

**ARMSTRONG ATLANTIC
STATE UNIVERSITY**

MEMORANDUM

To: University Curriculum Committee
From: Phyllis Panhorst
Catalog Editor and Committee Secretary
Date: November 10, 2010
Re: Agenda – November 17, 2010

The University Curriculum Committee will meet at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 17 in University Hall 282.

A G E N D A

CALL TO ORDER

Glenda Ogletree

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 18 and October 20, 2010

ITEMS

I. College of Education (no items)

II. College of Health Professions

- A. Communication Sciences and Disorders (no items)
- B. Dental Hygiene (no items)
- C. Health Sciences (no items)
- D. Medical Technology (no items)
- E. Nursing (no items)

F. Physical Therapy

- 1. Modify the Program of Study for the Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation Science

B. Major Field Courses 44-47 **41-44** hours

ITEC 1050 - Introduction to Computer Concepts and Applications
PSYC 1101 - Introduction to Psychology (if not taken in Core Area E)
PHYS 1111/1111L Introductory Physics I
PHYS 1112/1112L Introductory Physics II
COMM 2280 Speech Communication

RESP 2110 Medical Terminology
 PSYC 3280 Abnormal Psychology
 RHAB 5100U - Neuromuscular Basis of Exercise
 SMED 5005U - Musculoskeletal Basis of Exercise
 SMED 5060U - Physiological Foundations of Sport
~~SMED 5070U - Theory and Methodology of Strength & Conditioning~~
 PUBH 5580U - Health & Human Development
RHAB 4000 – Application of Research to the Rehabilitation Professions
RHAB 4111 - Pathophysiology for the Rehabilitation Professions 1
RHAB 4112 - Pathophysiology for the Rehabilitation Professions 2

C. Electives 13-16 **16-19** hours
~~12~~ **15** hours must be at or above the 3000 level.

RATIONALE: SMED 5070 was eliminated as a course by the Health Sciences Department in Spring, 2010

Effective date: Fall 2011

G. Radiologic Sciences

1. Modify the following course:

RADS 3531 NUCLEAR MEDICINE CLINICAL EDUCATION I 0-20-2

Prerequisite: RADS 3520

Prerequisite or Corequisite: RADS 3502

Supervised clinical practice in performing nuclear medicine procedures.

Rationale: RADS 3520, radiopharmacy and radiochemistry, is offered in session 2 of the fall semester and prior to RADS 3531, clinical education. The skills learned in this course are essential for success in RADS 3531.

Effective date: Fall 2011

2. Modify the following course:

RADS 3503 PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF NUCLEAR MEDICINE III 4-1-4

Prerequisite: RADS 3502, **RADS 3520**

Rationale: RADS 3520, radiopharmacy and radiochemistry, is offered in session 2 of the fall semester and prior to RADS 3503. The skills learned in this course are essential for success in RADS 3503.

Effective date: Fall 2011

H. Respiratory Therapy (no items)

III. College of Liberal Arts (no items)

IV. College of Science and Technology

A. Biology (no items)

B. Chemistry & Physics

1. Change the following course:

CHEM 1211 PRINCIPLES OF CHEMISTRY I 3-3-4

Prerequisite or corequisite: MATH 1111 *or eligibility for MATH 1113*

First course in a two-semester sequence covering the fundamental principles and applications of chemistry designed for science majors. Topics include composition of matter; nomenclature; atomic structure; bonding and molecular geometries; stoichiometry; properties of solids, liquids, gases; acids and bases; thermochemistry; and periodic relations. The lab reinforces these topics.

Rationale: There is a group of students who come in with an SAT score of 550 or greater which qualifies them for MATH 1113. However, if they do not take a MATH course, banner does not recognize that they have met the MATH 1111 prerequisite by getting a 550 on the SAT. Each of these students requires a special override and this would simply solve the intent of the requisite structure and allow the registrar to code banner for these students to enroll without an override.

