Re-envisioning the Undergraduate Experience Committee Report Spring 2018

On December 5, 2017 President Holland, Faculty Senate President Craig Thulin and UVUSA President Rob Smith issued a letter to the campus calling for the creation of a *Re-envisioning the Undergraduate Experience Committee* (RUEC). The RUEC was given a simple charge “Their goal will be nothing less than a comprehensive evaluation and set of recommendations in light of our dual mission model and our commitment to being a serious, inclusive, and engaged teaching university.” The work on this charge began in January 2018. The RUEC has spent much of the spring semester establishing the boundaries of such a charge, exploring the state of affairs at UVU as related to general education and undergraduate education and preparing a work plan that will allow it to take full advantage of such an opportunity.

As the RUEC convened there was a level of skepticism towards such a broad and open charge. To that end, the RUEC sought to understand better the initial charge and ultimately develop its own charge. Several activities and speakers addressed these issues and the RUEC wrestled with just how much it could consider and what constraints might hinder its ability to implement “all” options. The charge the RUEC developed reads, **“Create an adaptable strategy that will lead to retention and completion of students who are prepared to thrive personally and professionally in a multi-faceted world.”** This charge now directs the overall efforts of the RUEC.

The RUEC has 40 members, 28 faculty elected from the schools and colleges, 3 students and 9 other campus and community members (see RUEC membership list attached). **After considerable work the RUEC concluded it would not finish its work this semester but asked the simple question “Should this work continue into the fall?” It was unanimously decided that the work should continue and that there is an opportunity here to reshape the UVU experience and create an even more robust environment for student success.**  The RUEC, as currently constituted, looks forward to its continued work and report out of its efforts. What follows is detail on the work completed, an outline of the work still needed and action items the RUEC feels can be acted upon immediately.

**Spring 2018 Efforts**

The following is a compilation of individuals and groups that have addressed the RUEC, other activities, accomplishments and outcomes. Information regarding the content of the presentations and all other RUEC activity can be found in the *Re-envisioning the Undergraduate Experience* minutes located on the Faculty Senate website.

Individual and Group Presentations:

* Greg Benson- USHE System Offices.
* UVU Institutional Research presentation.
* Eugene Seeley, chair of the GE committee- current state of GE committee work.
* Tristan Denley’s persistence and graduation analysis that was presented to all USHE institutions.
* Jack Sunderlage- UVU Trustee and RUEC member.
* Student Panel- 9 Students organized by UVUSA.
* President Holland provided context on the charge, timeline and his overall expectations.
* Dr. Liz Hitch- USHE System Offices and friend of UVU.
* Institutional Research Student Focus Group- 6 students participated.
* Institutional Research General Education Student Survey Spring 2018. N=969
* *Pluralsight* presentation arranged by Trustee Sunderlage.

Activities and Group Efforts:

* General Education and Assessment conference- *Association of American Colleges and Universities.* Seven members of the RUEC attended- three main ideas emerged from the attendees
  + A first year seminar.
  + GE is cross-disciplinary and as such departments/disciplines should not have ownership over GE courses.
  + Create a schedule for periodic review and continuous assessment of general education.
* High Impact Practices (HIP’s), USHE has recommended that each student have two such experiences during their undergraduate time. The RUEC has begun exploring how this can be delivered at scale for UVU students.
* The RUEC has conducted a number of exercises exploring the current Essential Learning Outcomes (ELO’s) and while there may be a few minor modifications recommended, the RUEC has moved forward with these as one of its organizing frameworks.
* Gather Data Phase (see below): Developing a series of surveys and focus groups for students, faculty and staff, alumni, and employers.

**Moving Forward**

The RUEC has outlined a process and timeline for continuing its work into the 2018-19 academic year (See attached Re-Envisioning Committee Process Outline.) Inspired by Design Thinking, the process begins with gathering data to understand the needs of UVU stakeholders and identifying important constraints. From this information, the RUEC will evaluate and define the objectives for undergraduate education at UVU. These objectives will inform a broad exploration of ideas including reviewing literature, attending conferences and researching other institutions to identify possible changes and improvements to achieve the objectives. The ideas will be systematically evaluated according to the identified constraints and how well they might achieve the objectives for undergraduate education. The top ideas will undergo further development and planning including identifying stewardship, developing curriculum, and determining resource needs for potential PBA requests to prepare for piloting during the 2019-20 academic year.

