

Minutes

CUC100 Review Group Meeting

Friday 17th October 2014

10.00 am – 11.00 am

Orange 4.2.08 – Meeting room

School of Academic Language & Learning / Faculty of Law, Education, Business & Arts

1. ATTENDEES

Nicola Rolls (NR); Sharon Bridgeman (SB); Elizabeth Thynne (ET), Clare McVeity (CM), Linh Pallos (LP), Danial Kelly (DK), Marianne Dyason (MD), Greg Shaw (GS), Birut Zemits (BZ), Bernadette Royal (BR), Mila Bristow (MB), Matthew Marchesi (MM), Kate Presswell (KP).

2. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

2.1. Welcome

Nicola welcomed the review group, accepted apologies and introduced new review group members.

2.2. Apologies

Bev Turnbull (BT), Penny Wurm (PW), Malcolm Flack (MF),

3. COMMENTS FROM UNIVERSITY L&T

- NR advised that the core team now working on the unit development of CUC100 now include herself, CM, EF and SB. The purpose of this meeting is to consider the university's L&T committee recommendations for amendments to the CARP documentation and to continue working toward finalising the new iteration of this unit.

3.1 Status of university sustainability strategy

DK confirmed that the university L&T committee queried what was driving the change to sustainability?

NR advised that the suggestion of sustainability originally came from VCAG as part of the university's sustainability strategy and it was agreed that it should be introduced via an academic pathway. The common units were considered an appropriate vehicle via which that could occur. Sustainability is covered to some degree in CUC106, this would therefore mean all students are introduced to the topic. The common unit team acknowledge that CUC100 has always needed a theme which is currently graduate attributes. Some thought was given as to whether RIEL might be able to establish a common unit on the topic, however that is a longer term consideration.

GS agreed with NR that using sustainability as a vehicle via which to teach academic literacies (CUC100) is a good idea.

DK agreed that a vehicle is appropriate, but queried whether that should be locked into the CARP process.

NR pointed out that if the university decided to proceed with sustainability as a graduate attribute then arguably it can be locked in.

The CUC100 review team agreed that there is a need for confirmation that the university is embracing sustainability as a key theme going forward and asked that these comments be tabled at the next CU committee meeting.

Action: Theme Leader, CU to table comments from CUC100 review group regarding sustainability as a key theme of CDU going forward at the next CU committee meeting.

3.2 Unit title

The university's L&T committee expressed concern that the unit title appeared to foreground sustainability and complex ideas. NR pointed out that the development team wanted to reflect that the topic had many dimensions.

GS commented that the current title also makes it more difficult for professional and regulatory bodies in terms of convincing them that the unit continues to cover academic literacies.

PVCA had advised NR that CDU is not answerable to industry in terms of what is covered in our units confirmed that CUC100 is not a literacy unit; it does not cover basic reading and writing.

GS pointed out that as a team however we are answerable to other university teams.

3.3 Learning outcomes

The university L&T committee felt that the placement of sustainability as the first two learning outcomes was the wrong emphasis.

3.4 Learning assessments

The team was commended on the thought and depth that had gone into this section. However, again it was felt that there was overemphasis on sustainability. NR suggested that the team now intend to remove one of the columns.

DK queried whether it was appropriate to include this level of detail in the CARP documentation and that there was not a need to lock this in.

DK pointed out that during the last unit review meeting he understood that there was a broad agreement that sustainability should not be 'front and centre' and recalled an email outlining that this would be considered further. However, it was next raised at the faculty (and university) learning and teaching committees. Given this, DK queried the role of the unit review group and whether it acted as a sounding board. Is there an expectation that members of the group will take back information from these meetings for further consideration with other staff within their schools/faculties?

NR advised that the role of the group is a course advisory reference group and a place where the common unit team can get representation of the needs of other areas around CDU and there is an assumption that information will be shared.

DK commented that he would have liked more follow up than had been given.

EF pointed out that the team are answerable to the CU committee and information was provided to them.

LP agreed with DK's point and stated that there was some agreement by this group that sustainability would not be locked in as a theme.