Effective Term: Fall 2011

CURCAT:

Major Department: Chemistry & Physics
 Can course be repeated for additional credit? No
 Maximum number of credit hours: 4
 Grading Mode: Normal
 Instruction Type: Lecture / Laboratory
 Course equivalent: None

C. Computer Science and Information Technology (no items)

D. Engineering Studies (no items)

E. Mathematics (no items)

F. Psychology (no items)

OTHER BUSINESS

A. eCore

Charge from the Senate:

"Based on information from Radiologic Sciences, Medical Technology, Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Adolescent and Adult Education (*see Attachment 1*), report to the Faculty Senate whether a bill to the university president recommending Armstrong become an e-Core institution is indicated. Attach such a bill if it is indicated."

Additional attachments for the committee's information include notes from the faculty forum held on November 5 (Attachment 2), and statements/emails submitted by faculty members. Statements/emails are in the chronological order in which they were received by the Secretary to the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

Direct the Senate to convene a committee to reconsider AASU becoming an eCore institution.

This motion is being cosponsored by Radiologic Sciences, Medical Technology, Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Adolescent and Adult Education

Rationale:

1. The faculty as a whole voted on this issue several years ago and it was rejected by 3 votes at that time.
2. More than one in four students in the US took at least one online course in the fall of 2008, according to the findings of an annual survey published by the Sloan Consortium. This is a 17% increase from 2007. (The Chronicle of High Education, January 26, 2010)
3. According to a review of the literature published in the Journal of Distance Learning Administration (Volume 4, No. 3), students are shopping for online courses that meet their schedules and circumstances. This would suggest that availability is a significant issue when students select higher education institutions.
4. In 2009 the US Department of Education published a meta-analysis of studies comparing online outcomes to face-to-face instruction. "The meta-analysis found that, on average, students in online learning conditions performed better than those receiving face-to-face instruction." Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies.
5. Currently, there are several online degrees offered at Armstrong. Some examples of operational degrees are Information Technology, Radiologic Sciences, Medical Technology, and Health Science. Other online degrees are being developed in Nursing and Respiratory Therapy. A major issue with all of these degree programs is the lack of online Core course.
6. Currently, online students must either enroll in another eCore institution or be a transient student from Armstrong to get online Core courses. If the student elects to be a transient to an eCore institution, policy dictates that they cannot be a transient student two semesters consecutively. Consequently, if there are not courses offered by Armstrong they can take every other semester, the student must transfer to another institution to take courses and we lose the EFT count and possibility the student.
7. Dr. Bleicken has clearly indicated her intent to expand the online offering of the university and some provision must be made to address the current lack of online Core classes for our students.

**ARMSTRONG
ATLANTIC
STATE UNIVERSITY**
Faculty Forum on eCore
November 5, 2010
Notes

Note: The Secretary to the University Curriculum Committee has done her utmost to try to use the original language of the speakers and to not paraphrase, beyond the opening paragraph. Faculty members did not identify themselves before speaking, and in a few cases the Secretary did not know their names. She apologizes for this.

The forum began at 12:10 p.m. in the Ogeechee Theater. Dr. Rick McGrath, Vice Chair of the University Curriculum Committee, served as moderator. Dr. McGrath opened the forum by providing some background and other information on eCore (see Attachment 2A). Dr. McGrath emphasized to those present that the purpose of this forum was to collect information on faculty opinions regarding eCore, and that comments should be limited to eCore's academic appropriateness. He encouraged people to say, "I agree," if they agree with a particular person's statement.

Dr. Will Lynch, Chemistry and Physics: Dr. Lynch had asked for assessment data on the chemistry side twice, and it was never provided. The American Chemical Society runs exit exams on general chemistry, so providing the assessment data should be easy. In the syllabus for General Chemistry there are only 6 hours of supervised laboratory instruction. This raises concern at both an academic and a safety level. There is also an issue of competency in the laboratory. There is concern about the low level of supervision, both from a safety and a liability standpoint. Several agreed.

Dr. Elwin Tilson, Radiologic Sciences: Dr. Lynch misrepresented the laboratory component of General Chemistry. Students do have the same amount of laboratory time, but not the same supervision. It should be thought of as a transfer from a different institution. Do we not accept transfers from any other USG institution, assuming that they have met general minimum standards? We as an institution should look at eCore this way. The issue is whether we are serving students properly and giving them a good basic education.

