

Minutes of the Meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee
University of Kentucky
Thursday, June 13, 2024

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASAC) of the University of Kentucky (UK) Board of Trustees met on Thursday, June 13, 2024, in the Harris Ballroom of the Gatton Student Center.

A. Meeting Opened

Chair Rachel Webb called the meeting to order at 1:45 p.m.

B. Roll Call

The following members of the ASAC answered the call of the roll: Hubie Ballard, Cathy Black, Alex Boone, Ron Geoghegan, Brenda Gosney, Lizzy Hornung, Paula Leach Pope, Hollie Swanson and Rachel Watts Webb.

C. Approval of Minutes

Chair Webb reported that the minutes of the April 25, 2024, ASAC meeting had been distributed. Trustee Ballard moved approval of the minutes and Trustee Pope seconded the motion. Hearing no discussion, Chair Webb called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

D. ASACR 1: Candidates for Degree: May 2024

The recommendation was that the President be authorized to confer upon each of the individuals whose names appeared on an attached list the degree to which they were entitled, upon certification by the University Registrar that the individuals had satisfactorily completed all requirements for the degree for which application had been made and as approved by the elected faculty of the University Senate and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.

By way of background, the individuals whose names appeared on an attached list completed the work leading toward the degrees for which application was made at the close of the 2024 Spring Session. Due to administrative error, their names were not previously submitted.

Trustee Black moved approval, which was seconded by Trustee Swanson. Hearing no discussion, Chair Webb called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

E. ASACR 2: Candidate for Degree: August 2024

The recommendation was that the President be authorized to confer upon the

individual whose name appeared on an attached list the degree to which they are entitled, upon certification by the University Registrar that the individual had satisfactorily completed all requirements for the degree for which application had been made and as approved by the elected faculty of the University Senate and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.

By way of background, the individual whose name appeared on an attached list was scheduled to complete the work toward the degree for which application was being made at the close of the 2024 Summer Session. Due to licensure or certification requirements for students pursuing job placement or additional education, degrees must be verified as soon as possible.

Trustee Ballard moved approval, which was seconded by Trustee Pope. Hearing no discussion, Chair Webb called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

F. ASACR 3: Deletion of Certificate: College of Education

The recommendation was that the Board of Trustees approve the closure of the graduate certificate in College, Career and Civic Life Teaching and Learning, within the College of Education.

By way of background, this program had not enrolled students since 2018. There were no current students in the program and as such the deletion would not affect any faculty, staff or students.

This proposal had the approval of the College of Education and the University Senate. The Provost of the University supported this recommendation.

Trustee Black moved approval, which was seconded by Trustee Ballard. Hearing no discussion, Chair Webb called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

E. Provost Report

Provost DiPaola provided updates on Project Accelerate: Work Group 2

Since April's update on interview progress, data collection and benchmarking, various project management activities, e.g., project governance, standing meetings with the project management team, co-facilitators and the work group, and feedback opportunities, the current state report was completed, design principles were finalized and recommendations were formed. Those recommendations, along with the principles and priorities, were outlined in a comprehensive, final report of more than 70 pages, including additional details to be shared with the President.

The Current State Report revealed many opportunities for the UK Core, as well as outlined the strengths of the UK Core including, but not limited to, its ability to provide students with a broad liberal arts education and allow them to explore courses outside of

their comfort zone and/or colleges with numerous course choices for students. The UK Core was broken into five key focus areas: curricular framework and competencies, student experience, assessment, program oversight and administration and communication and messaging.

Curricular Framework and Competencies referred to the overall structure of the UK Core, including the organization of competencies and student learning outcomes (SLOs), which are taught by instructors. The UK Core had 75 student learning outcomes/objectives (SLOs), overwhelming faculty and students in understanding the end goal. The UK Core competency titles are non-intuitive and ambiguous, with some students wondering what skills they are supposed to gain.

Student Experience referred to a student's involvement and participation in the UK Core and their ability to complete their general education requirements. Students desired to gain more practical knowledge and skills in their general education courses. Twenty-nine percent of UK Core credits are brought in through transfer or dual credit, causing some constituents interviewed to worry that these students are not getting the full UK experience.

Assessment was the evaluation of students' attainment of student learning outcomes for competencies within the UK Core and compliance with accreditation requirements. Mapping course artifacts was challenging and time-intensive for faculty. Many submitted artifacts are unusable in assessment, pointing to an ineffective and inefficient process. While the assessment plans documented that faculty should receive course feedback, that did not always happen in practice, which limited faculty members' ability to make changes to the course for the future.

