

# Undergraduate Curriculum Forum Constitution

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## Preamble

The Undergraduate Curriculum Forum (UCF) grew out of discussions to merge the functions of the Undergraduate Curriculum and Instruction Committee (UCIC) and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC). During the fall of 1995, the Joint Merger Committee was formed by the Faculty Committee on Structure (FaCS) with representatives from the UCC, the UCIC, the Academic Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate, and the Administration. In the fall of 1996, a proposal prepared by the Joint Merger Committee for a unified undergraduate curriculum committee was approved by the UCIC, the UCC, and the Faculty Senate.

This Undergraduate Curriculum Forum Constitution was approved by a vote of the full-time faculty in the spring of 1997. According to this proposal, the UCF would be brought into existence for a trial period of no more than three (3) years.

## Article I: Purview

The Undergraduate Curriculum Forum is an autonomous standing committee of the Faculty Senate. It is charged with the responsibility of devising and encouraging the means for improving the overall undergraduate curricular arrangements and quality of instruction, including all matters that impinge on the quality of instruction.

## Article II: Guiding Principles

The UCF should be the place for faculty, administration, and students to come when they have questions or wish to bring up issues pertaining to the curriculum and instruction. In carrying out its charge, the UCF will be guided by the following principles:

First, the UCF should carry out its charge in a way that is consistent with the academic mission of this university. The central underlying tenet of this mission is to provide the best education for Southern's students. All UCF decisions should be made with this goal in mind. Since the academic mission of the university is central to the work of the curriculum committee, the UCF should take the initiative in defining, clarifying, focusing, operationalizing, reviewing, and evaluating the mission of the university as it pertains to the curriculum and to instruction.

Second, the UCF will carry out its charge in a way that is consistent with collegiality, civility, openness, and honesty. The UCF should be seen as a group of concerned colleagues whose input is intended to help with curricular changes, rather than an obstacle that must be tolerated or avoided.

Third, the UCF will operate under the principle of open communication. To the extent possible, notification of all proposals and issues coming before the UCF, and their disposition, will be posted to the university community.

Fourth, the UCF will carry out its charge in a way that balances expediency with rigorous and thorough review. For those matters that are routine, procedures should require the least amount of steps or paperwork possible. UCF members should do whatever they can to expedite the process without bypassing necessary rigor. For those matters that require a thorough review, adequate opportunity and time should be made available to hear from all sides and fully explore the issues. In matters concerning discussion of issues and giving the opportunity of people to bring up issues or respond to issues, the UCF should err on the side of providing more opportunity, rather than less, for discussion and input.

Fifth, the UCF will carry out its charge in a way that encourages consensus, rather than confrontation, among the various UCF members, membership groups, and the university community.

### Article III: Functions

In carrying out its responsibilities, the UCF:

A. Shall receive, consider, and evaluate all proposals for new and revised majors, minors, and programs guided by university-wide undergraduate curriculum principles as defined by the UCF. The UCF shall recommend to the President of the University or his/her designee adoption or rejection of these proposals.

B. Shall receive, consider, and evaluate all proposals for new or revised courses, numbering of courses and similar matters. The UCF shall recommend these proposals to the President of the University or his designee for adoption or rejection. The UCF has the authority to delegate some of these activities to other bodies (departments, school) under the supervision of the UCF and according to standards set by the UCF. It is understood that the faculty of a school may choose to operate as a committee of the whole, or may elect a school wide curricular committee, or it may choose to have no school curricular structure.

C. Shall develop and modify principles, structures, and objectives for General Education requirements. Such changes must be ratified by a vote of the full-time faculty.

D. Shall clarify, or develop and recommend, policy in regard to undergraduate curriculum and instruction, as requested by administration, departments, students, or other committees.

E. Shall discuss matters pertaining to the curriculum and all matters that impinge on instruction. The UCF may evaluate proposals that relate to these issues and may recommend these proposals to the President of the University or his/her designee or to the appropriate committee, group, administrative office, or department for adoption or rejection.