Dr. McGrath: Our students are eligible to go through another institution and register in eCore classes if they wish. There is a philosophical difference between our being required to accept these courses because the USG said so versus whether we say as a faculty, "We think this is academically a good idea." The fact that we accept it does not necessarily mean that we have to like it. The question is whether this is the best or most appropriate method for our students, because we would be putting our stamp on it, saying that we think this is academically good and appropriate.

Dr. Richard Wallace, Chemistry and Physics: To say that students have 6 hours of supervised instruction and 84 hours in their kitchens by themselves is different than doing all 90 hours in the classroom supervised by a faculty member.

Dr. Tilson: True, no more than it would be in a face to face English class. But let's look at the total idea, not just a few issues that may or may not be minor. We should not get bogged down in details, but rather focus on whether or not it is good for students.

Dr. Delana Nivens, Science and Technology: Did they ever say how many students or what percentage of students actually finish all their courses in eCore?

Dr. McGrath: He does not have this number.

Dr. Nivens: Dr. Melanie Clay said something about not having to change our core to match eCore, but it seems they should have to if the overlay does not match.

Dr. McGrath: They have not dealt with SLOs yet, but most institutions have not done so yet. However, they will have to comply with the SLOs.

Dr. Nivens: We offer online degrees, but not in the core areas. Do people who teach in the core areas support eCore?

Dr. June Hopkins, History: In a general way, it will degrade the academic experiences of our students. Armstrong students have said the relationship between faculty and student is very important. If you can do your whole core online and are then thrown into a classroom situation, it will be a shock and we may lose these students. Overall, eCore will have a negative impact. Many agreed.

Faculty Member 1: Who teaches eCore courses?

Dr. McGrath: Faculty are drawn from around the USG. They can teach eCore without working for an affiliate institution.

Faculty Member 1: Do students have the choice to take eCore instead of on our on-campus core, if Armstrong becomes an affiliate?

Dr. McGrath: Yes.

Faculty Member 2: This is going completely in the opposite direction of freshmen learning experiences and RPG. Many agreed.

Dr. Carol Andrews, LLP: What is relationship between eCore and the University of Georgia independent study program, where there have always been independent study online classes?

Dr. McGrath: It is a separate structure, administered separately. Students can go to other USG institutions as a transient student and take an online class that belongs to that institution and not to eCore. eCore is more of a consortium. One does not have control over course content when teaching eCore courses.

Dr. Anderws: Does the other system still exist?

Dr. McGrath: Yes, maybe.

Dr. Andrews: Is it separate from eCore?

Dr. McGrath: Yes.

Dr. Andrews: She is talking about independent study.

Dr. John Kraft, Academic Affairs: That's IDL. It still exists, but is totally separate from eCore.

Dr. Jane Wong, Psychology: She urges the University Curriculum Committee to vote against adoption of eCore because of all reasons stated, but is open to the idea of online courses if specific disciplines want to offer a program online. She shares concerns that eCore is not good. Many agree.

Mr. Leon Jaynes, Chemistry and Physics: He has a question on governance, since there is no faculty committee such as the UCC that would review and assess appropriateness of courses or to make changes.

Dr. McGrath: There is a collaboration within eCore for working through changes.

Dr. Jack Simmons, LLP: He cited Joel Feinberg, who worked on e-Philosophy courses since 1981. He supports the idea of electronic courses but worries about the clearinghouse method of delivery. He thinks it will cost more and have smaller student/teacher ratio to accomplish what is done face to face. Also, you don't know what your students have gotten as preparation for other courses.

Dr. Tilson: Why we started this discussion in first place is that it is impossible for students to get their core done online right now because there is a system policy that says a student must be a transient student to take a course elsewhere, but they can only be a transient student for one semester at a time. This precludes getting an entirely online degree. 25% of all students in colleges in the U.S. took an online course this year. This is a 17% increase over the previous year. A 15% increase is predicted for next year. This is the wave of the future. We are saying to a huge, growing, significant portion of students, "Don't come here because we are not going to deliver what you want." There is no question that we should deliver top notch education, but he has serious concern that, with no data, faculty are equating that what is different is bad. eCore retention is very good. The content is very similar to our core, based on the data.