Program Oversight and Administration was the management and operations of the UK Core, both the curricular aspects by faculty and programmatic aspects by administrative support. The UK Core lacked needed oversight for items like marketing, communication and assessment. UK's peer institutions have at least one full-time equivalent (FTE) managing their general education program.

Communication and Messaging was the publicization of the UK Core's processes, purpose and goals to all UK constituents through various modes of communication. Documents related to the UK Core, including the website, are often contradictory, inconsistent, and outdated. The UK Core lacked a programmatic communications plan, which was frequently referenced as the cause of much of the misunderstanding around the UK Core.

Employers and peer institutions were interviewed during the current state phase. For the employer interviews, the work group prioritized employers that have experience hiring UK students and encompassed a variety of industries as well as company sizes. Employers felt that UK graduates were adequately prepared for the workforce; however, they noted recent changes in new employees regarding expectations, motivation, and experiences. What recent graduates want in the workforce was not necessarily the reality.

Recent graduates wanted to be rewarded for completed tasks. They are typically less willing to perform tasks outside of the job description. Recent graduates believed they deserve certain experiences or only want to do work they enjoy. Every employer stated the most desirable skills and attributes they look for in recent graduates were communication, teamwork, lifelong learner, personable and self-motivation, and noted recent graduates could use additional growth in these skills and attributes.

Peer institutions were interviewed to learn how they operated and implemented their general education programs. High-level benchmarking was performed on 31 peer institutions that included the Southeastern Conference (SEC), the contiguous campus eight, Kentucky public/private institutions and institutions with advanced general education programs. With those results, the work group voted on which institutions to conduct deeper benchmarking through additional analysis and interviews. The five chosen were the University of Georgia, Centre College, Ohio State University (OSU), Virginia Tech and Eastern Kentucky University.

After analyzing and interviewing those five peers, it was apparent that some of the challenges UK Core faced were similar to the challenges the peer institutions experienced. The first was around the assessment process of general education programs, specifically the processes to assess the student obtainment of skills as well as the act of reporting out of it. The second was the challenge of gaining buy-in and passion for general education programs from students when they were busy with major courses, extracurriculars, part-time jobs, etc. Many of the peers also acknowledged that it was difficult to find time and resources to train the instructors not only regarding course-specific responsibilities but also on the overall importance of the general education program. Instructors, like students, have busy lives with many conflicting priorities and general education courses are not always on the top of the list.

Some peers had solutions for other challenges that UK experienced. OSU has 3.1 full-time equivalents supporting the administration of their general education requirement. Virginia Tech has an Office of General Education where their Provost of Undergraduate Education oversees the day-to-day operations and administration of the program and has staff support dedicated to their program.

OSU general education courses included required bookends (a launch course their first year and a reflection course their final year), foundational areas and themes that included emerging topics. This balanced a general liberal arts education while also allowing students to explore 21st-century topics and trends.

Virginia Tech's structure, though like UK's "menu" of options, included a Pathways minor program allowing students to satisfy general education requirements while also satisfying a minor. This allowed students to complete their Pathways general education requirements while also exploring their passions and interests, complementing their major with a cross-disciplinary minor, and enhancing their future career prospects.

Centre College folds in high impact practices into their general education program

such as study abroad, mentored research and internships through their experiential learning requirement.

To put into action the process to strengthen the UK Core, the work group created design principles and initial recommendations to help move UK towards a general education program that is more innovative, cohesive and effective. Ten design principles were finalized to encompass the “what” and “why” for each of the key focus areas.

These are not only to serve as the foundation for the recommendations moving forward but to also serve as a reference point to revisit as future decisions around the UK Core are made. The design principles for each key focus area are as follows.

For Curricular Framework and Competencies, the work group heard that students want more human and practical skills in the UK Core so the design principles emphasize that competencies should help students become resilient, lifelong learners who value curiosity, empathy, humility and collaboration.

For Student Experience, the work group heard that students do not always understand the purpose of the UK Core so the design principles emphasize that the purpose of the UK Core should be clearly articulated to and among students and allow for high-impact opportunities.

For Assessment, the work group heard that the assessment process can be confusing and time-intensive so the design principles emphasize that the assessment should be simple and effective in measuring outcomes, and it should allow for continuous improvement and innovation in teaching and curriculum.

For Program Oversight and Administration, the work group knows that faculty are invested in the success of the University’s students but need more administrative support so the design principles highlight how the UK Core should be overseen by a faculty committee as the primary curricular authority and should include an appropriately resourced administrative director to manage operations of the UK Core.

