

**Cardinal Core Curriculum Committee  
Meeting of March 1, 2019, 2:30**

**Minutes**

*Attending:* Barrow, Baumgartner, Beattie, Bertacco, Carden (staff), Determing, Fernandez, French, Fuselier, Land, Lewis, Libe, Perry, Riedel, Seif, Shanahan, Singleton, Willey

*Absent:* Boehm, Christopher, D'Silva, Donis-Munoz, Faircloth, Hammash, K. Partin, W. Partin, Patton, Walker

*SGA Rep:* Zack Pennington

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of February 1, 2019, were approved.

**\*ACTION:** Carden will post the minutes to the Cardinal Core web site.

**Assessment and Course Proposal Subcommittee Updates**

**Assessment:** Shanahan reported that the training for the Arts & Humanities (AH) assessment went well and that the artifacts will be reviewed and scored on March 8. The AAC&U VALUE Rubrics for Critical Thinking, Written Communication, and Intercultural Knowledge and Competence will be used. Applying the intercultural knowledge and competence rubric will be challenging. UofL is on track to participate in the AAC&U VALUE Institute this year. A sample of artifacts from CUE courses has been collected in addition to the Cardinal Core artifacts collected for the assessment. Shanahan hopes to be able to measure an impact of the Cardinal Core program and previous General Education Program around critical thinking. The VALUE Institute also will provide an opportunity to look at findings from the CUE courses with a comparison of students who completed their general education requirements at UofL vs other institutions.

**Course Proposal Subcommittee:** Shanahan reported that the Course Proposal Subcommittee will use a newly designed review sheet to review a sample of 30 AH, SB, and SBH coded syllabi randomly selected from each department. The main categories involve a check for the Cardinal Core SLOs, the corresponding assessments, whether the Spring 19 syllabus reflects the content originally approved for Cardinal Core, and the added piece of whether it reflects the Cardinal Core philosophy (key words/indicators provided). Additionally, the VALUE rubrics have been adapted to assess the intentionality of the course in addressing Critical Thinking, Effective Communication, and Historical, Social, and Cultural Diversity.

The review is a fact-finding endeavor. Of course, if SLOs and other required components of the syllabus are missing, departments will be informed. Riedel commented that the philosophy piece is a goal. Barrow wondered how to help students understand the meaning and importance of the philosophy statement, which is part of the challenge of the Provost's charge.

**\*ACTION:** The Course Proposal Subcommittee will meet on March 19 to review the sample syllabi and report the findings to the CCCC at the April meeting.

## **Provost's Charge: Follow-up Discussion and Philosophy Statement**

French began the discussion, with a focus on:

- 1) the critical thinking competency area of Cardinal Core, guiding principles, and the philosophy statement that was developed in 2017,
- 2) the web links that Fernandez shared in which he found several relative statements regarding views on promoting the value of general education, and
- 3) the marketing recommendations made by Karen Christopher about producing a short video explaining what Cardinal Core is and why it is important, to be shared at each orientation in order to reach a large number of students with a consistent message. It also was suggested that the message be posted in a prominent place on UofL's website, and played by instructors in Cardinal Core classes (vs. adding another bullet point on a syllabus that might not be read by students).

### **Philosophy Statement:**

Riedel felt that the philosophy statement adopted by the General Education Task Force was too abstract and recommended edits for the marketing piece. Bertacco favored reducing the philosophy statement to two paragraphs, making it more concise. Detmering pointed out that the Cardinal Core philosophy statement highlights the intention of engaging students in their own learning.

### **Video Recommendations:**

- Engage students in the video (French).  
(Word of caution about copyright violations if making videos in class lectures.)
- Include a company representative in the video to talk about why they like to hire UofL graduates (Riedel).
- Highlight critical thinking skills (Shanahan).
- Expand on the value of critical thinking by asking business reps to talk about it at Career Fairs (Singleton).
- Stress the importance of soft skills (Fernandez).
- Promote the importance of foundational skills by asking a student in the video how they value critical thinking and other key skills relevant to learning and careers.
- Along with the potential employer, include a graduate who has been in the work world (Riedel).
- UofL MBA students might be hired to run the ad campaign (Riedel).
- Be general regarding the value of QR or other courses without mentioning specific classes or particular students (Riedel).
- Include freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior students (Riedel).
- School of Music students might provide background music (Land).
- Mention approaches to finding a major through Cardinal Core courses (Detmering).
- Can use explicit language and connections about how Cardinal Core courses approach learning in a reflective way, explicitly identifying moments within the semester that reinforced aspects of the Cardinal Core philosophy (Barrow).
- Be explicit about what critical thinking is, defining it and aiding faculty in how to weave it into their courses so that students are taught how to think critically and understand why it is important (Lewis and Baumgartner). French wondered if Cardinal Core instructors could be asked to categorize examples of critical thinking. Riedel did not think that adding this to the syllabus would make an impactful difference, but Mathematics instructors are asked to identify questions on the final exam that are part of critical thinking. Riedel also commented that signs in the classroom generally are not read.
- Address students through videos, FB pages, twitter, Instagram, and in any other way in which students can be reached (Willey).

- Self-reflective students need to be able to make connections through a sequence of developed skills vs. just checking a box (Fuselier).
- Be more intentional about messaging in order to help students see the connection and convincing them of the value of the Cardinal Core foundation in their success (Perry).