It is important that the work of the RUEC be transparent and well-documented, allowing for input and feedback from the UVU community. The work of the RUEC during each step of the process has been and will continue to be recorded and summarized through reports and presentations. **Though the exact schedule and format is yet to be determined for fall, the RUEC** **will host multiple public meetings to present findings and solicit feedback. It is the intent of the RUEC to study and recommend solutions, however, all recommendations will be approved by the faculty and administration before being piloted and implemented.** Ultimately the approved means by which any decisions will be finalized was decided upon when the RUEC was formed and includes the following steps:

1. The RUEC passes out any recommendations with a 60%+ vote of approval.
2. The Report of the RUEC then moves to Faculty Senate, AAC and UVUSA for recommendations.
3. Benefits eligible, full-time faculty non-binding vote.
4. The Report then proceeds to Presidents Council where it will either be forwarded to the Trustees for final approval or remanded back to the RUEC for further refinement based on the feedback received.

The work accomplished during Spring semester 2018 has been integral in developing the plans and process for moving forward by informing the RUEC’s understanding of the scope of work required for each step. This preliminary work will be incorporated into the process steps and expanded on in the coming year. Additionally, work will progress during Summer 2018 to gather data through alumni and industry surveys as well as to thoroughly investigate institutional and USHE constraints.

**Future Considerations**

The RUEC has started exploring ideas and evaluating possible changes that will be implemented, likely in phases, before anything is done university wide. This is a process that requires thinking and testing that will shape the RUEC work moving forward. As the RUEC has met consistently throughout the semester, larger questions that dictate the structure of the work the RUEC may propose must be addressed. These include:

* Investigating the implications of a change in the credit hours (either an increase or decrease) of general education.
* Examining if general education should reside within departments or if it should be institutionally organized.
* Implementing a system for robust assessment to ensure we are delivering what we say we deliver as well as how effectively that delivery is taking place.
* As noted above, High Impact Practices (HIP’s) in the curriculum- how will that be delivered?
* Current workload measures and models may not fit well with some discussed changes such as team teaching and thus must be explored.

These overarching issues and many others will be addressed as the work of the RUEC continues over the summer and into the next academic year.

**Proposed Actionable Steps**

The RUEC proposes two immediate actions be taken based on the work to date:

* Formation of an *Undergraduate Assessment Committee* in partnership with the SVPAA and including *Student Affairs* in its composition and charge.
* Move the current *General Education Committee* under the *University Curriculum Committee*

The Outcomes Assessment sub-committee proposes the creation of a university level *Undergraduate Assessment Committee*. This title reflects the belief that we should not only assess the academic portion of the undergraduate experience but also the student affairs portion. It is thru the combination of this more holistic assessment that we better understand how we deliver on our commitment to student success. It is proposed that the structure, charge and other basic needs of this committee be developed over the 2018 summer and be submitted for approval in the fall of 2018. The sub-committee recommending this new approach reminds everyone that there was considerable work done on this approach in 2009 and recommends that work as one starting point for the new committee (document posted on the Faculty Senate website)*.* The RUEC also notes the recommendations in the recent *Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities* (2018) accreditation report that assessment is not functioning optimally at UVU. This sub-committee believes there are incomplete and under-utilized assessment frameworks, such as mapping major program outcomes to the ELOs that can be reinvigorated.

Furthermore, the RUEC recommends that the current *General Education Committee* become a sub-committee of the *University Curriculum Committee.* Upon the final work of the RUEC, its functions will be analyzed in relationship to whatever changes might be made in the general education offerings and administration.

