L&S Curriculum Committee
Annual Report (2015-2016)

Overview
The L&S Curriculum Committee (LSCC) is comprised of faculty representatives from all L&S divisions, advisors, and ex-officio members from L&S Administration and L&S Student Academic Affairs. The LSCC advises the Dean on the curricular integrity of academic programs offered in the College of Letters and Science, from degree requirements affecting all L&S undergraduates, to changes to requirements for existing majors, certificates, and options. The committee reviews proposals to add, change, or delete courses from the L&S subject listings, after departmental approval and prior to final approval by the University Curriculum Committee. To maintain the integrity of the undergraduate Liberal Arts curriculum, the committee also considers requests to allow courses offered outside the college to count toward L&S undergraduate degree requirements by awarding them the designation of “Liberal Arts and Science” courses. This work is described in greater detail online, at https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=20092. At the Dean’s request, the committee considers other issues related to undergraduate education for purposes of advising him, the faculty and L&S departments and programs, and the L&S division of Student Academic Affairs. Below are brief descriptions of issues addressed by the committee this past academic year.

Program Changes
LSCC guidelines regarding changes to requirements for academic programs remain in effect (https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=20013). The Committee and L&S Administration staff continue to work with departments to articulate the connections between requests for curricular changes and efforts to assess student learning in academic programs, to link changes to evidence, and to demonstrate more clearly effective student learning. As part of the approval process for changes to existing programs, implementation dates and teach-out plan are established to ensure that students on the “old” programs are still able to complete those requirement or that they may transition to the new requirements without adversely affecting their progress.

Information about these undergraduate program and policy changes are emailed to the advising community through advisor-link, to better communicate recent changes to advising staff across campus.

African Languages and Cultures: Undergraduate Honors program. Eliminates the need to take graduate-level courses, adds an entrance requirement, incorporates the “B or better in Honors work” policy, and adjusts language and structure to render the curriculum easier to interpret.

American Indian Studies: Undergraduate Certificate. Restructures the breadth requirement, requires students to take an introductory course, and reduces the total number of credits requirement.

Biochemistry: Undergraduate major (in L&S and CALS). Effectively increases the number of required credits for the program, due to a course change. The L&S Curriculum Committee reaffirmed that Biochemistry may continue to require a high number of credits for their program because the inherently interdisciplinary nature of the program supports the outcomes of a liberal arts degree.
Chicana/Latina Studies: Undergraduate Certificate. Organizes requirements around two introductory courses and higher-level electives, and removes a portfolio writing requirement that wasn't enforced.

Computer Science: Undergraduate Certificate: Restricts instances in which special students may complete the certificate, and clarifies ambiguous wording in requirement text.

Computer Science: Undergraduate major: Allows current students to substitute a different course for one of the core required courses.

Environmental Sciences: Undergraduate major (L&S and CALS). Small revisions align major requirements and Undergraduate Catalog text between L&S and CALS.

French and Italian: Masters Program Restructures requirements so students are no longer required to take 10 credits in a field outside the French department.

Japanese Professional Communications: Undergraduate Certificate. Removes EA 374 from the list of elective courses in the certificate

Library and Information Sciences: Masters Program. Adds more opportunities for students to learn management skills and research/evaluation methods, which are increasingly important for employment. Reduces overlap between existing courses, and reduces the total number of credits.

Math: Undergraduate Certificate. Reduces the total required credits from 25 to 12 credits. While the requirements no longer include the full calculus sequence, the department anticipates most students will continue to take them as preparation for the required courses.


Statistics Honors Program. Adds GPA entrance requirements, raises the GPA required to complete the program, and allows students to take three credits of statistics elective in lieu of 6 credits of Honors option coursework in their major elective courses.

Curricular Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines
The L&S Curriculum Committee is frequently invited to comment on the development of campus policies. The committee commented on and supported the following proposals:

- Proposed Campus Policy for Honors Program Designations
- Proposed Campus Policy on Named Options
- Draft Campus Major Declaration Policy

The L&S CC also discussed and approved:

- L&S Peer Learning Course Guidelines
- L&S Guidelines and advice to departments renumbering their course array
- Discontinuation of the Interdivisional breadth designation
Proposal to Create a Foreign Language Attribute. The L&S CC reviewed a proposal to create a foreign language attribute, submitted by an ad-hoc working group that convened by the chairs of Van Hise departments and programs. The proposal requests a new course designation to transparently communicate to students how foreign language courses meet their L&S undergraduate degree foreign language requirement. The proposed designation will indicate the level of the foreign language, and the DARS system will use the designation to audit how students are meeting the requirement. Students and advisors could also search for the designation in Course Guide.

