

[Approved 9/25/12]

The Committee on University College
4/27/12 Minutes

Prepared by Terry-Ann Jones

Present: Gerry Campbell, Robbin Crabtree, Ryan Drake, Terry-Ann Jones, Ryan Munden, and Aaron Perkus (invited guest)

Absent: Anne Campbell and Dee Lippman

1. Minutes of the 11/16/11 meeting were approved.
2. Discussion of the proposed Center for Continuing Studies has been tabled until Academic Council discusses it.

Online courses:

UC had policies that served to protect revenue generation and determine whether or not our full-time, traditional students should take online courses. This has been on the Academic Council agenda, but because of their busy semester, it has not yet been addressed.

Dean Crabtree supports the idea of Academic Council creating a task force or asking the SVPAA to do so, to address the strategic, policy, and operational points of online education. Prof. Munden pointed to an example from a recent Chronicle article to illustrate that online education is a rapidly growing trend. Dean Crabtree proposed a motion that Academic Council makes a determination about how the university should approach online education, both strategically and in terms of academic policy. Dean Crabtree relayed examples of experiences that illustrate both the need for online courses in some contexts and faculty resistance to it in others. She reiterated that a university-wide strategy for online education is needed.

Dean Crabtree asked whether this would be an issue for Academic Council and the SVPAA, or if the CUC should address it first, and then take it to Academic Council. Prof. Drake suggested that the latter would be preferable.

Prof. Drake expressed reservations about online teaching and suggested that it may be the case that online courses work better in some disciplines than in others. Prof. Munden proposed that we provide a synopsis of the present state of online education at Fairfield University.

Prof. Campbell suggested that we add this issue to our future agenda items. The other CUC members agreed to address a strategic plan for online courses in the coming academic year.

3. Discussion of the CUC Annual Report, prepared by Ryan Munden. Associate Dean Perkus corrected the wording of point #8 of the report (unfinished business). Academic Council has approved the recommendation of the AC Subcommittee on Continuing Education that the CUC investigate fully the

desirability of developing a Center for Continuing Studies for non-credit/non-degree programs. Prof. Munden asked whether the more appropriate term is the Center for Continuing Studies or Center for Continuing Education. Associate Dean Perkus responded that "Education" should be used to avoid confusion with other programs in continuing studies.

Associate Dean Perkus expressed some apprehension that online education be under the purview of the CUC. While he agreed that a strategic conversation is needed, he thought it wasn't necessarily the role of the CUC. Dean Crabtree thought it was appropriate for the CUC to initiate the discussion. Prof. Campbell pointed out that the wording, in which the CUC is charged with "investigating the desirability" is appropriate at this point.