UNL's General Education Program

Governance and Assessment

I. Initial ACE Committee.
In order to facilitate the review and approval of the initial set of ACE-certified courses, a temporary Initial ACE Committee will be established. (See *Populating ACE* for details.)

II. Long-term ACE Responsibility.
Upon the dissolution of the Initial ACE Committee, curricular responsibilities for ACE will be transferred to an ACE subcommittee of the University Curriculum Committee composed of the faculty representatives from each of the undergraduate colleges. [1]

A. Membership:
The ACE subcommittee of the University Curriculum Committee is composed of one faculty member from each of the UNL undergraduate colleges. These faculty members will be selected in accordance with the governing procedures, traditions, or special rules of their home colleges. The other members of the UCC may sit in on ACE deliberations but as non-voting members only. The UCC chair will chair this ACE subcommittee but will not have a vote unless s/he is one of the faculty representatives from one of the undergraduate colleges.

B. Charge:
• Review requests for ACE certification and recertification, determining which requested courses will receive that designation, and communicating their decisions to the proposing units. In cases where ACE certification is not granted, this committee will clearly communicate the reasons for this decision.
• Work with the Dean of Undergraduate Studies to see that ACE-certified courses are communicated to the UNL community through the Undergraduate Bulletin, the OUS website, and other appropriate venues.
• Make formal recommendations to the undergraduate colleges regarding substantive changes in the ACE Program.

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[1] At present those colleges are Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, Architecture, Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education and Human Sciences, Engineering, Hixson-Lied Fine and Performing Arts, and Journalism and Mass Communications.

- Remove ACE certification when requested by the hosting department(s) or provided there is evidence the department offering the course is not meeting the terms of the ACE Certification Request.
- Coordinate, support, and review the regular assessment of the ACE program by the University-wide Assessment Committee.
- Review individual student requests for alternative means of satisfying ACE Learning Outcomes.

C. Voting:

On all matters, a unanimous vote of the undergraduate college representatives is required for approval.

III. Requests for ACE Certification.

A. Requests for ACE certification must be initiated by the department/unit that offers the course. In cases where the course is cross-listed, memos of support from cross-listed units(s) must accompany the certification request.

B. An ACE Course Certification Request Form (see online example) must accompany all requests for certification. This form asks for:
- The course number, name, and current description from the UNL Undergraduate Bulletin.
- The ACE Learning Outcome(s) that would be satisfied by the course.
- The Outcome(s) or skill(s) that would be reinforced by the course.
- A copy of the syllabus which clearly identifies:
    - The Learning Outcome(s) that would be satisfied by the course.
    - A brief description of the opportunities this course would provide for students to acquire the knowledge or skills necessary to achieve the Learning Outcome(s)
    - A brief description of the graded assignments that the instructor(s) will use to assess the students' achievement of the Outcome(s).
- A signature from the unit chair/head affirming that the Unit will:
    - see that the syllabus for each ACE-certified course clearly indicates the ACE Outcome(s) for which the course is certified, the opportunities the course will give students to acquire the knowledge or skills necessary to achieve the Learning Outcome(s), and the graded assignments which the instructor(s) will use to assess the students' achievement of the Outcome(s).
    - collect and assess in coordination with the ACE assessment cycle a reasonable sample of students' products and provide reflections on students' achievement of the Learning Outcomes for its respective ACE-certified courses.
    - provide the results of these assessments, along with samples of student work, to the college's dean's office or the college committee responsible for program assessment.

C. In its review of requests for ACE certification, the UCC ACE subcommittee will use such criteria as:
- Does the course clearly address the Learning Outcome(s) identified?
- Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills

necessary for successful achievement of the Learning Outcome(s)?
- Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the Learning Outcome(s)?
- Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Mathematics and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, or Human Diversity?
- Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) agreed to follow through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?

IV. Transfers from Other Institutions.

Through established review of course equivalency and articulation agreements, the office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies will begin providing institutions from which most students transfer credit to UNL with information regarding the ACE Institutional Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes.

When a course from another institution is established as equivalent to a UNL course through articulation or equivalency agreements, then that course will fulfill the same ACE Outcome as the equivalent ACE-certified UNL course.

In cases where no articulation or equivalency agreement exists, the transferring student's UNL home college is empowered to seek the information it needs (from the other institution, copies of course syllabi or assignments, or from an examination of graded student work for that course submitted by the student seeking equivalency credit) to make a determination of whether the transferred course can be counted for that student as ACE-equivalent.

V. ACE Certification for Co-Curricular Activities.

A student may seek to have co-curricular activities counted for no more than one ACE Learning Outcome. To do so, the student must complete an ACE Co-Curricular Request Form (see online example). This form will identify:
- The nature of the co-curricular activity.
- The ACE Learning Outcome for which the student wishes to have the co-curricular activity count.
- The faculty member who will sponsor the student in the co-curricular activity and review the student's work.
- The number of contact hours involved in the co-curricular activity. Fifteen hours of ACE co-curricular activity will be equivalent to one credit of coursework.
- The assessable product resulting from the co-curricular activity.
- A rationale for counting this activity toward the Learning Outcome.
- A signature of support from a UNL faculty member.
- A signature of support from the faculty member's chair/head.
- A signature of support from an appropriate representative of the faculty member's college.

The request form must be submitted to the ACE subcommittee of the UCC for review and approval. Upon completing the co-curricular activity, the sponsoring faculty member will

submit the student's assessable product and an assessment of that product to the ACE subcommittee of the UCC. These documents will be kept for no more than five years and will be used without attribution only for ACE program assessment.