### **Feedback from Advisors Meeting:**

Willey reported that Provost Boehm pushed the “15 to finish” goal with students finishing in eight semesters. Regarding Cardinal Core requirements, Willey told advisors to quit telling the students that they just needed to “get through” these classes. Instead, advisors were asked to stress the four foundational skills of Cardinal Core (critical thinking, understanding diversity, effective communication, quantitative reasoning). It might help the attitudes of advisors and faculty to see a few recorded interviews with potential employers. Such a video could be shared widely and may encourage faculty to want to teach Cardinal Core while also promoting the value of Cardinal Core among advisors.

### **Student Dissatisfaction:**

Seif asked if students were dissatisfied with the Cardinal Core courses themselves. Willey responded that they are dissatisfied that the Cardinal Core requirements do not help them finish their major and that they are perceived as a 13<sup>th</sup> year of high school. She thinks that there is a lack of connection and student engagement. Bertacco questioned the ability to assess student dissatisfaction during the first academic year of Cardinal Core. Barrow commented that it is a legitimate issue that students have had and which has not been addressed, and he does not want to kick the can down the road a few more years. He stressed the need to believe in the program in order to sell it. Fernandez added that it is an issue at other institutions, as well.

### **Faculty Buy-In and Training:**

Lewis recommended improving faculty buy-in and being strategic in the approach in promoting the message. Fernandez agreed that spending more time with faculty on the front lines is important. For example, providing talking points for faculty is one strategy so that the message is coming from the faculty side. From his perspective, instructors should walk into the classroom thinking that this is the last course in this discipline that the student is going to take, so convey what you want them to know. Shanahan reminded all that the rebranding of general education was an attempt to start afresh, and the faculty development budget did not happen. The implementation of the new program is just getting started, and the training using the assessment rubrics is telling about the missing student reflection piece.

Willey agreed in the importance of faculty investment, but raised two faculty issues that need to be addressed: 1) getting faculty to become willing to participate in faculty training and to agree to teach Cardinal Core courses and 2) \$\$/financial support for x-pays and training. Riedel commented that funding would solve the first problem. How to train faculty is another consideration raised by Shanahan. Willey commented that a teaching academy for first- and second-year classes is in the works.

Given the money matter, Riedel suggested starting with students, a less expensive approach. Then get junior faculty on board which could affect long-term changes. Giving credit on their annual work plan might be an incentive. Conversely, Fernandez and Perry recommended starting with willing faculty. Perry added that senior faculty maintain the culture, and junior faculty watch them. Fuselier pointed out that PTLs and term faculty teach many of the Cardinal Core courses, and that it might be difficult to get them to participate in the training. There are also core faculty who large classes in the first two years. Therefore, she recommended starting with high-enrollment classes

from the first three semesters, focusing on faculty who want the training and in hopes that others may follow. She reported that good interactions have taken place in the FLCs at the Delphi Center. However, some faculty prefer faculty-led training. Willey commented that if there was someone like Fuselier leading it, working with the Delphi Center as a team, it could work. The Delphi Center provides the necessary staff support and they have a library of teaching resources. Barrow commented that a main mission of the Delphi Center is to promote faculty development and support faculty not just by training them in the area of on-line learning but on best practices in teaching. The CUEs also are rolled out by the Delphi Center. Baumgartner stressed the need to help chairs realize how vital it is to have a couple of faculty in the department invested in faculty learning communities and to have at least one session where both chairs and junior faculty are present. This would cover tenured faculty and junior faculty.

Thinking about how assessment fits into the faculty development piece, Shanahan informed the committee that the AAC&U is allowing up to 12 faculty participants to engage in free rubric scoring and that there has been faculty interest. One step might be filling those 12 slots.

In connection to putting the language out there as part of the marketing piece, Fuselier would like to see some Cardinal Core faculty on the banners. Detmering suggested having a separate category of Cardinal Core faculty favorites.

**\*ACTION:** Barrow will find out how many faculty favorites teach Cardinal Core courses.

### **Key Points (Re-cap):**

French asked for a consensus on the top three ideas discussed and how the proposals fit together into a statement to the Provost to find ways to improve student perceptions about Cardinal Core and to engage faculty and advisors in that process.

Favorable ideas from Bertacco included:

- 1) Production of the video proposed by Christopher
- 2) Faculty Training (possibly incorporating it into the New Faculty Orientation Workshops)
- 3) Identification of faculty to participate in the AAC&U Values Institute with a focus on critical thinking.

Perry liked the idea of:

- 4) Overlap between faculty favorites and Cardinal Core, identifying himself as one of those faculty. The CCCC could talk to faculty favorites about what they do in the classroom.
- 5) Also, regarding participation in a FLC he was highly enthusiastic after listening to a faculty member from Engineering (Jeff Hieb); Fuselier was not sure if such leaders are being awarded in the department
- 6) Approach the challenge from both ends: must have faculty commitment and buy-in. If only focusing on junior faculty, they think that they are getting stuck with Cardinal Core courses because it is not important enough to the senior faculty.

**\*ACTION:** CCCC members were asked to review the key points and ideas discussed encompassing faculty, students, advisors, and the overall program and to recommend first steps.

### **Spring 2019 Meetings**

The next meeting is set for 2:30 on April 5, in Ekstrom E254.

Prepared by Kathy Carden