

**Cardinal Core Curriculum Committee
Meeting of April 5, 2019, 2:30**

Minutes

Attending: Beattie, Bertacco, Carden (staff), Christopher, Determing, French, Fuselier, Land, Lewis, Patton, Reynolds (Public Health rep), Riedel, Seif, Shanahan, Willey

Absent: Barrow, Baumgartner, Boehm, D'Silva, Faircloth, Fernandez, Hammash, Libe, K. Partin, W. Partin, Perry, Singleton, Walker

SGA Reps: Sabrina Collins, Lazaro Donis-Munoz

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of March 1, 2019, were approved.

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

Introduction of SGA Representative

Sabrina Collins, newly elected SGA Academic Vice President, will serve as the new A&S student rep during the 2019-2020 academic year. Soon, a second student also will be appointed.

Assessment, Diversity Petitions, and Variance Updates

Diversity Petitions: Shanahan provided a report on the 7 new diversity petitions reviewed since January: 2 for military experience, 4 for study abroad, and 1 for transfer credit. All seven were submitted for D2 consideration, but only five were approved. The two military experience petitions are being revised for reconsideration.

Cardinal Core Variances: Shanahan is tracking the variances and 199 have been received to date. Of the total, 165 were approved, 26 denied, and the remaining variances are either pending a decision or the variance request was not necessary. Since January 45 new variances were submitted.

Preliminary Results of the AH Assessment: Shanahan provided the mode for each rubric measure of the Critical Thinking, Written Communication, and Intercultural Knowledge and Competence AAC&U VALUE Rubrics for both Cardinal Core and CUE Courses. Overall, the results were positive, with the mode at 3 (on a 4-point scale) for most areas. Preliminary results indicated that students continue to struggle with questioning assumptions as part of critical thinking skills, as was consistent with the previous General Education Program. A full report will be shared in May. A smaller sample of student work will be selected for the AAC&U VALUE Institute to measure impact of the Cardinal Core program. Specifically, 50 artifacts from first-year students in Cardinal Core courses and 50 artifacts from seniors in CUE courses will be sent to AAC&U for the VALUE Institute. The results from the VALUE Institute will be available in the fall. The Assessment Subcommittee will meet on April 8 to discuss the AH Assessment results in greater detail.

Course Proposal Subcommittee Report: Spring Review and Next Steps

On behalf of the Course Proposal Subcommittee, Shanahan provided a written report on the outcomes of the Spring 2019 syllabi review. Only about half of the syllabi were in compliance. A sample of 30 syllabi from AH, SB, and SBH were randomly selected with one syllabus from each department. The subcommittee reviewed for:

- 1) **verbatim Cardinal Core SLOs:** About 13% still are using the old outcomes and about 37% had no outcomes at all. Only 16 of the 30 (about 53%) listed the new SLOs, and one syllabus included both new and old outcomes (counted twice in the percentage breakdown).
- 2) **connection between the assessments and SLOs:** About 43% listed the corresponding methods of assessment for the new Cardinal Core SLOs and about 7% for the old general education outcomes, with 50% not including any assessments tied to the outcomes.
- 3) **how closely the sample syllabus aligned with the content of the syllabus originally approved for Cardinal Core:** Only 50% reflected the original content; 37% did not (topics, readings, overall content not the same at all—would expect some variation but not to this extent); and 13% did not include enough information to determine whether the course aligned with what originally was approved. Note: One SB-coded course did not reflect any SB content, and another course was nothing like the originally approved course to the extent that the reader would not have guessed that it was in the designated department.
- 4) **whether the syllabus reflected the Cardinal Core philosophy, using key markers:** About 35% reflected aspects of the CC philosophy, 48% did not, and 17% did not provide enough information to make a determination on alignment with the philosophy. Note: This was especially true if the course did not include the outcomes and assessments.

Shanahan noted the apparent lack of understanding about Cardinal Core and the disconnect between outcomes and assessments and content when a new instructor was teaching the course. And one instructor dismissed the value of Cardinal Core altogether by stating “back to the good stuff” after listing the required outcomes and assessments.

Willey commented that some approved syllabi are somewhat of a fiction. She was not as concerned about the different readings as long as it did not change the outcomes. Detmering mentioned that in some cases there seemed to be a surgical removal of components of the originally approved version, including a complete change in the description of the course. Riedel agreed and commented that even if the readings change, one needs to be stay true to the intent of the course so that it is not radically different. Also, in many cases the general spirit of Cardinal Core was missing.

Reynolds spoke of his experience in Public Health where a faculty member does not know what is expected. Willey commented that theoretically chairs should be managing this issue. Shanahan sends a reminder about guidelines to all instructors who teach Cardinal Core courses. Still, the message is not getting across. Fuselier commented that faculty have a tendency not to read bulk e-mails, unlike PTLs who might be more diligent because they want to do well. She thought that A&S could try to convey the message at the Chairs meeting. Detmering stressed the importance of selling Cardinal Core to faculty, as well as students. Shanahan said that the syllabus is a way to signal whether they know what Cardinal Core is.