GS queried whether in the CARP documentation the description of the vehicle (sustainability) could constitute a minor rather than major change and that the content (academic literacies) would remain unchanged.

NR pointed out that there was a general feeling that it would not be advantageous to leave content out of the unit CARP but that would be determined by the university's ideological approach to sustainability and graduate attributes.

MB confirmed that the School of Environment see sustainability as an important vehicle and would love to see it developed in the common units, there is a large amount of information that can be used.

DK requested that direction be given from VC – academic board level.

4. AMENDMENTS TO THE UNIT CARP

NB. These amendments are premised on the university (at VC level) confirming sustainability as a key ideological theme for the university going forward and the desire for common units to explicitly develop this knowledge. Therefore, depending on direction from VCMG, where there is reference to sustainability in the changes below this could be replaced with a reference to the generic term "theme" rather than naming a specific theme.

4.1 Unit title (p1 CARP)

GS reiterated that ideally, for CARP purposes the title (academic literacies) would remain unchanged, irrespective of the vehicle change to sustainability.

Group considered the following as a possible title: Academic Literacies: Exploring sustainability

4.2 Unit description (p.6 CARP)

NR advised that the unit description has been simplified and now includes the point Andrew Campbell made regarding the introduction of fundamental ideas.

Resolution: Review group agreed on the following amendments:

‘This is achieved via’ to be inserted after academic literacies in first sentence.

‘fundamental science’ to be replaced with fundamental concepts’. It was later suggested that “core elements” was preferable.

Full stop at end of final sentence to be added.

KP queried whether the 3 pillars of sustainability should be reflected more in the unit description?

NR said this is an important consideration for the development of the sustainability content but maybe better to leave this detail out of the unit description content.

4.3 Unit learning outcomes (p.6 CARP)

LO5 – replace ‘regarding sustainability’ with ‘appropriate to the theme’.

LO7 – replace ‘ideas’ with ‘concepts’ and ‘relating to sustainability and sustainable development’ with ‘appropriate to the theme’.

4.4 Learning activities and assessments (p.9 CARP)

NR advised that the ‘themed content’ column has now been removed from the learning activities. There is now just one column that covers how the topic will be taught and the academic literacies content covered.

Resolution: Review group approved amendments to learning activities.

4.5 Assessment items (p.10)

NT confirmed that the unit development team had decided to replace the short essay with a presentation that will include an essay overview, plan and list of references. It will be possible to cover paragraphing within the online learning reflections.

GS queried why the team had changed the weighting of the final assignment to 50%.

NR advised that this was a deliberate change and would ensure that students need to pass the final assignment to pass the unit (given that it is a summative item of assessment) in the event that the request for this to be a hurdle assessment is not supported.

(p.11 compulsory assessment item/hurdle assessment)

Review group agreed the following should be included:

“Students are required to attempt all assignments”

“Because CUC100 is a foundational skill unit for the remainder of students’ degrees, it is essential that they are seen to meet an acceptable standard of academic skills for the final assignment as a signal of their readiness to cope with the rest of their studies. Students are encouraged to resubmit assignments that do not meet the requirements and will be provided with appropriate scaffolding to achieve this.”

MM noted that sustainability is referred to in the university’s strategic plan and this link will be useful if vehicle does change.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

As a result of discussions at this review group meeting, NR will request that the CU committee consider the remit of unit review groups and their TOR. **Action:** NR to report back at next meeting

6. ACTION ITEMS

Action Item: Theme Leader, CU to table comments from CUC100 review group regarding sustainability as a key theme of CDU going forward at next CU committee meeting.

Action Item: Theme Leader, CU to update CARP documentation and circulate to unit review group prior to being tabled at next CU committee meeting.

Action Item: Theme leader, CU to report back to review group on CU committee's decision about TOR for unit review groups.

Action Item: Theme Leader, CU to ensure Director - Research Institute for Environment & Livelihoods is kept in the loop regarding suggested changes and action items.

7. NEXT MEETING