We should not make decisions based on bias, but based on what is happening out there.

Dr. Beth Howells, LLP: Why not change transient rule instead?

Dr. McGrath: Note: We are not deciding whether or not to offer online courses. We are deciding whether or not we are adopting a particular structure. Please go back to the original questions. Are there areas of eCore you think are fine, or not fine?

Dr. David Wheeler, LLP: Is the handout correct, that there are no fine arts courses?

Dr. McGrath: There are no fine arts courses

Dr. Wheeler: This is a serious deficiency. Many agree.

Dr. Erik Nordenhaug, LLP: (Dr. Nordenhaug read from a prepared statement. What follows is a summary. See UCC Attachment 3 for his complete statement). The question on tenure track was hedged. He collected more facts. He printed the chart from the Fact Book and looked up titles of all 91 faculty in that table. Of 97, 32 have job titles listed that could carry tenure or tenure track. 65 were not listed with titles that could be tenure/tenure track. eCore is a form of outsourcing to a virtual corps of faculty controlled by VPAs. At Armstrong, there have been complaints over the years about the lack of tenure track positions and the overuse of part-time faculty. eCore will in practice alleviate enrollment pressure on VPAs to build new tenure track positions. As of fall 2008, only 42.8% of Armstrong faculty are tenured. How much further must it fall? Say no to eCore. This is academically relevant because the ratio of tenure track faculty to non-tenure track faculty is academically relevant. Many agree.

Dr. Jackie Hee-Young Kim, Childhood and Exceptional Student Education: We fear of eCore. But we have to consider that online universities are a rapidly growing market. People need to work and don't have the money to attend college full-time. How will they go to school if not online? We need to think of the future. We are going to have worse economic problems next year. We need the tuition money. How are we going to increase enrollment.

Dr. McGrath: This forum is to discuss academic issues only, not financial or business issues.

Dr. Cameron Coates, Engineering Studies: The bottom line in the sciences and engineering is control. Why control? Because we want the best. In the classroom, we are able to put new techniques into practice as they become available from a research standpoint. With eCore we are stifling that kind of creativity and academic freedom where newer techniques can be applied as they become available. eCore also limits scholarship in those areas. There is also one more point on retention rate. You have to look at the student body being retained and the characteristics of eCore students. It is a different set of students. Many agree.

Dr. Wong: Should Armstrong offer more online core curriculum classes, and if so, how? We are looking at hiring a director of online learning. Faculty should be encouraged to develop our own online classes, which would still be under the same control structure as our other courses. She supports offering more core classes online if the faculty in those departments want to, but does not approve of eCore because there is no way to control the quality of the instructor.

Dr. Michael Benjamin, History: There are pros and cons: How would eCore work in the context of lower level history classes? Getting students to articulate ideas in the classroom is important. They should participate in the formation of discourse, spontaneously and orally. eCore does not permit that. He is troubled with an eCore approach as it impacts oral communication development. Many agree.

Dr. Joseph Weaver, LLP: If I'm an Armstrong student and take an eCore class at another institution, is it as a transient student?

Dr. McGrath: Yes.

Mr. Lee Braswell, Radiologic Sciences: Would he rather Armstrong teach core classes rather than an unknown? Yes.

Dr. McGrath: Nine Armstrong students took eCore classes last year.

Mr. Braswell: Because of transient issue.

Dr. Teresa Winterhalter, LLP: Would the problem of our students not getting a seat in an eCore class be addressed by being an affiliate?

Mr. Braswell: That is not the issue. The transient student rule is.

Dr. Winterhalter: We've made our core very rich and very purposefully with fine arts, and created ethics and global perspectives in area B as something we felt we should do as an institution, and there is nothing in eCore that is close to that. That is a deep philosophical thing on our part. It would be a big compromise.

Dr. Tilson: If we had the infrastructure to support online instruction, how many people think their department would offer core courses online?

