

UNDERGRADUATE OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (UOAC)
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
Minutes of 2017-18 meeting #15, March 1, 2018

Present: L. Mathews (chair), D. Samson (secretary), R. Mallick, J. deWinter, C. Demetry, A. Heinricher (Provost's Office), A. Donta-Venman (Institutional Research), G. Cataldo '20 (SGA), P. St. Louis (Engineering, permanent visitor)

The meeting came to order at 12:01.

L. Mathews introduced invited guest Kris Boudreau, Head of the Department of Humanities and Arts, to describe the department's work toward assessment of student work since it adopted a list of teaching objectives in 2008. Professor Boudreau explained that following a series of evaluative reviews of student "capstone" projects in the department's Inquiry Seminars and Practicums, Humanities and Arts is now working to define parameters for assessment. Her concern as Head is to work toward consistency of quality and outcomes in the capstone Inquiry experience without doing away with instructor autonomy. Prof. Boudreau described innovations being considered for adoption, including new possible course sequences and assignments to encourage student reflection. The department will launch a pilot initiative on Humanities and Arts course advising through the Insight program during the 2018-19 calendar year.

A. Heinricher introduced for discussion some frequently-encountered issues of Inquiry Seminars and Practicums. These include students' delaying completion of the Humanities and Arts requirement until late in their WPI careers; difficulties in selecting and registering for suitable courses; and oversubscribed courses on the part of some instructors. He also discussed initiatives he is spearheading toward an improved student questionnaire for the Inquiry Seminars and Practicums. This led to discussion of the use of student feedback in evaluating instructors for promotion and tenure. Professor Boudreau left at 12:49 with the committee's thanks.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved with some suggested changes. D. Samson reported that Prof. Lance Schachterle, the committee's guest at that meeting, had approved the UOAC secretary's summary of his comments at the meeting.

L. Mathews asked whether the committee wanted to meet during the first week of D term, considering that there will be a faculty meeting that week and UOAC does not ordinarily meet during weeks with faculty meetings. The committee voted not to meet. The next meeting of the committee will be on March 20.

The meeting adjourned at 12:57.

Respectfully submitted, D. Samson, secretary