F. Shall meet bi-weekly or more often as appropriate.

#### Article IV: Membership

The UCF will have representatives from the following SCSU constituencies

##### A. Faculty

1. There will be one faculty representative and one faculty alternate elected from each of the following areas:
  - a. Each academic department
  - b. Library Services
  - c. Academic Advisement
  - d. The Faculty Senate (to serve as liaison)
  - e. The Graduate Council (to serve as liaison).
2. Faculty Members-At-Large
  - a. There will be three faculty members-at-large
  - b. These will be elected by a general faculty election vote
  - c. Departments and Schools are limited to one member-at-large
3. All full-time faculty members are eligible to be elected as representatives and alternates
4. For the duration of the 3 year trial period, all faculty representatives will serve for the 3 years.

##### B. Administration

There will be one representative and one alternate from each of the following areas chosen through a process determined by the administration:

1. Continuing Education
2. Records Office
3. Student Affairs
4. Instructional Services
5. Other Administration selected by the Vice President of Academic Affairs

##### C. Students

1. There shall be two representatives from the Student Government Association chosen through a process determined by the Student Government Association:
2. There shall be one student representative from each of the five schools chosen through a process determined by the Student Government Association

3. There may be two additional student representatives if other student constituencies request and receive approval for representation from the UCF.

D. As changing conditions warrant, the UCF may extend representation to other constituent units of the University with the approval of the Faculty Senate.

#### E. Observers

Any faculty member, administrator, or student will be welcome to attend the General UCF meetings as a non-voting member up to the space limitations of the room.

### Article V: Committee Structure

The Undergraduate Curriculum Forum is the full committee that discusses, reviews, evaluates, and makes recommendations on instructional and curricular matters. It consists of:

#### A. Five (5) Standing Committees

Every member shall serve on at least one standing committee. The membership of the standing committees, other than the Steering and Communication Committee, shall be determined by the Chair of the UCF; to the extent possible for the overall effective working of the UCF, the UCF Chair shall accede to expressed preferences of members for committee service.

Each committee may issue procedural guidelines to define the way it operates. These guidelines shall be devised by that committee and approved by the full UCF, and reported to the Faculty Senate.

##### 1. Steering and Communication Committee

- a. Consists of the chairs of the four other standing committees and the chair of the UCF.
- b. Directs the proposals and inquiries to the appropriate place.
- c. Sets agendas for the UCF.
- d. Is responsible for providing communication about UCF proceedings to UCF members, department chairs, and the University community at large.

##### 2. Notifications Management Committee

- a. Reviews Notifications of Revisions of Existing Courses, New Courses, and Revisions of Existing Programs for completeness and accuracy.
- b. Negotiates conflicts between departments regarding curricular issues.
- c. Provides mentors to departments to help in preparing course proposals.

d. Works with schools and departments to make proposal procedures consistent.

3. New Program and Innovation Committee

a. Screens New Program Proposals and makes sure that they are ready for review by the full UCF.

b. Screens suggestions and proposals on curricular and instructional innovations from outside and within the UCF and helps to put the proposals in a form for review by the full UCF.

c. Monitors offerings of Special Topics Courses

d. Actively encourages suggestions on curricular and instructional innovations from outside and within the UCF.

e. Initiates suggestions and proposals for innovation. Monitors and evaluates innovation.

f. Provides mentors to departments and individuals for help in preparing program proposals.

4. University-Wide Impact Committee

a. Screens and prepares for discussion and action by the full UCF those new and revised course proposals pertaining to All-University Requirements (AUR), The final discussion and action on AUR's will occur in the full Forum. Actions on major structural revisions to the AUR go to faculty referendum.

b. Monitors and evaluates AUR's.

c. Approves proposals for special designation (e.g. L-Courses and HD designation courses).

d. Reviews and evaluates L-Courses, HD courses, and any future designated courses with university wide impact.

e. Screens and prepares for the full committee any new proposals that have University-wide impact

f. May initiate proposals for structural change to the AUR.

These proposals would then go to the full UCF, and then to a vote of the full-time faculty.

5. Program Review/Assessment Committee

a. Is involved with integrating all Program Review and Assessment procedures on campus.

b. Administers 10 year cycle of program reviews for each program.

c. The Chair of the University assessment committee is an ex officio member.

B. Ad Hoc Committees

The UCF may establish ad hoc committees as needed. Such committees shall cease to exist upon completion of their charge, or by subsequent action of the UCF.