Dr. Zaphon Wilson, Criminal Justice, Social and Political Science: Criminal Justice already does. We have control of our courses and can monitor and evaluate them. Several agree.

Dr. Tilson: Only three hands were raised. He is not seeing evidence of our offering the full core for the students who are out there that need it. How we address that will continue to be an issue.

Dr. McGrath: Is eCore how we want to address it, academically?

Dr. Nivens: Core Area A math could be taught online. There are people here who would or could do it. Dr. Wong has had PSYC 1101 taught online. However, for faculty in the sciences, the problem will always be the labs. We have taught online non-laboratory science classes in past for dental hygiene students. It can be done. The technology is available. She would rather we control it. But in Core Area D sciences, there is no support for science labs.

Dr. Nordenhaug: There is a student group out there who may want this, but there is the issue of growth versus quality. We need to uphold serious academic standards. Our desire for quality and personal contact is something Armstrong should stick with. It has always been part of our philosophy.

Ms. Rochelle Lee, Radiologic Sciences: There is no issue of Armstrong wanting to give quality. But there are students who are professionals who would desire to come here but cannot because we do not have enough online offerings. We are losing a piece of the local market.

Dr. Tilson: It is not possible for a student to complete the core online because it is not possible to complete the core in a reasonable time frame.

Dr. Laura Barrett, Liberal Arts: Are eCore classes treated as overload for the faculty member?

Dr. McGrath: Yes.

Dr. Barrett: Faculty having trouble with a fifth class either face to face or online. Quality will decrease.

Ms. Lee: In her department they do that just fine.

Dr. Wayne Johnson, Engineering Studies: If we could remove the rule regarding transient students, would that fix things? Maybe that's what we should push for.

Dr. Tilson: The request was made and has been ignored for 2.5 years. The University petitioned for this change. It never makes it out of committee.

Dr. Karen Hollinger, LLP: Pedagogically is eCore a good idea? Will this help students succeed beyond the core, if they've taken their whole core online? Will it help them with face to face classes? She does not think so.

Dr. Sungkon Chang, Mathematics: The transition from online classes to the classroom will take a period of time.

Dr. Tilson: A meta-analysis by the Department of Education says on average, online education is as good as face to face in terms of what students take away, how they succeed, and how they transition. Ten years ago there were major questions, but now we are starting to see that online courses can be built that are as good as or better than face to face classes. The student/faculty interactions are much better.

Dr. Priya Goeser, Engineering Studies: She does not think we can rely on national data, because Georgia is next to the bottom in education. How can we look at national data and compare it to us? We need to get data that is more relevant.

Dr. Nivens: As a faculty, we ought to be developing online courses, with the caveat that the College of Science and Technology and the College of Liberal Arts serve a different population than the College of Health Professions and the College of Education. Still, we could be developing our own online courses with our good faculty. There are still issues with lab sciences, but we could make it our mission to develop online classes and have control. We should not hand that control off. She understands the need to serve different populations. However, we should think about it from our own point of view first.

Dr. McGrath closed the forum at 1:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis L. Panhorst
Secretary to the University Curriculum Committee

eCore: Should Armstrong Participate?

The University Curriculum Committee has been charged with evaluating the academic value of the eCore program offered by the USG, and recommending Armstrong's participation if appropriate.

If the UCC determines that eCore is academically appropriate for Armstrong, the Faculty Senate will debate the issue of formal participation with the purpose of making a recommendation to President Bleicken. The process is likely to include participation of other committees in studying the non-academic aspects of the program.

If the UCC determines that eCore is academically inappropriate for Armstrong, this will be reported to the Faculty Senate, and Armstrong's participation in eCore will not be considered.

eCore: What is it?

Links to detailed information about eCore were provided in the email announcement of this forum. To summarize...

eCore consists of...

- Fully online core curriculum with centralized course design and syllabus
- Administered by the University of West Georgia since 2009
- Five listed affiliate institutions for 2010-2011
- Three affiliate institutions with student headcount for 2009-2010
- Eight institutions with five or more faculty participating
- Onsite testing

eCore: Course Availability Areas A-E

Area A
Composition I, II
from Math Modeling up to Calculus I

Area B
Communication
Electronic Technology

Area C
World or American Literature
Intro Philosophy or Spanish

Area D: Non-Science major
Lab Science
Non-Lab Science
Science or Math

Area D: Science major
Chemistry sequence
Calculus I

Area E
American Government
Civilization I
US History I
Intro Psychology or Intro Sociology

eCore: Is it academically appropriate?

