



Report for Academic Year 2020-2021

Submitted by Dr. Cathlin Davis, chair, on behalf of the committee:

Cathlin Davis	Chair
Ann Strahm	Chair Elect
Julia Rosas-Nieto	Counseling Representative
Tim Held	Library Representative
Steven Wood	CAHSS Representative
Kimy Liu	COEKSW Representative
Orestis Panagopoulos	CBA Representative
Nhu-Y Stessman	COS Representative
Bret Carroll (Spring 2021)	At Large Representative
Gerard Wellman (Fall 2020)	At Large Representative
Keith Nainby	Speaker of the Faculty
Stuart Wooley	Executive Secretary
Zoe Martinez	ASI Representative

OUR YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

UEPC has a perennial agenda, and although we got a lot done this year, there were a handful of items that remained on the “tabled” or “old business” list for the entire academic year. UEPC instead focused on pandemic-related issues, the Ethnic Studies requirement, and other new business. We had a busy year, with every meeting filled with focused discussion. Teaching remotely meant that faculty often felt we were building the plane while flying it, and UEPC tried to help out when we could, through both temporary policy proposals and interpretation of extant policy.

This was a year like no other. Classrooms, conference rooms, offices, all looked the same as we sat in front of our computers. Very few faculty ever planned to teach online classes, and most policies on our campus are written for in-person teaching. Even the simple concept of attendance became complicated, especially for asynchronous classes with flexible due dates. Thus part of the work of UEPC became to interpret policies, either for specific questions or for general information.

A select few of those issues – waitlisted students being able to access the LMS, how to schedule final exams for asynchronous classes, student needs in remote learning, delivery of materials to students (and ways to return those materials), and the spring calendar. We passed the issue of student cameras being on during Zoom to ATLC, deciding that it was more in their purview. We asked the Assessment of Student Learning subcommittee to consider issues related to assessment and remote learning. We sent two emails to faculty, one with spring calendar dates and one with general recommendations and policy interpretations for instruction. We agreed on language for transcripts, to note the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on student grades and successful completion of courses. These notes will appear under the semester grades for Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021.

ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD TO ACADEMIC SENATE

Issues of new or revised policy are necessarily sent forward to Senate for approval. The following Resolutions were sent to Academic Senate:

30/AS/20/UEPC Temporary Modification to University Grading Policies as a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic

(Approved by Senate 10/20/20)

This temporary policy allows students to withdraw from a class or choose CR/NC for any class during the pandemic. UEPC considered many scenarios, listened to the concerns of several departments, and sent forward a policy that we hoped covered all possibilities.

05/AS/21/UEPC Pre-requisites for General Education Upper Division Courses

(Approved by Senate 3/23/20)

A previous catalog language change had proved to be very confusing. When can a student take their Upper Division GE courses? This resolution intended to clarify the timeline for students. We will see if it works in the coming years.

03/AS/21/UEPC Preferred Name Use Policy

(returned to committee)

PeopleSoft has a module that campuses can “turn on” that allows students to identify their preferred name, which would then appear on class rosters in both PeopleSoft and Canvas. While the implementation of the module had support in Senate, the resolution and policy were returned to UEPC to clarify procedures. UEPC was unable to return to the discussion due to other pressing matters, most particularly the Ethnic Studies requirement. This will be on UEPC’s agenda in the 2021-22 academic year.

31/AS/20/UEPC CSU Stanislaus Ethnic Studies Resolution in opposition to Chancellor’s Proposed Implementation of AB 1460

(Approved by Senate 10/20/21)

When we first began discussing implementing an Ethnic studies requirement in Senate on September 22, UEPC believed that we would be able to determine how to include the requirement in our campus curriculum. In late October, the Chancellor’s Office proposed a very restrictive implementation that the Committee agreed stood in abrogation of the established curricular authority of the faculty. We sent forward a Sense of the Senate resolution, along with nearly every other campus, in the hopes that it would lead the Chancellor to not implement the proposed General Education structure. The resolution was well-supported, but the Chancellor went ahead with the changes.

09/AS/21/UEPC Addition of an Ethnic Studies Requirement to the Baccalaureate Degree

(Approved by Senate 5/4/21)

So much has been written and said about the process of bringing this resolution to the Academic Senate. Our first discussions started in September. We asked for an ad-hoc committee to consider the topic in-depth, knowing that UEPC would need to discuss other urgent issues throughout the fall semester. It took all year, but we were finally able to send a resolution to Academic Senate. At Senate the Ad-Hoc committee proposed a separate resolution; UEPC and members of the Ad-Hoc group were able to reconcile the two resolutions and return one resolution to Senate for a second reading. At the second reading, the resolution was split into two, both of which passed. One resolution focused on the Ethnic Studies requirement; the second focused on not making further changes to General Education. We now await the President’s response to both.

ITEMS REVIEWED WITHIN UEPC

Other items discussed in UEPC included curriculum changes, listed below. We also reviewed the update to federal definitions of the Student Credit Hour. We found that our campus policy is in line with the new WASC definition, and no further changes are needed.

UEPC approved the following curriculum changes:

Liberal Studies Computer Science concentration was approved
Geography and Environmental Resources B.S. was modified
Kinesiology minor was modified
Criminal Justice B.A. was modified
Geography and Environmental B.S. was modified (name and new prefix)
Liberal Studies Ethnic Studies and Social Justice concentration revision was approved

AGENDA ITEMS FOR 2021-22:

There are several items discussed this year that will continue into next academic year. We anticipate that the conversation on the Ethnic Studies requirement and General Education changes will continue. One element that was not a central part of this year's discussion was the status of the Multicultural Requirement. It will be part of the next conversations.

In March 2020, the Chancellor suspended all use of testing as part of the Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR). The University Writing Committee recommended a temporary pre-requisite for WP courses – the Golden Four (GE A1, 2, 3 and B 4). During this past academic year, the Writing Committee has worked on a replacement screening process. As UWC is a sub-committee of UEPC, we have had some cross-committee discussions on that work in progress. We will leave it to the UWC to fully describe their work in their own year-end report.

The General Education Subcommittee asked UEPC to take up the issue of consultation principles in curriculum development. The University Writing Committee continues to grapple with the issue of faculty not responding to course review requests. Issues surrounding faculty interaction with the bookstore continue, and will be a focus for UEPC next year.

In May, Chair Davis will finish the work on a final agenda item. We have multiple Academic Calendar policies on the policy website. Some supersede others, and finding information is confusing. UEPC will create a combined policy, reconciling all versions and separate policies. This will not change any current policy, just make it easier to find. This will come as a consent item to Academic Senate in the fall.

Finally, we hope to finally bring to the table those agenda items that we did not have time for in this academic year. But we also acknowledge that there will be urgent issues that arise. We encourage all faculty to contact UEPC when curricular questions arise.

I wish to thank the members of UEPC (both voting and ex-officio), and Gurpreet Aulak, our administrative support, for all their work this academic year. I especially want to thank the members for keeping our discussion productive and respectful, even when the conversation got heated. Thanks also to the subcommittees and Ad-Hoc committees for taking up issues that needed fuller discussion than UEPC could manage with our full agenda.