

Report to the Faculty Senate
From the Liberal Studies Coordinating and Policy Committee (LSCPC)
Academic Year 2021-2022

Membership

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Michelle Therrien, Communication and Information
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Ex officio

Joe O'Shea – Dean of Undergraduate Studies
Lynn Hogan – Director of Liberal Studies, Dean of Undergraduate Studies designee
Leslie Richardson – Vice President for Academic Affairs designee

Guest Participant

Kestrel Strickland – Office of Liberal Studies

The role of the Liberal Studies Coordinating and Policy Committee is to promote liberal education and provide oversight for the liberal studies curriculum and University-wide undergraduate requirements. The LSCPC also develops and oversees course approval criteria and processes, as well as the development of policies and processes related to assessment of student learning outcomes.

The committee met six times during the academic year. This report focuses on two key outcomes from our meetings this year.

1. The LSCPC presented a proposal to modify the University-wide Diversity Requirement: As a University-wide Graduation requirement, the current diversity requirement stipulates that students must complete with a grade of “C–” or higher at least one Cross-Cultural Studies (X) course and one Diversity in Western Experience (Y) course.

- Courses designated as X are Cross-Cultural Studies and are intended to facilitate students' development as culturally conscious participants in a global community.
- Courses designated as Y are Diversity in Western Experience and are designed to facilitate students' development as culturally literate members of society.

A sub-committee met to develop the proposal. Current X and Y courses will remain as Diversity courses, but the modified requirement will remove the X- and Y- designations. The student learning objectives for approved and new Diversity courses remain the same. Under the new Diversity Requirement, students will complete two approved Diversity courses in order to fulfill the Liberal Studies Diversity requirement.

Students transferring into Florida State University with an articulated AA degree will complete one Diversity course.

The rationale for the changes is based upon faculty input and the fact that student expectations have evolved. The current FSU requirement has existed since at least 1992. The diversity, equity, and inclusion conversation has moved beyond constructed boundaries to intersectionality, multiple perspectives, and a host of other frameworks. The new policy will reduce confusion and meet the faculties' request for greater latitude in creating diversity courses that will be more impactful and in step with contemporary thinking. Student experiences and expectations have transformed as well. Student experiences are more integrative, and FSU needs to adopt a model that builds upon their current frame of reference. Removing the designations will allow students greater flexibility in their education. The modified Diversity Requirement was approved by the Faculty Senate at the December 2021 meeting. The proposed change will become official beginning Fall 2022. As is the practice at Florida State University when curricular changes benefit students, the revised requirement would be applied to all currently enrolled undergraduate students. Because the proposed change allows for current courses to meet the new Diversity requirement, there would be minimal, if any, impact on academic units. The LSCPC will coordinate with the Liberal Studies office during the implementation phase and course approval process.

2. For several years, the LSCPC has been engaged with the Liberal Studies office and the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment in the development of the assessment of student learning outcomes in General Education courses. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) now requires a data driven process for assessment of the General Education courses and the development of an improvement plan for meeting student learning objectives. Key points include the following:

- Fall 2020 marked the initial roll-out of the newly developed process.
- In Fall 2020, LSCPC members participated in informational meetings between the Director of LS and Associate Deans, Chairs, and Instructors.
- The Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment developed and provided faculty the option of using innovative tools to streamline data collection and for providing feedback.
- There was 100% reporting rate on the Tallahassee campus.
- The LSCPC will view the aggregate data which is returned to chairs and instructors who may engage with the LS office in the development of an improvement plan.
- The LSCPC is in the process of finalizing its role in data analysis and incorporation of feedback from the instructors as we work to improve student learning outcomes in general education curriculum.

Lastly, each year, the LSCPC gratefully acknowledges the many members of the Liberal Studies Course Review Panel for their reviews and the constructive feedback to instructors on course development and design. Kestrel Charlton of the LS office has done an excellent job recruiting new reviewers and updating training for new reviewers.

Respectfully submitted for the LSCPC,
James M. Fadool