

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
Minutes - February 20, 2024

Call to Order – Meeting: 3:45 pm, Zoom

Voting Members Present: Sheila Flener, Anne Heintzman, Jason Wilson, Grace Lartey, Scott Grubbs, Alex Olson, Jean Huss, Joe Shankweiler, Brian Elliott, Carly Wheat, Kate Hudepohl, and Jean Snavelly.

Advisory Members Present: Stuart Burris, Danita Kelley, Jennifer Klemm, Jennifer Hammonds, Jessica Dorris and Beth Laves.

Guest: Darbi Haynes Lawrence, Julie Lee, Alison Langdon, Liza Kelly, Audra Jennings, Brad Pfranger, Angela Jerome, Mac McKerral, and Rodney King

Approval of Minutes, January 23, 2024 – 1st/2nd: Olson/Heintzman – **Vote:** Approved (10 yes)

New Business

Curriculum Agenda

College of Health & Human Services				
Code	Title	Status	Contact	Received
FACS 189	FACS 189: Child Life Specialist	Added	Darbi Haynes-Lawrence	1/26/2024
Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Olson/Heintzman Discussion: None Vote: Approved (11 yes)				
FACS 413	FACS 413: Creative, Scholarly & Research Activity in CFS	Added	Darbi Haynes-Lawrence	2/2/2024
Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Huss/Olson Discussion: Dorris asked is this for junior only? Or should it say Junior/Senior? Darbi answered that it should be both. Vote: Approved (11 yes)				
Motion to bundle all HMD's – 1st/2nd: Heintzman/Olson – Vote: Approved (11 – yes) Motion to hear bundle – 1st/2nd: Lartey/Heintzman Discussion: Went through all courses one by one. Dorris asked about the scheduling type change on HMD-354 and should they recreate to make this change for Fall 24. Decided to change the implementation date to Spring 24. Vote: Approved (11 yes)				
HMD 201	HMD 201: Introduction to Dietetics	Edited	Julie Lee	1/26/2024
HMD 340	HMD 340: Nutrition Assessment	Edited	Julie Lee	1/26/2024
HMD 354	HMD 354: Hospitality Data Analytics	Edited	Julie Lee	1/30/2024
HMD 360	HMD 360: Advanced Nutrition	Edited	Julie Lee	1/26/2024
HMD 361	HMD 361: Life Stage Nutrition	Edited	Julie Lee	1/26/2024
HMD 362	HMD 362: Medical Nutrition Therapy I	Edited	Julie Lee	1/26/2024
HMD 364	HMD 364: Sports Nutrition	Edited	Julie Lee	1/26/2024
HMD 367	HMD 367: Nutrition in Aging	Edited	Julie Lee	1/26/2024
HMD 368	HMD 368: Dietary and Herbal Supplements	Edited	Julie Lee	1/26/2024

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HMD 461	HMD 461: Application of Nutrition Theory and Research	Edited	Julie Lee	1/30/2024
HMD 462	HMD 462: Medical Nutrition Therapy II	Edited	Julie Lee	1/26/2024
HMD 464	HMD 464: Practicum in Dietetics	Edited	jlk66071	1/26/2024
HMD 465	HMD 465: Community Nutrition	Edited	Julie Lee	1/26/2024
IDFM 403	IDFM 403: Business Principles and Practices for Interior Design	Edited	Sheila Flener	1/26/2024
Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Heintzman/Olson Discussion: None Vote: Approved (10 yes)				