Recommendations on next steps were discussed with an inclination to notify departments about compliance in a way that recognizes that the syllabus does not indicate everything that goes on in the classroom, but that it should reflect the content as approved and the intentionality of the overall Cardinal Core philosophy. Reviewers observed that if some of the sample syllabi were reviewed as

new proposals, they would not be approved under Cardinal Core guidelines. Feedback on ways to improve compliance, not just including the outcomes in the syllabus but also addressing them in the classroom, were considered.

- Patton suggested developing a module on BB with a check-off feature.
 - Bertacco recommended training GTAs who teach a lot of the humanities courses, working with their chair and director. Shanahan noted that the courses with the most compliance are typically lower-level courses taught by GTAs.
 - Seif mentioned that some instructors might believe that they are covering all of the goals in class. Therefore, Willey proposed that faculty could be approached in a non-browbeating statement such as “Although we know that you are probably addressing the outcomes in your class, it is important that students see the Cardinal Core outcomes and realize their value.” Furthermore, Shanahan recommended an emphasis on embedding the foundational core competencies--critical thinking, effective communication, quantitative reasoning, and diversity goals.
 - Another statement in the syllabus, such as the required Title IX statement, does not mean that students will read it, as they oftentimes go straight to the grading and schedule sections in the syllabus. Fuselier mentioned that she gives a syllabus quiz to her students, and Riedel counts the number of visits to the posted syllabus (a low number).
 - Riedel wondered if a statement about Cardinal Core could be included on Blackboard along with Title IX and other statements. Willey commented that some syllabus requirements vary by unit, and that it is difficult to standardize language for a Blackboard shell. Another issue is that there may be legalities to consider if a statement about disabilities, plagiarism, etc. is not included in the actual syllabus. Beattie mentioned possibly providing a link in the syllabus to standardized text since faculty complain about adding more to the syllabus.
 - Seif suggested that faculty might write a personal statement about why Cardinal Core is important, but Lewis was skeptical about the response rate since many faculty are not even including the outcomes. Detmering added that if the outcomes are not in the syllabus they probably are not teaching them.
 - French suggested getting feedback from the instructors regarding why the outcomes and assessments were missing to determine whether it was a miscommunication or some other factor.
 - Collins commented from a student perspective. Some of her professors have shown positive attitudes about Cardinal Core and some have reflected negative attitudes.
 - Fuselier was concerned about faculty dismissing Cardinal Core goals and wondered if that attitude shows up in assessments. Negative faculty attitudes are counter-productive to trying to elevate the value of Cardinal Core among students. Faculty have voiced that they don't want to be asked to do one more thing, even though including the outcomes and assessments in the syllabus are established guidelines. Fuselier asked if other clusters of the out-of-compliance courses could be looked at for a broader assessment.
- *ACTION:** Since Shanahan already coordinated a recent review of the AH Cardinal Core syllabi, she can run a comparative analysis and report at the next meeting.
- *ACTION:** Shanahan also will notify departments about the random sampling and specific findings. Additionally, she will request feedback on the breakdown in compliance.

Bertacco mentioned that if a faculty member is convinced about the value of Cardinal Core, it will show up in the teaching. Regarding faculty buy-in, a rewards approach was discussed. Ideas from Fuselier, Riedel, Detmering, and French included:

- Extra credit on AWP's if teaching Cardinal Core courses.

- More money from the Provost to reward compliance, including the provision of a personal statement from the faculty member for consideration during merit reviews.
- Funding for the marketing campaign with a recommended focus on a Cardinal Core year, including flags on the posts (if approved) and the aforementioned video. The Delphi Center might be a good marketing resource.
- Showcase Cardinal Core projects at an event, a way to engage both faculty and students.
- Obtain student views to help guide the committee in their marketing approach.

Regarding student buy-in, Collins would like to enhance the competency of the SGA Senators and Student Ambassadors by setting up a conversation with them about Cardinal Core. They, in turn, can take the presentation of information back to the student councils to improve student perceptions. The Student Senate meets in the fall, and Willey agreed that this is an easy first step. Ideas for the presentation were welcomed by the chair, which included a student recommendation to conduct a 5-minute survey at the Senate.

***ACTION:** Set up the fall discussion with student leaders, working with Collins.

***ACTION:** Develop a brief student survey.

***ACTION:** Additionally, Fuselier offered to provide data from the A&S surveys.

Expanding QR/Data Analytics Offerings

Willey will share details about this proposed initiative at a future meeting.

Spring 2019 Meetings

The next meeting was set for May 10 with a time change to morning to avoid conflict with the afternoon hooding ceremony.

Prepared by Kathy Carden