

Office of Undergraduate Studies
Florida Gulf Coast University
Curriculum Development Plan
DRAFT #6, 8-26-2013

The Office of Undergraduate Studies currently has the purview for three areas of curriculum: the Honors Program, the University Colloquium: A Sustainable Future, and Effective Learning. The Honors Program includes a suite of courses that fulfill the programmatic needs of its students and is working to develop an integrated set of courses at the lower level that will take student learning to a higher level; the Honors Program has an advisory board, comprised of faculty from each college, that assists in oversight of its operations, including curriculum development. The University Colloquium, a single, required course on sustainability that fulfills a central component of our mission, also has an advisory council that assists in providing oversight of the curriculum.

The Effective Learning course (SLS 1501) was originally developed in the College of Arts and Sciences and then moved to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction; the course is now housed in the Office of Undergraduate Studies. In the Fall of 2011, when the Office of Undergraduate Studies was created, the Interim Dean placed Effective Learning in the Center for Academic Achievement, following models at other institutions (such as Florida State's Office of Academic Excellence).

Most institutions of higher education have more than one SLS (Student Life Skills) or LDR (Leadership Studies) course to meet a variety of needs. Indeed, here at FGCU, we use the SLS 1501 Effective Learning course for three different populations:

- Academic Recovery – we offer sections in the Fall and Spring for students who have gone on academic probation (below a 2.0 GPA) in the previous semester, targeting FTICs;
- Accelerated Collegiate Experience (ACE) – we offer sections in the Fall for our specialized early admission program; these students are high touch but also of extremely high capabilities;
- College Transition – we offer sections in the Fall for students who would like a transition into the FGCU experience, again targeting FTICs; we have piloted sections specifically designed for athletes as they have special transition needs.

Because each of these populations have different needs, we have the responsibility as an institution to create different courses in order to differentiate their learning experience. Students who are in the ACE program and who are high achieving should not be taking the same course that we use for students needing to recover academically.

In response, and working with Student Affairs where many of these courses originate at other institutions, the Office of Undergraduate Studies will be working to develop several new courses. All of these courses would be elective courses and would not be a part of any major or program, nor would they be included in the General Education program. The courses to be developed could meet the following student needs, including but not limited to:

- Accelerated Collegiate Experience – these are high achieving students who are still in high school, though they are completing all of their coursework at FGCU;
- College Transition – such courses provide an extended orientation for FTIC students, further acquainting them with campus resources and opportunities for engagement, while introducing them to the values, culture, and expectations that come with attending a university like FGCU;
- Leadership Development – such courses could be upper level courses for Student Government leaders, conduct board members, multicultural ambassadors, RSO presidents, Eagle News leaders and Greek letter organization leaders; they could provide a structured format for developing student leadership skills and for further initiating students into FGCU's values and culture;

- Career Development – such courses could be for mid to upper level students and would assist them in developing a clear sense of the professional opportunities open to them and appropriate methods for accessing these opportunities;
- Veteran’s Success – this is a common course on campuses that enables Veterans to integrate into academic expectations and culture.

The students who would be taking these courses comprise a ready-made audience. For the Academic Recovery version of the SLS course, students who go on Academic Standing have been required to either take this course or complete a series of workshops in CAA (the advantage to having them take the course is that we are able to include other activities, such as service learning, that build student engagement and success into their experience). The Leadership courses will be designed for students who engage in student leadership on our campus (and would likely supplement our Emerging Eagles program); this course would allow these students a better integration into our culture and better development of leadership skills. In all cases, specific, targeted populations exist who are candidates for these courses.

In addition to these credit bearing courses, the Office of Undergraduate Studies, working with various offices in Student Affairs, may want to develop continuing education courses (non-credit bearing; not covered by tuition). Courses in this category might include a Resident Assistant Training course, an Orientation Leader Training course, a course for Emerging Eagles, a Leadership Academy, and a Leadership Summit.

The Office of Undergraduate Studies has worked with the leadership from Faculty Senate to consider the creation of a model for curriculum review that parallels other models (such as that in the Honors Program and the University Colloquium Advisory Council). Specifically, Undergraduate Studies has worked with the Faculty Senate leadership team (Shawn Felton) and representatives of the University Undergraduate Curriculum Team (Jason Craddock), the Faculty Affairs Team (Tunde Szecsi), the Student Affairs Team (Barb Hess), and the General Education Council (Eric Otto).

Through this collaborative process, we have identified both the purpose of developing an Undergraduate Studies curriculum review body and possible representatives. The primary goal for the development of a curricular advisory team would be to make certain that oversight of the curriculum remains in the hands of faculty as courses are initiated and developed and then that faculty have ongoing input into the offering of these courses. While we do not see an ongoing need for new course development (we would likely develop 3-5 courses, and no more), we do see a need for ongoing faculty oversight of the content of these courses.

The goal would be to create an advisory structure that would be responsible for the review of the curriculum developed within Undergraduate Studies before that curriculum is then sent to the University Curriculum Team. Membership might include faculty with backgrounds relevant to these courses (such as faculty from IDS courses within CAS, from IDS courses within Undergraduate Studies, and from Leadership and other courses within the College of Education). In addition to the mentioned representation, the UGS curriculum advisory group would have two at large faculty members appointed through the Faculty Senate appointments Team. We might also have a non-voting member from the Center for Academic Achievement, which currently houses the one existing course, on such an advisory group.