Potter College of Arts and Letters				
Code	Title	Status	Contact	Received
ENG 404	ENG 404: Global Englishes	Edited	Alison Langdon	1/31/2024
Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Olson/Lartey Discussion: None Vote: Approved (11 yes)				
MUS 331	MUS 331: Commercial Songwriting	Added	Catherine Wilson	2/13/2024
Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Olson/Lartey Discussion: Huss asked if it was a colonnade course. Kelly answered no. Vote: Approved (11 yes)				
MUS-593	MUS 593: Music	Added today	Catherine Wilson	2/20/2024
Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Huss/Olson Discussion: None Vote: Approved (11 yes)				
/programadmin/389/index.html	: Commercial Music	Added	Liza Kelly	1/16/2024
Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Olson/Heintzman Discussion: Flener asked about MUS-331 is not found. Kelly answered it was approved last month; and this was held because of that. Vote: Approved (11 yes)				
RELS 496	RELS 496: Senior Seminar	Edited	Audra Jennings	2/13/2024
Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Olson/Heintzman Discussion: None Vote: Approved (11 yes)				
769	769: Religious Studies, Bachelor of Arts	Edited	Audra Jennings	2/13/2024
Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Olson/Lartey Discussion: Dorris asked for Degree works programming, about the electives and Jennings answered. Vote: Approved (11 yes)				

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BCOM 345	BCOM 345: Sports Reporting and Production	Added	Brad Pfranger	2/13/2024
<p>Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Olson/Lartey Discussion: None Vote: Approved (11 yes)</p>				
1760	1760: Workplace Communication, Certificate	Edited	Angela Jerome	2/13/2024
<p>Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Heintzman/Lartey Discussion: Huss asked about the SLO's, do you have SLO's figured out. Jerome said yes they are re-working them all, and they all have rubrics. Vote: Approved (11 yes)</p>				
PR 347	PR 347: Sport Media Relations	Added	Ken Payne	2/13/2024
<p>Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Olson/Lartey Discussion: Flener said that typically under topics they come in separate lines. Jerome said they have been told its okay to submit that way. Vote: Approved (11 yes)</p>				
667P, 667	667P, 667: Film, Bachelor of Arts	Edited	Sara Thomason	2/13/2024
<p>Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Huss/Lartey Discussion: None Vote: Approved (11 yes)</p>				
530P, 530	530P, 530: Film Production, Bachelor of Fine Arts	Edited	Sara Thomason	2/13/2024
<p>Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Lartey/Huss Discussion: Huss asked how many hours is this? Jerome, they haven't changed, added by one (FILM-444). Dorris said it was an administration change, due to the course changes. Vote: Approved (11 yes)</p>				
736P, 736	736P, 736: Journalism, Bachelor of Arts	Edited	Mac McKerral	2/13/2024
<p>Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Huss/Olson Discussion: None Vote: Approved (10 yes)</p>				
HONR	HONR: Honors Requirements	Added	Rodney King	2/13/2024
<p>Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Heintzman/Huss Discussion: Olson has several concerns. Why is HON 275 & 300 being eliminated? There's no rationale. Concerned why this is going through during an interim basis. King, dropping 402 was actually no one has seen a benefit to keep that course, dropping the hours to 27. Changes with 275 & 300 just trying to give students flexibility. Courses are still offered and they can take them. Olson are you concerned about students not having incentive to take 275 & 300, King explained. Olson asked why there are no upper division courses. King, they are taking thesis courses which are upper level. Motion to Table to send back – 1st: Olson – Huss commented that she doesn't understand Honors enough. Motion to be table until the next UCC meeting; needing more time to have more discussion – 1st/2nd: Lartey/Huss</p>				

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Vote: Approved to Table (9 – yes; 1-no)

King wants a list of detailed explanation of the concerns. Olson, yes. Concerns were submitted and added to the bottom of the minutes as an Appendix A.

Elliott also asked for the detailed explanation as well.
Yes the committee will get a copy.

[615](#)

[615: Asian Studies,
Bachelor of Arts](#)

Edited

Audra
Jennings

2/13/2024

Motion to Approve – 1st/2nd: Lartey/Huss

Discussion: None

Vote: Approved (10 yes)

Old Business:

- **BYLAWS OF THE UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

Motion to Approve - 1st/2nd: Lartey/Huss

Discussion: Briefly discussed the senator/vs non-senator making motions. Talked about the recorder/Parliamentarian area and how pronouns show up, should we change to they instead of she/he.