For Communication and Messaging, the work group heard that there is no unified message of the UK Core, and it sometimes lacks the necessary communication so the design principles outline how the UK Core’s communication and branding should be engaging, clear and accurate to present a unified and understandable message. UK Core’s resources should be sufficient to sustain this critical work at UK.

Chair Webb called for questions. Trustee Swanson asked if Work Group 2 will continue to work on this and be co-led by Dr. Collett. Provost DiPaola stated the work was finished at present but will determine in the fall how to work through the recommendations. Trustee Swanson questioned a supposed contradiction between innovative practices pertaining to senior-level, major-focused capstone courses and Transdisciplinary Educational approaches to advance Kentucky’s (TEK) encouragement. Provost DiPaola said there was discussion on the intersection of skills and teamwork and

to keep in mind the mapping that occurred related to a student's entire experience at UK, not only the first year.

F. Vice President for Student Success Report

Dean Scott Lephart provided an update on Project Accelerate: Work Group 1. Dean Lephart reminded the Board that the work group was charged with strategies to develop more educated Kentuckians. The work group reviewed more than 300 occupations in Kentucky that require a bachelor's degree and categorized them into 33 knowledge areas. The focus was on the knowledge areas where the Commonwealth would see the most growth. Six areas represented 80 percent of the growth, including 48 associated occupations that were in high demand. Those occupations were mapped to more than 160 programs across UK.

A 10-year study through 2031 included the three largest areas of demand, which made up 60 percent of all the demand: administration and management, education and training in medicine and dentistry, and the knowledge area that contributes primarily to health care occupations. The remaining three knowledge areas were economics and accounting, engineering and technology, and psychology.

The infrastructure and support considerations for effective smart enrollment growth include establishing workforce need and current state, expanding pipeline and capacity planning, and fostering partnership opportunities to facilitate greater learning and occupational opportunities. Each college dean was consulted; it was realized that the variety of major choices students have made do not correlate directly to the prioritized occupations. Potential barriers included supporting increased capacity including physical space limitations (class space and operational space), faculty distribution of effort capacity, student recruitment challenges, and state and federal regulatory limitations. Colleges uniquely identified interests in developing deeper relationships with partners "as a company" versus relationships with specific people within those organizations which will result in more comprehensive and sustainable partnerships.

There were 44 occupations in the knowledge area of medicine and dentistry of which 13 exhibited above average demand. Nursing accounted for the largest scale of projected need while smaller scale occupations such as physical therapy, physician assistant and athletic training have significantly high percentages of projected growth opportunities. Preliminary alignment of existing UK programs to knowledge area by college was reviewed. All colleges identified courses or programs to support critical skills necessary for success in those occupations.

Chair Webb called for questions. Trustee Gosney requested examples of professions that have regulatory restrictions and what those restrictions are, particularly in healthcare areas. Dean Lephart stated that many are regulated by accreditation agencies, which determine the size of programs relative to the full-time equivalent space available to the opportunities for clinical education. Those are areas of concern as well as state regulations as they relate to the scope of work that may put some restraints on

the ability to grow programs.

Trustee Swanson asked how to balance the focus on workforce training when it causes stress and mental anxiety for students. Dean Lephart stated UK is at the forefront of considering how to do that, as it relates to the UK Core, while ensuring the prerequisites for matriculation into occupational and professional programs are addressed. Life skills and intellectual skills are central to the development of UK's students.

President Capilouto stated that elected representatives and community leaders have an almost insatiable thirst for a capable workforce. These work groups' considerations are not either or but an essentiality of a technical capacity with a human capacity. The dream is that UK graduates have both.

G. SGA President Report

Trustee Lizzy Hornung and Student Government Association (SGA) President Maddie Duff highlighted activities in which the SGA participated. SGA leadership returned recently from the Kentucky Leadership Academy Conference where collaboration within and between SGAs was discussed. The SGA will attend the Southeastern Conference Exchange for Student Government Associations, where UK will present on safety. Other upcoming activities include Big Blue Nation Orientations, fall election planning, programming and gathering student feedback. Wildcat Wardrobe, a service that provides free professional clothing to students, will be moving out of White Hall Classroom Building, due to construction, and into a more accessible location.

Chair Webb called for questions. There were none.

H. Meeting Adjourned

Hearing no further business, Chair Webb adjourned the meeting at 2:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Brenda B. Gosney
Acting Academic and Student Affairs
Committee Chair

BG/sjr