The L&S CC expressed strong support for the creation of this designation. Before approving, however, the committee asked the ad-hoc working group to also create a similar designation that would identify courses eligible for retro-credit. Identifying these courses is also a confusing process for students, and many courses that will carry the proposed foreign language designation are also eligible for retro-credit. The L&S CC advised the Van Hise ad-hoc working group this was an opportune time to address this retro-credit issue.

Course Related Issues

Proposals to Add, Change, or Delete Courses

The LSCC is responsible for college-level review of proposals to add, change, or delete courses managed by L&S departments and programs. Proposals approved by department faculty are forwarded to the college-level Curriculum Committee for approval.

A review is conducted to evaluate whether the proposed courses or changes conform to technical requirements (e.g., valid course number, etc.) as well as the pedagogical goals of the College. New course proposals are carefully reviewed in terms of their syllabi, course goals, and possible overlap/opportunities for cross-listing with existing courses. The LSCC chair and staff review all proposals to determine if they are ready for committee consideration, and committee members review all proposals online prior to the meeting. On any of these levels, questions may be asked of the faculty and units submitting the proposals; the committee chair and L&S staff work with departments to resolve questions that come up before proposals are submitted to the University Curriculum Committee. During the 2015-2016 academic year, the LSCC reviewed and approved 373 course proposal: approved proposals to change 221 courses, create 101 new courses, delete 35 courses, and add L&S designations to 15 non-L&S courses.

Other Curricular Items

Certificate Implementation Report. Committee members reviewed a report from L&S Academic Information Management (AIM), regarding implementation of new campus guidelines for certificates. AIM held certificate workshops for department to share the new guidelines, and the new processes for declaring, reporting, and managing certificate programs.

Comments on APC proposals. The L&S Curriculum Committee is often invited to comment on curricular proposals submitted to the L&S APC. The committee offered comments, and supported, the following proposals:

- Proposal for New course Subject: Integrated Arts (Arts Institute), School of Education
- Certificate for Japanese Studies for Engineering Majors, expanding to L&S students
- Proposal to Establish Integrated Science Subject Listing, WIScience

Implementation of Mandatory Major Declaration Policy. In 2014-2015, the L&S Curriculum Committee approved enforcement of a policy that would require L&S undergraduate students to declare a major...
prior to achieving 86 credits. The L&S Curriculum Committee approved enforcement of this policy because of its substantial benefits to students, including:

- Students who declare early are more likely to complete their degree within four years;
- Declared students are connected to a department’s culture and membership in a cohort of students, and are connected to resources such as advising, faculty connections and course access;
- Declaration helps department identify students who intended to complete one of their majors, and assists with outreach to those students; and the process of declaring
- The process of declaring ‘locks in’ students to current requirements, and ensures they have the right to complete under those requirements.

Enforcement of the policy began Spring 2016, with registration holds (First year students and first-semester students do not receive registration holds). The implementation subcommittee submitted a progress report to the L&S Curriculum, outlining the steps for successful implementation of the enforcement hold.

**L&S Curriculum Committee Members:**

**Chair:** Ivy Corfis, Spanish and Portuguese  
**Members:**  
Cécile Ané, Botany and Statistics  
Michael Wagner, Journalism and Mass Communication  
Stephen Gammie, Zoology  
Galen McKinley, Atmospheric & Oceanic Sciences  
Dan Quint, Economics  
Karen Redfield, English  
Peter Timbie, Physics

**Student Members appointed through ASM:**  
Justin Skiba

**Ex Officio:**  
Kimbrin Cornelius, L&S Administration  
Elaine Klein, L&S Administration  
Christopher Lee, L&S Student Academic Affairs  
Jacqui Guthrie, L&S Honors Program  
Michael J. Pflieger, L&S Student Academic Affairs  
Nancy Westphal-Johnson, L&S Administration

**Assistant to the Committee:**  
Joni Brown, L&S Administration