Vote: Approved (9 – yes)

Adjourn @ 5:00pm – Motion 1st/2nd: Heintzman/Huss

Respectfully Submitted
UCC Recorder
Jessica Steenbergen

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Appendix A:

Comments on revisions to the Honors curriculum

Per request of the UCC at its meeting on 2/20/24

From: Dr. Alexander Olson (UCC voting member)

To: Dr. Rodney King and fellow members of the UCC

Background

The Mahurin Honors College (MHC) is a critical contributor to the quality of WKU's overall enrollment profile, helping recruit students with strong academic backgrounds. Over the past decade, WKU has punched above its weight in national fellowship competitions largely thanks to MHC recruitment, generating a virtuous cycle of student success stories that help attract future classes. Students pay an annual fee to remain members of the MHC, which creates pressure on the College to demonstrate its value as a scholarly community beyond Honors designation on the final transcript. An ongoing challenge is to uphold the rigorous expectations necessary for student success at the highest level while avoiding attrition and managing costs. Most MHC students are directly recruited into the program during undergraduate admissions and must complete the "Thesis Track" or "Non-Thesis Track." A smaller number transfer into the MHC and complete the "Honors in the Major" curriculum.

The quality of the MHC curriculum is critical to its sustainability as a driver of enrollment. The Honors faculty was dissolved in 2018, transferring key functions to administrative staff. This change placed heightened responsibility in the hands of Senate committees such as the UCC to exercise faculty governance over curriculum. The Honors Development Board is not a Faculty Senate Committee.

Existing Curriculum

The existing curriculum of the MHC is built around the "Thesis Track," although students can opt for the "Non-Thesis Track." It provides touchpoints across all four years at WKU and is scaffolded to prepare for the CE/T (Capstone Experience/Thesis) in the final year.

Year 1 (12 credits): HON 251: Citizen and Self (a gateway course offering a common experience) as well as 3 lower-division Colonnade courses designated as Honors.

Year 2 (3 credits): HON 275 (internship) or HON 300 ([interdisciplinary colloquia](#)). These courses use high-impact practices, whether through experiential learning or a small seminar, to help provide substance to the recruitment pitch that the MHC will provide a liberal arts college experience alongside the resources of a larger university.

Year 3 (7 credits): HON 402 (1-credit for CE/T development) and 2 upper-division electives, at least 1 of which must be in the major.

Year 4 (6 credits): HON 403 & 404 (CE/T sequence). Thesis is completed across two semesters. Advising for the early stages of the MHC curriculum is provided by two staff members, one for CHHS/OGSE and one for CEBS/GSCB/PCAL.

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Stated Rationale for Curriculum Change

The proposal offers the following rationale: *“When the credit requirement for a baccalaureate degree at WKU changed from 128 hours to 120, the MHC curriculum was also reduced from 33 to 28 hours. At that time, HON 402 was required because it was thought that this course would encourage more students complete a CE/T. However, we have not seen evidence for this. In addition, Honors does not have the faculty resources to teach multiple sessions of HON 402. Therefore, we propose the following changes.”*

Questions:

The rationale focuses on HON 402: CE/T Proposal Writing (1 credit). However, the proposal also includes significant curricular changes unrelated to HON 402 with no written rationale. The proposal does include a more detailed explanation of changes to the “Honors in the Major” track, which is reserved for transfer students with 45-75 credits.

1. Removing HON 402 for direct recruits: The proposal identifies the lack of staffing for HON 402 as a key problem. Have other options been explored such as shifting HON 402 into an independent study with the faculty mentor for the project? The proposal also states that “it was thought that this course would encourage more students to complete a CE/T.” This only makes sense as a reason for removing it from the Non-Thesis Track. The primary purpose of HON 402 was to better scaffold the curriculum for Thesis Track students. It was placed in the Non-Thesis Track as a nudge to consider the thesis while stopping short of eliminating the Non-Thesis Track entirely and requiring that all MHC scholars complete a thesis.