Reason for consideration

- Programs with online majors are interested in online core curriculum
- System is already in place

Some concerns raised by UCC

- Course content controlled off-campus
- Assessment has not been done on eCore
- Low retention in science courses
- Course selection is limited
- Area B courses do not match Armstrong priorities or new core overlays

What is your evaluation of the UCC's concerns shown above?

Should Armstrong offer more online core curriculum classes? If so, in what areas?

If you support increased online core curriculum offerings, is eCore the way to go?

What are the pros and cons of the eCore approach in each area A-E?

In the Oct 18th minutes of the UCC, the following question was asked: “Of those who teach eCore classes, how many are full time tenure track?” The answer given was: “Full-time and Part-time status are listed at the back of the Fact Book. About 70% are full-time.,”. Having been at Armstrong over 15 years now, I have seen many creative uses of the category “full-time” and I noticed as no doubt many of you did that the term “tenure” or “tenure track” did not appear in the answer to this question. I was curious and decided to collect some more facts. I printed up the ecore faculty chart of appendix from the Ecore FACT Book and looked up in the Open.Georgia.Gov database the titles of everyone of the 97 faculty members listed in the ecore faculty chart of appendix. Here is what I found for 2009 (the most recent data available).

Of the 97 ecore faculty listed, only 32 member listed (that is 33% of all ecore faculty) have job titles capable of carrying tenure or tenure track. This does not mean they have tenure, only that they have a title capable of carrying tenure (e.g. the title “Assistant Professor”).

65 ecore faculty or 67% of them do not have titles that possess tenure or a tenure track.

So, here is another important FACT for the FACT BOOK-- while 70% of ecore faculty are listed as Full Time, the reality is: nearly 70% do not have tenure and are not on tenure track.

Ecore is essentially a form of OUTSOURCING the teaching of our core classes to a virtual group of faculty spread out all over the state and controlled by VPAAAs all over the state—not by the faculty of Armstrong Atlantic.

For the past decade, I have watched the number of tenure track positions in LLP hover around the same number, with no significant increase or decrease, while the student enrollments have grown tremendously. LLP and other departments have complained about the over use of part-timers consistently for the past decade while pleading the usual refrain for additional tenure track positions—only to receive Tenure Breadcrumbs while the number of non-tenure track positions increase to keep up with enrollment growth. It is in this context that we should be thinking about the Ecore proposal since ecore will in practice (no matter what it says in the FACT BOOKS) alleviate the enrollment pressure on VPAAAs and other administrators to create and fill more tenure track positions.

My argument is this: Any tenured faculty member who supports ecore is VOTING AGAINST NEW TENURE POSITIONS IN THE FUTURE. If one thinks that this proposal only affects a small number of students and faculty now, one is refusing to see the big picture 5, 10, or 15 years later where the number of tenured faculty dwindle to insignificance. Here is another FACT from the Open.Georgia.Gov database, as of FALL 2008 (the most recent data available there), only 42.8% of Armstrong Faculty are TENURED. How much more must this number fall before tenured faculty say “NO”?

Members of the UCC, please say “NO” to this ecore proposal and do not let it go forward. ECORE, if supported, will be in the long run a significant force contributing to the diminishment of tenure track positions in the future.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Erik Nordenhaug
Nov. 5, 2010

Thank you for allowing us to make comments. I am very much against becoming an eCore institution. There are a couple of reasons:

(1) Retention - There have been meetings about retention, progress and graduation last week and this week. I believe it has been shown that students that make connections with Armstrong stay at Armstrong, whether it has been through freshmen experiences or working with a professor. By taking a course online, there is NO and I repeat NO connection to Armstrong. The student is not on campus, not working with their peers, not interacting with our esteemed faculty first hand. I have taught a science course online and it was the worst course I have ever taught. I felt so disconnected with the students. Their comments about the course reflected the same opinion.

