102 as it is, and instead make the *new* course the pathway for

transfer students. Mary Ann wondered whether we could achieve the desired transparency without changing course numbers. She wants to fully explore the ENGL 102 syllabi of the top twenty transferring institutions, and see the results of Chris and Joseph's review. Helen remarked that this means we don't vote today. Ed commented that there is no good solution between the two options.

Jed perceived two different philosophical arguments, and suggested a straw vote:

1. We require all students to meet *Carolina Core* requirements.
2. Or, we waive the requirements of transfer students.

Ed disagreed, saying the more permanent decision was whether to permit transfer equivalency so that courses match one-for one. If the answer is yes, we don't know exactly how this will happen, but we will work on that. Rob stated that all proposals essentially agree with Cliff's first sentence. The issue is what the next step is. Joseph asked what the timeline is for processing changes. Augie clarified that the Faculty Senate would need a decision by September 1st.

Helen observed that the CCC had agreement on Cliff's first sentence, with clarification to come, and suggested a straw vote by hand or emails. Rob asked whether the changes would be effective for Fall 2016, and Augie responded they would not be until Fall 2017. Ed said it is important for the Honors College that colleges don't start cherry picking as they advise for the *Core*. Manton said his proposal was really a subset of Brian's, and withdrew it.

Helen asked for a show of hands. Those in favor of Brian's proposal = 4; those in favor of Cliff's proposal = 7 present, plus 6 emails = 13.

Augie asked how the formal vote would be taken, and Helen said it would be done next week electronically, once the results of the ENGL 102 transfer syllabus review, the minutes, and all the proposals had been circulated. Ed said that one of the next things CCC needs to take up is how to make sure every student is getting the same *Core* experience. Helen asked if it is the will of the committee to keep working over the summer. The group agreed to meet every two weeks as needed to continue making progress on solutions. Mary Ann said she might be persuaded to change her vote if the INF syllabus data so warrants.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Kris Finnigan

Revised 6/16/2016