2. Adding HON 402 for transfer students: The proposal adds HON 402 to the “Honors in the Major” track, which is reserved for transfer students. Wouldn’t this this course be impacted by the same staffing pressure noted in the rationale for removing it from the Thesis Track? Also, this proposal positions HON 402 as a way to deal with the “significantly abbreviated” timeline for transfer students, implying that direct recruits are already receiving thesis preparation. But this proposal eliminates thesis preparation for direct recruits.

3. Requiring HON 403 (half-thesis) for transfer students: This significantly impacts all departments at the university. Previously, “Honors in the Major” students were not required to complete HON 403, but instead complete the capstone course in their major for Honors credit. The proposal rationale states that HON 403 is already required by way of a catalog footnote, but this is not true; the footnote refers to “capstone coursework” in the major and makes no mention of HON 403. The footnote marks a category called “Minimum Upper-Division Honors Credit in First Major,” which plainly refers to prefixes in the major (such as HIST 498: Senior Seminar). Is Honors currently interpreting the footnote to mean that students must fulfill this requirement through HON 403? The other important problem with the revision is that it carves the CE/T sequence in half. The catalog description for HON 403 clearly identifies it as one half of a sequence: “First three credit hours of 6-hour Capstone Experience/Thesis Project (CE/T).” This proposal clearly contradicts the course description. Does the MHC plan to submit a course revision for HON 403 to reflect the fact that its outcomes differ depending on whether it is a standalone course or part of a sequence? The idea that the CE/T can be carved in half generates

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a host of problems: Does the MHC plan to distinguish between a 3-hour CE/T and the 6-hour CE/T? If not, why is the option of a half-thesis only available to transfer students?

4. Broader question about requiring HON 403 for transfer students: A mandatory thesis requirement is common at other honors colleges, so this proposal to require a thesis is not unreasonable. However, the differential treatment of transfer students and direct recruits is not explained in the rationale. Why should transfer students be required to complete a CE/T when direct recruits are allowed to avoid the CE/T by pursuing the Non-Thesis Track?

5. Elimination of HON 275 and HON 300: There is no rationale stated in the proposal for deleting these core courses from the Honors curriculum. Together with the proposal to delete HON 402, this creates a large gap between HON 251 (1st year) and the CE/T sequence (4th year) with no curricular touchpoints in between. Why is this requirement being eliminated? The WKU undergraduate catalog already includes a footnote allowing students to replace this requirement with Honors electives, but this step requires students to “opt out,” which is a reasonable hurdle that allows flexibility when necessary. Removing the requirement altogether will dramatically reduce the incentive to take these courses, which are offered by faculty across campus.

6. Removing the requirement that Thesis Track students take any coursework in the major whatsoever: The proposal does not explain why it removes the requirement that Thesis Track students take at least 3 credits in the major. Why was this removed? It does retain the requirement that Non-Thesis Track students take 9 credits in the major, but this change means that students can complete the Thesis Track without taking any Honors coursework in the major. Is it the intention of the MHC that Thesis Track students be able to obtain Honors designation on their transcript without any Honors coursework in their major? The proposal also does not explain why there is such a significant disparity between the number of in-major credits required for Non-Thesis (9) and Thesis (0).

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. I am raising these questions because of the risk that WKU may see a significant decline in its overall institutional enrollment profile if the Mahurin Honors College inadvertently withers during this time of significant leadership upheaval. Protecting the integrity of its curriculum as a launch pad for meaningful academic achievement is critical to its long-term success as a driver of enrollment and positive alumni relations. Stripping away curriculum requirements in response to a lack of staffing while continuing to collect the annual fee risks turning the “Honors” designation on transcripts into something that is purchased, not achieved.