(2) Failure rates of these students - I would be appalled if 70% of my students failed, but that happens in these courses.

(3) Safety of science labs - I am sure my colleagues will address this area as well. How can a student learn chemistry and physics in the kitchen? My concern is the safety of the courses they are taking, but I also have concerns about these students when they do come to a campus and take Organic Chemistry or Physics II. They have not learned the skills taught in our intro science courses, but will need to apply them in more advanced courses. They will be putting themselves and their classmates at a risk. Also, would we as faculty have to go back and teach these skills to students that took eCore science classes? This is also setting up the student for FAILURE.

In other words, why would we consider an avenue that sets students up for failure, whether it is in their current class or in future classes? We are in a business of teaching and training students and preparing them for their future courses and careers. Armstrong is already at the point of having to develop plans to improve retention rates. eCore does not support that plan.

Donna Mullenax

I won't be able to attend the meeting on Nov. 5th, but I did want to voice my opinion. I think an eCore is a horrible idea. It is one more step further into the corporatization of higher education. Critical inquiry in the classroom, engagement in dialogue with peers and professors, and the intangibles of a liberal arts education that seeks to cross disciplines in an intentional and intellectual manner via classes are fundamentals of university life. To be able to take your entire core via e-classes seems a genuine disservice, not only to our students but also to our society.

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After the discussion in the faculty senate meeting on the re-consideration of eCore, I discussed it with my department (engineering studies faculty) and here are some of our comments:

- there are several courses esp. the math & sciences & labs that cannot be taught solely online
- though enrollment is 'higher' for online courses, retention and failure rate is higher too
- the support staff and resources for an eCore or for that matter any online course to be done well is extensive and Armstrong does not have this support currently
- faculty compensation for such online courses are much lower than traditional settings though the workload is either the same or higher
- works for mature older students, but not for the traditional 19-20 yr old students
- I am ok with the ecore but would like more info on how sciences especially lab sciences are handled via ecore
- If we offer courses for ecore, online courses should count as part of regular teaching course and enrollment needs to be capped just like for live courses.

Overall, 3 out of 4 of us vote NO for eCore at Armstrong with 1 faculty willing to consider it after further investigation and information is provided.

Since this has been such a well-debated issue and it is now on the UCC's docket to consider, I am sending this information to you.

Thanks,
Priya Goeser

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Colleagues,

I am writing to make you aware of a motion put forth by several departments in the College of Health Professions and one department in the College of Education to reconsider AASU becoming an eCore institution. At this point, the motion has been referred to UCC by the Senate (by a vote of 17-16). As you may recall a similar motion was defeated on the floor of a faculty meeting in 2006 by a narrow margin. The crux of the matter as I see it is that becoming an eCore institution would mean that the faculty has endorsed the online core curriculum available through eCore as equivalent to the core curriculum we currently teach. Armstrong students would hear the message that you can do either one or mix/match parts of each to complete the core. I have several objections to this. There is the philosophical objection that any and all disciplines can be effectively taught to relatively inexperienced students online. There is the common sense objection that at this particular time of attention and concern for our retention rates it seems that we should insist on more face-to-face interaction with our lower level students not less. There is the discipline-specific objection to General Chemistry (CHEM 1211 and 1212 with labs) being marketed as online courses complete with a lab kit used in the kitchen. I have done some investigation of the courses in eCore (the syllabus and lab kit) and I am absolutely certain that the online sequence is not equivalent to our sequence in which students use scientific equipment and high technology instruments in a real chemistry laboratory.

In summary, because we are part of the University System of Georgia, we have to accept some core courses transferred from other USG schools-this is out of our control. Becoming an eCore institution is an entirely different matter. From the students' perspective, the eCore curriculum courses will appear the same as the core curriculum we currently teach. We do not have to nor should we surrender control over the core curriculum taught to Armstrong students. I encourage you to think about this and communicate your opinion to your department's representative on UCC (see http://www.armstrong.edu/Departments/faculty_senate/senate_university_curriculum_committee_2010-2011?AASUSTID=6a5484f7a4d7442599fcb99fbd644fe3).

