Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. Joy Landeira took minutes in the absence of Lori Riley, Recording Secretary.

Approval of the agenda/September 29, 2014 minutes
The agenda was approved unanimously as presented.

The September 29, 2014 minutes were approved unanimously as presented.

Chair Report/Announcements: No report.

Reports from Councils

Graduate Council (Wiegand) Has not met since last report.

Liberal Arts Council (Smith)
Smith reported that Boyce has resigned as the LAC Chair for 2014-2015 and from the LAC. There is nothing in the bylaws about a succession plan to decide who takes over as leader of LAC committee when someone resigns mid semester …Vice Chair? Re-election? Matter will be decided at next meeting. There were several approvals of new course in the LAC. There is a full slate to consider and more awaiting approval.

Professional Education Council: No report.

Undergraduate Council: No report.

Special Reports

Unfinished Business

Grade Submission
The Committee voted (6 in favor, 0 against, 2 abstentions) to forward the proposed language for Grade Submission (removing Academic Appeal Process and requiring two signatures and rationale for grade change) to the Faculty Senate for consideration at their next meeting.

New Business
Smith clarified for de la Torre some questions from MCB regarding 10 year policy. Colorado only exercises control over LAC 1-6. LAC categories 7+8 are UNC requirements. Under the statute, the shelf life of the core as a whole or any one class is ten years. The department that offers the course content will have the say-so about whether it may be used to satisfy the core and how long it may be counted. If someone wants to know what the core classes are, consult the catalog. It lists all classes in the LAC core.

Discussion: Committee member cautioned that the upcoming HLC visit will evaluate the LAC systematic evaluation of learning outcomes of core instruction. LAC ought to promulgate and map the learning outcomes. There is a need for learning outcomes to be listed in the syllabi, and for a clear set of global learning outcomes in the Liberal Arts Core itself.

A retreat was held for the various area committees that oversee the LAC. Issues raised: Instruction that takes place should be evaluated. The Liberal Arts Core should be the centerpiece of our instruction, yet 60% of LAC courses are taught by TAs or adjuncts. Are we assessing the learning outcomes? Can the UGC and this APC body be involved in how we evaluate the learning that takes place at UNC? MCB, CEBS and other accredited
programs are good at it. What can this body (APC) do to get engaged in defining what UNC needs for creating meaningful learning outcomes?

A senator mentioned that MCB has “Assurance of Learning” evaluations that started in the 1990s. But after going through accreditation, faculty members are apathetic after 8-9 years. Can colleges mandate that every class in their college be assessed?

Other questions raised: Can LAC have a triennial review cycle of all courses in the core? The LAC can review the syllabi and say that learning outcomes must be in the syllabus or it will not be allowed in the core. LAC does not specify the need for learning outcomes. Just the existence of learning outcomes on the syllabus does not mean that they are assessed.

Questions raised: Is the issue around learning outcomes a trend because we have a large LAC driven by degrees trying to manage a number of credits but not necessarily dedicated to a common core center? Other questions and comments: GTpathways drives the core. Will the student learning outcomes help improve the core? Individual Course learning outcomes have to map to the intended outcomes of the core. State has sets of content criteria. How can we have our faculty unite behind outcomes and be aware of the function of a central core? There is a long history of the core being a mechanism by which departments try to fill classes by getting them into the core, not necessarily putting them into the core because they address certain needs or learning outcomes. If you have a requirement-heavy major and very few electives, often the core courses function as prescribed prerequisites. This practice chips away at the ethos of what the core ought to be.

A senator who has experience working with HLC evaluations cautioned that we could be written up by HLC for lack of Student Learning Outcomes on syllabi. There should also be LAC programmatic learning outcomes. We have been trying to address this. Tom Smith will request that units that have practiced assessment of their core courses submit the results. It is important to have a feedback loop.

Difference between INPUTS and OUTPUTS. In many cases there are SLO inputs listed on the syllabi, but are the outputs assessed? Are we using the syllabi and providing a feedback loop? The only person that has the authority over all the courses is the provost. AACSB is example of an accrediting agency that evaluates the feedback.

APC Chair reminded the committee that curriculum comes from the faculty, so it is not up to the provost or “top down” structures to dictate what goes into the syllabi. These programmatic SLOs need to come from the faculty and LAC. The university now has purchased the “Live Text” reporting tool for us to submit our course SLOs and programmatic SLOs. Related committee comments: LAC is a university wide enterprise. When issues have come to us in the faculty syllabus, there was stern resistance to being told what to put on the syllabus. At some point we are going to need to have university wide policies with some teeth to make SLO’s necessary as part of the syllabus design. How much can we compelling someone to put things on syllabi? It is a contract between the faculty member and the student. Can we make a statement to put things on the syllabus? Can university council provide a statement about what can be required on syllabi? Can the chair of AAUP define what can be required on syllabi?

What should be included? A senator pointed out that faculty members should state that they advocate for social justice by including such things as the disability statement. Isn’t this the law? The dean should uphold rights. Discussion: The content of the disability statement isn’t the issue; the syllabus is a contact between faculty and students. Faculty make the contract, no one can tell them what contract they can make with their students. Forcing us to put something on syllabus is the issue. Question: is the contract only between faculty member and student if the courses are UNC courses, with UNC numbers and faculty are contracted by UNC?

Discussion: Student learning outcomes. Measures, Assessments. Other institutions have been dinged for lack of assessment. This is important to learning. How to do assessment? It is not a matter of the syllabus. In many of
our colleges, we have to do feedback loops to stay accredited. Our undergrad council pays attention and we review syllabi to document that outcomes are being met. Smith is asserting that LAC doesn’t document that outcomes are being met in all of the LAC core courses. Assessment must start in LAC core. Things from LAC will come onto the docket here at APC. The courses that we offer in the core are the university’s property, and we have responsibility to the core.

Discussion: Before you get started on assessment, you have to write up programmatic SLOs to address assessments. LAC needs to write down what the objects of the LAC are. Courses should align to the objectives. At some point, faculty has to recognize the unity of the information that creates an education. Unless you are willing to assess, how do we know that our courses enhance the overall mission?

Could this body (the APC) say that there has been a concern raised about the lack of learning outcomes in LAC? Could we charge the LAC committee to address the situation in order to provide programmatic learning outcomes? Rather than “charging” them to do so, should the APC offer our assistance to the LAC committee to help them accomplish this?

A senator requested that we invite the provost to this committee so that we can talk about LAC assessment.

Discussion: LAC does have course criteria in place. As far as defining student learning outcomes, how much can LAC be blamed for this? We need to narrow the core. Senator states, “I don’t want my students taking courses that aren’t evaluated.” We don’t have a requirement to update syllabi. Have the syllabi been updated? Courses get reviewed at the beginning, but things get dropped at the end as far as assessment.

Yes, criteria cover incomes, but not outcomes. Who does the responsibility fall upon to complete the loop for the LAC? Who completes the LAC feedback loop-- the LAC committee or individual areas? Assessment doesn’t work unless it is done by faculty. Are they mapping to outcomes in the LAC core? Are faculty improving their own core courses? There are no formally programmatic outcomes that are globally stated by LAC core committee. What do we want our students to know and to do in our classes and programs? Senator opines: If you want to be part of the LAC core, you have to do assessment. The college should be doing it anyway. Questions raised: is there an LAC accrediting body? We are aware that there is a huge national conversation about accreditation and will continue this discussion at the next meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Joy Landeira
APC Chair