VI. Requests for ACE Decertification.

Requests for ACE decertification may be made by the hosting department/unit of the ACE-certified course. In cases where the course is cross-listed, memos of support from cross-listed department(s)/unit(s) should accompany the decertification request. In all cases the memo requesting decertification should be accompanied by a memo of support from the dean(s) of the hosting department(s)/unit(s).

VII. ACE Program Assessment.

A. Each instructor of an ACE-certified course is responsible for:
- seeing that the syllabus clearly indicates the ACE Outcome(s) for which the course is certified, the opportunities the course will give students to acquire the knowledge or skills necessary to achieve the Learning Outcome(s), and the graded assignments which s/he will use to assess the students' achievement of the Outcome(s).
- providing the hosting department/unit each semester with a reasonable sample (at least three) of students' products (related to achievement of the appropriate ACE Learning Outcome) and assessments of those products.

B. Each hosting department/unit of an ACE-certified course is responsible for:
- seeing that syllabi for ACE-certified courses clearly indicate the ACE Outcome(s) for which the course is certified, the opportunities the course will give students to acquire the knowledge or skills necessary to achieve the Learning Outcome(s), and the graded assignments which the instructor(s) will use to assess the students' achievement of the Outcome(s).
- collecting from instructors of ACE-certified courses a reasonable sample (at least three) of students' products (related to achievement of the appropriate ACE Learning Outcome) and instructor assessments of those products.
- reviewing and aggregating samples and summary assessments across course sections and semesters.
- drafting a summary assessment across courses/sections that addresses:
    - General trends in the kinds of assignments used to assess student achievement of the appropriate ACE Learning Outcome(s).
    - General trends in students' achievement of the ACE Learning Outcomes.
    - The kinds of modifications that might improve student achievement.
- providing the results of these aggregated assessments, along with samples of student work and the summary, to the college committee responsible for program assessment.

C. Each hosting college of ACE-certified courses is responsible for:
- collecting from each department/unit which offers ACE-certified courses the aggregated summary assessments and samples of student work.
- reviewing and aggregating samples and summary assessments across departments and semesters.
- drafting a summary assessment across departments/semesters that addresses:

- General trends in the kinds of assignments used to assess student achievement of the appropriate ACE Learning Outcome(s).
- General trends in students' achievement of the ACE Learning Outcomes.
- The kinds of modifications that might improve student achievement.
- providing the results of these aggregated assessments, along with samples of student work and the summary, to the University-wide Assessment Committee.

D. The University-wide Assessment Committee in cooperation with the UCC ACE subcommittee will oversee the institutional assessment of the ACE program. A member of the UCC ACE subcommittee will be named to serve as a liaison to the University-wide Assessment Committee and will sit on that Committee as a full member. Responsibilities include:
- collecting and reviewing the aggregated assessments and samples of student work from the colleges which host ACE-certified courses.
- providing the UCC, the undergraduate colleges, and the rest of the UNL community with an annual report on the ACE program.
- developing and communicating a 5-year rotation for the assessment of the 10 Learning Outcomes so that the assessment process is regular, reasonable, and distributed over time.
- developing forms, processes, and guidelines that facilitate ACE program assessment
- reporting regularly to the UCC ACE subcommittee

VIII. Recertification of ACE Courses.
A. The initial set of courses certified for ACE will be divided into five groups, with different groups coming up for recertification after 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 years. Subsequently five years after a course has been certified or recertified, the ACE subcommittee of the UCC will submit an ACE Recertification Request Form (see online example) to the hosting department/unit. That form will ask the unit if it wishes to seek recertification for the course and to identify:
- What assessment data have revealed about how the course helps students achieve the designated Learning Outcome(s).
- How those data have been used to modify the course.
- Any other changes in the course since certification was obtained.

B. In its review of requests for ACE recertification, the UCC ACE subcommittee will use such criteria as:
- Does the course clearly address the Learning Outcome(s) identified?
- Does the course provide students with opportunities to develop the knowledge/skills necessary for successful achievement of the Learning Outcome(s)?
- Does the course provide students with opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the Learning Outcome(s)?
- Does the course reinforce at least one of the following as appropriate for the discipline and as identified by the department offering the course: Writing, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Historical Perspectives, Mathematics and Statistics, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Problem Solving, Ethics, Civics, Social Responsibility, Global Awareness, or Human Diversity?
- Has the hosting department/unit used assessment data to improve the course?
- Have the hosting department/unit and the instructor(s) followed through with their responsibilities as outlined in the ACE Course Certification Request Form?

IX. The Role of Undergraduate Studies.
The Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Office of Undergraduate Studies will be responsible for supporting the work of the Initial ACE Committee and the UCC ACE subcommittee. (This office currently supports the work of UCC and the University-wide Assessment Committee.) Such support may include:

- funding for ACE program development and assessment.
- hosting an ACE website where current information about program requirements, ACE-certified courses, the assessment process and institutional-level program assessment results, and ACE forms are readily available.
- keeping ACE sections of the Undergraduate Bulletin and ACE websites current.
- facilitative infrastructure and clerical support.
- fielding, addressing, and communicating concerns about the ACE program.
- working with deans, chairs/heads, Academic Affairs, the Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Admissions to see that ACE serves our students well.

Approved by UNL faculty as of January 2008.