Article VI: Officers

- A. UCF - the activities of UCF will be coordinated by a chair
- B. The Standing Committees - The activities of each of the standing committees will be coordinated by a chair.
- C. Each Ad Hoc committee will have a chair.

D. Terms of Office

- 1. the Chair of the UCF will be elected by the members of the UCF and will serve for a three year term with a two consecutive term limit.
- 2. Chairs of the standing committees will be selected by the members of that committee and will serve for a 3 year term with a two consecutive term limit.
- 3. Chairs of Ad hoc Subcommittees will serve as long as the Ad hoc Committee exists.
- 4. All officers of the UCF and its standing committees must be faculty representatives or faculty members-at-large. Alternates may chair ad hoc committees.

Article VII: Voting

- A. Voting in the Forum on proposals for new or revised courses, new or revised programs, and major or minor changes in the University Requirements program shall be reserved to faculty representatives and faculty members-at-large.
- B. Voting on all other issues of curriculum and instructional improvement will be open to all UCF representatives.
- C. If a representative is absent, the corresponding alternate shall have the same voting privileges as that representative.
- D. Voting in the committees of the UCF on all issues will be open to all committee members.

Article VIII: Flow of Communication and Recommendations

- A. All incoming proposals, inquiries, and issues for discussion, and agendas, and minutes will be communicated to the entire university within one week.

B. Any incoming proposal, inquiry, or issue for discussion will be sent to the Steering and Communication Committee to decide on the appropriate place to direct it.

1. The Steering and Communication Committee may send it to the appropriate UCF committee.

2. The Steering and Communication Committee may send it to the full committee for discussion.

3. The Steering and Communication Committee may determine that it does not fall under the purview of the UCF and will not be reviewed by the UCF. If this occurs and the petitioner still feels that matter should be reviewed by the UCF, then the matter will go to the full UCF for a final determination.

C. Routine curricular matters will be reviewed either by the department and/or school curriculum committees, as outlined below, with notification to the UCF.

1. Minor course revisions shall be approved at the department level with notification to the School Curriculum Committee (if it exists) and to the UCF. If no school curriculum committee exists, the review shall be conducted by the UCF.

2. All program revisions, all new courses, all interdisciplinary course revisions within a school shall be reviewed by the School Curriculum Committee (if it exists) with notification to the UCF. If no school curriculum committee exists, the review shall be conducted by the UCF.

3. All new programs shall have a full review by the UCF.

4. The concept of "pocket approval" shall pertain during this process: if the next reviewing level does not find a problem with the proposal within 3 academic weeks of notification, it is accepted. If a problem is found with a proposal, that proposal shall be reviewed at the next level, or it may be sent back for modification.

5. Since all notifications of actions on proposals will be made available to the entire university, anyone can petition the UCF to review a proposal if the petition is made within the 3 academic weeks before the pocket approval takes effect.

6. The UCF has the authority to determine the forms for all levels in this process

D. All recommendations and actions will be simultaneously sent

1. To the Faculty Senate for notification

2. To the President of the University or his/her designee for review, evaluation, and action.

E. The UCF may indicate, as part of its notification pursuant to part D above, that a written recommendation or action is a major one.

If the Faculty Senate does not state otherwise within two weeks, such action of the UCF shall be understood to be the action of the Faculty Senate within the meaning of Article 5.10 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

#### Article IX: Amendments

Throughout the trial period, the UCF may amend this Constitution.

A. All recommendations for changes to the Constitution must be discussed by the full committee.

B. Proposed amendments shall require a two-thirds vote of the full committee.

C. Notifications of proposed amendments shall be sent to the President of the University and to the Faculty Senate as major actions, pursuant to Article VIII, E.

D. Notification of amendments shall be distributed to the entire University within one week of their adoption.

#### Article X: Early Termination of the Trial Period

A. After the UCF has been in existence for one or more years, if by petition, 10% of the full-time faculty believe that the UCF trial period should be terminated, the Faculty Senate will hold a vote by all full-time faculty on whether to terminate the UCF.

B. After the UCF has been in existence for one or more years, if the UCF itself feels that the new structure is unworkable, then by a 2/3's vote, it may decide to end the trial period.

C. If the trial period is ended prior to Fall, 2000, and no alternative proposal is in place, the UCC and the UCIC shall be reconstituted as they were prior to Fall, 1997.

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