Do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this further. I am always happy to talk.
Suzy

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At the Faculty Forum dealing with eCore, the faculty that attended were asked to address any concerns about the academic aspects of eCore. I believe this is a very important issue but I was dismayed by the tone of the conversation at this meeting. Many of the faculty there seem to believe that if they opposed eCore that somehow online education would bypass Armstrong. I would like to point out that according to the Carnegie Foundation, one in four students in the US now are taking classes online and that number grew 17% between 2007-2008 so it is becoming a major factor in the college choice process. I would also like to note that most of the meta-analyses of online studies now conclude that faculty/students interactions and the overall quality of online teaching is different but equal to face-to-face instruction. If we like it or not, online delivery is going to be in the future of any institution that want to prosper in the future.

The eCore may or may not be the best choice to meet this need. However, if Armstrong chooses to not become part of the eCore, then it is my belief that we have to offer Core classes online to stay an institution of choice. What worries me about rejecting the eCore is that at the faculty forum, I asked how many departments might be able and willing to deliver Core online if resources were available and only two individuals raised their hands.

As part of that forum, a paper was submitted that addresses another very important issue about the potential impact of the eCore on the number of tenured faculty in the Core. This is an important concern and needs to be looked at. The paper submitted makes the case that there were very few tenured faculty teaching in the eCore and that this would somehow hurt the number of tenured faculty in COLA and COST.

However, there is a huge discrepancy between the data that is published by the eCore and the data submitted by a faculty member stating that "65 ecore faculty or 67% of them do not have titles that possess tenure or a tenure track".

I found that statement and the discrepancy quite extraordinary so I did exactly as the author of the note had. That was to go to the eCore list and then look up the individuals listed to see what academic rank/position they held. I did not review the entire list but only sampled the list just to see if my numbers were similar to those in the submitted document. This consecutive sample gave me an n of 21 or about one fourth of the total referred to by the faculty's paper.

My results varied wildly from those stated in the paper. Of the faculty samples, I found the following:

RANK	%	Notes
Instructor/Asst. Professor	19% (4)	Traditional tenure rank
Associate Professional	14% (3)	Traditional tenure rank
Professor	19% (4)	Traditional tenure rank

Part Time	19% (4)	Not tenure track
Temporary full time	19% (4)	Unknown status in 2010. We have no way of ascertaining if these are first year hires who were placed in a temporary position in 2009 and are now on the tenure track (as was done at AASU) or if they are truly temporary and will never be on a tenure track.
No 2009 Data	9.5% (2)	Unknown status. May or may not be in tenure position.

In a worse case scenario, we would count all of the "no data", temporary, and part time faculty as not tenured and not on a tenure track. Even using this flawed methodology, 52% of the people in the sample hold ranks that are traditionally associated with the possibility of being on a tenure track. This is quite a bit higher than the number of 33% given in the paper so I am unsure how this figure was arrived at. Realistically, we have no data on two individuals in this sample so they cannot be counted as on or not on the tenure track. We have a similar problem with the temporary faculty lines that may or may not be on a tenure line this year. We just have no data to suggest one way or another and is it misleading to count them one way or another. The paper stated eCore only has 33% of faculty on tenure tracks but my sampling shows there to be potentially between 52%-78% of the faculty on the tenure track depending on how data are used.

This is actually slightly higher than the numbers at AASU. To give a comparison, when we look at the COLA and COST at AASU, they have 127 faculty tenured or on track, 30 faculty not on a tenure track, 15 who's status is not clear and 126 part time faculty. Using the same categorization as the submitted paper where unknowns and part timers are included in the 'non-tenure' numbers, the Core faculty at AASU is 43% tenured or tenure track faculty and 67% non-tenured with 10% non-tenure track, 5% unknown, and 42% part time.

Although the state of tenure does need to be addressed as we consider this issue, I do not see that eCore faculty statuses are significantly different from those at Armstrong and I do not believe this issue has been adequately addressed either by me or by the author of the paper.

Dr. Elwin Tilson