**Members of the Re-envisioning the Undergraduate Experience Committee:**

Community Members

Fidel Montero – Principal of Timpview High School

Rona Rahlf – President of the Utah Valley Chamber of Commerce

Jack Sunderlage – UVU Trustee, local business liaison

Brian Verwer – Director of Public Affairs, im FLASH

Student Affairs

Michelle Kearns – AVP Student Success & Retention

Alexis Palmer – Dean of Students

Andrew Stone – AVP Enrollment Management

Academic Affairs

Kat Brown – AVP Academic Administration

Jessica Gilmore – AVP Community Outreach & Economic Development

Students

Taylor Bell – UVUSA University College Senator

Chelsie Krazcek – UVUSA VP of Academic Senate

Rob Smith – UVUSA Student Body President

Faculty

Mary Brown - College of Health & Public Service

Kevin McCarthy – College of Health & Public Service

Melissa Noyes - College of Health & Public Service

Brian Birch - College of Humanities & Social Science

Nathan Cottle - College of Humanities & Social Science

Robert Cousins - College of Humanities & Social Science

Steven Sylvester – College of Humanities & Social Science

Virginia Bayer – College of Science

Jim Harris – College of Science

Joseph Jensen – College of Science

Weihong Wang – College of Science

Cheryl Hanewicz - College of Technology & Computing – Committee chair

Afsaneh Minaie – College of Technology & Computing

Matt North – College of Technology & Computing

Sean Tolman - College of Technology & Computing – Committee chair

Kathie Debenham – School of the Arts

Ross Hagen – School of the Arts

John Newman – School of the Arts

Debora Escalante – School of Education

Numsiri Kunakemakorn – School of Education

Jon Anderson – University College

Elena Garcia – University College

Denise Richards – University College

Keith White – University College

Vance Gough - Woodbury School of Business

Laura Ricaldi – Woodbury School of Business

Sharon Yamen - Woodbury School of Business

Cynthia Krebs – General Education Committee representative

Ex-Officio Members

Wendy Athens – Senior Director Office of Teaching & Learning

Laura Busby – Director Academic IT & Analytics

Eric Humphrey – Senior Registrar

Wade Oliver – Director University Advising

Tim Stanley – Director Institutional Research

Eugene Seeley – Chair of General Education Committee

Craig Thulin – Faculty Senate President

Facilitation Team

David Connelly – AVP Academic Programs

Robin Escobar – Coordinator Faculty Relations

Tiffany Evans – Director Program Completion

Shauna Reher – Administrative Support Academic Programs

Fred White – AVP Engaged Learning

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| **Re-envisioning Committee Process Outline** | | | | | | |
| **Process Step** | ➊  GATHER DATA  Research | ➋  DEFINE | ➌  GENERATE IDEAS | ➍  REFINE | ➎  BUILD | ➏  PILOT |
| **Goal** | Understand needs of stakeholders | Define objectives for undergrad. Ed. | Identify ways of accomplishing objectives. | Evaluate ideas and select best ones for further development. | Develop specific undergrad experiences. | Test experiences and gather data |
| **Time (wks)** | 8 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 8-? | 2019-20 |
| **Tasks** | - Get info from:  Students  Alumni  Faculty  Administration  Employers  State (USHE, Legislature)  Other institutions  (Surveys, panels, focus groups etc.)  - Previously published research  - Identify important constraints.  Institutional  (student demographics, facilities, personnel, costs, commuter campus, etc.)  USHE | - State problems with current system.  - Identify opportunities for improvement.  - What undergrad. Ed. should do. | - Current ideas:  FYE Seminar  HIPs  Degree Pathways  - Other institutions  - Conferences  - Papers  - Unique ideas | - Identify method for applying constraints and explore feasibility  - Systematically review ideas | - Create framework  - Develop curriculum  - Determine budget  - Identify stewardship  - Audience/subjects | - Gather necessary approvals  (administration, grants, curriculum etc.)  - Run pilot tests of experiences  - Collect data  - Analyze and assess results  - Refine  - Iterate |
| **Outcome/ Deliverables** | - Report including summary of methods, data collected, results and conclusions for each stakeholder group.  - Process description for how to collect data. | - Report and presentation | - Digital portfolio containing all of the ideas gathered | - Rubric for idea evaluation  - Report summarizing top ideas to move forward with | - Proposal containing blueprint and framework for piloting. | - Summary report with recommendations for further development |
| **Audience/ Review/ Approval** | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD |