1. Child Care Services
	1. **Faculty Concern:** Several constituents have expressed the concern that UCA does not offer child care options for students, staff, and faculty. Ideally, constituents would like child care that is available as a contracted service as well as a drop-in service.
	2. **Response:** Thank you for representing our faculty. I agree that this concern continues to surface. That is why I invited the chair of that committee to come to senate last fall. Please share with your constituents:
		* Please see Faculty Senate Minutes for November 22, 2016. <http://uca.edu/facultysenate/meeting-schedule-agendas-and-minutes/>
		* On our web-site was the Child Care Survey Results. <http://uca.edu/facultysenate/meeting-schedule-agendas-and-minutes/child-care-survey-results/>
		* This committee recommended - not at this time. Based on the recommendation of the committee and UCA being in a tight budget position until after fall 2017 enrollment, I doubt a new request would get much movement.
2. Bachelor of General Studies Degree
	1. **Faculty Concern:** “I hate to start off the new year by making trouble for you, but at our last department meeting in the fall, [our chair] told us that there is a new degree being developed, called the Bachelor of General Studies, and that this new degree originated in and is being shepherded by the Provost’s Office. He went on to tell us that the courses that will be a part of this new degree will also be decided by administrators. This seems to me to be wrong.

It has always been my impression that degrees are decided upon by specific faculties of specific colleges, which, I always assumed, was the reason that faculty are called to rise to confer, symbolically, their consent to the awarding of degrees in their colleges. Of course, this makes perfect sense. Degrees are empty abstractions without some academic content, and academic content can only be provided by specific faculties in specific colleges, and these faculties are directly responsible for the requirements and quality of the degrees they award.

The proposed Bachelor of General Studies degree, as I understand it, does not originate with any faculty at all but in an administrative office. In fact, not only does the degree not originate with a faculty, the faculty are to be told what this free-floating degree will consist of, though they have no part in it.

This seems to me contrary to both the spirit and the letter of the Faculty Handbook, not to mention common sense. I understand that administrators feel tremendous pressure to find as many ways as they can to make or save money, but the fact that administrators are often in this position is one reason the determination of academic matters lies with the faculty. At the risk of seeming obvious, universities should not be in the business of selling degrees, no matter how they may dress up that selling, and faculty are in the best position to, and morally should, resist any attempt to compromise basic academic principle for the expediency of the moment. If we allow a degree to be devised by administrators for essentially administrative purposes, we will have abdicated our most basic justification to be faculty at all and run the risk of becoming simply workers in a diploma mill.

Some people may regard my position as hopelessly removed from the meat-hook realities of higher education, but I don’t think it is. If universities are going to offer courses of study, which I assume, perhaps naively, is their purpose, then those courses of study have to be determined by those who are conducting them. Isn’t this right? To allow administrators at any level to determine degrees or majors independently of the best judgment of the faculty not only inverts the only sensible way of going about things, it can’t help but lead to a kind of corruption. Any degree that is developed for any reason other than academic reasons is not and cannot be an academic degree. It is something else, perhaps a way to rekindle an interest in returning to UCA in students who have drifted away, or, perhaps, a way to improve the numbers by which universities live. The intentions behind such a degree may be good. But, it will not be an academic degree, and our pretending that it is makes it, at least in part, fraudulent.

Since this degree seems to transgress the responsibilities and authority assigned to the faculty by the Faculty Handbook and sets a dangerous precedent, I was hoping that you could bring this matter to the Faculty Senate for action. My impression is that this project is in its early stages, so it is a good time to call it into question. Above all, though, I think that we need to be clear about what it is we are supposed to be doing as faculty, and I think that we ought to resist encroachments, not on some imagined prestige or privilege, but on the very integrity of what we do. Thank you for having the patience to read all this.”

* 1. **Who is putting together the curriculum?**

Dr. Peter Mehl is leading the effort to pull the curriculum together. Dean Ishee and Dean Groves-Scott have also volunteers to work on this project as they have experience with this type of degree program at their previous institutions. Dr. Mehl has been conducting surveys and working with individual colleges as he develops this proposal.

* 1. **Will this go through the UCA Core and/or Undergraduate Councils for approval?**

Yes, this proposal will go through all normal channels for curriculum review and approval.

* 1. **Will it fall under a particular college (which) and go through their curriculum approval process?**

I anticipate that the review of the core of the program will be initiated out of the College of Liberal Arts and that individual specialty tracks will be reviewed and approved in the appropriate college.

* 1. **What is driving this degree?**

This proposal came initially out of CLA for the purpose of providing a relatively general degree that would be attractive to students who may have dropped out of college for some time or for those who have been in college for some time, but were perhaps indecisive in their chosen academic path.  The proposed degree might give those students a more efficient path to completion that would be more attractive than a disciplinary degree or simply dropping out of school.  In time it is likely that this degree could be offered online and attract students who have some college and no degree, but are likely working adults who cannot enroll as a traditional, on-campus student.

1. Please clarify the information we are hearing about minimum course fill levels.

**Guidance for Minimum Class Sizes**

**Office of the Provost**

**January 2017**

Building and managing course schedules and ensuring equitable faculty load is a significant responsibility and can be quite challenging at times. As a campus, we do a solid job of managing this process, but there is always room for improvement. Your diligence and efforts on this front are recognized and appreciated. Efficient course management and assignment of faculty loads can help free up resources otherwise spent on part-time and visiting faculty for other academic priorities.

To provide consistent guidance across campus and to continue being thoughtful and intentional in developing and managing the schedules, the following minimum class sizes that have been used in the past are being re-established.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Undergraduate lower-division class | 15 students |
| Undergraduate upper-division class | 10 students |
| Graduate class | 5 students |
|  |  |

Department chairs are asked to adhere to these guidelines to the extent possible, recognizing that exceptions will be necessary in certain circumstances. Exceptions can be approved by the Dean for situations that warrant class sizes below the minimum. Examples include:

* The course is needed for students to progress toward graduation without delay and an appropriate course substitution is not available.
* Combining the section with another section of the same course would cause the course size to be larger than can be reasonably accommodated considering mode of delivery.
* The course is part of a new program that has not yet reached projected size.
* Cancellation of the course was not feasible without causing undue hardship on students.

The Dean will provide a report to the Provost at the end of the first week of classes each semester listing the exceptions and the justification for the exceptions.

Suggestions for meeting class size minimums (recognizing that the goal is for sections to fill to the targeted capacity):

* For courses requiring multiple sections, wait to open some sections until demand is evident.
* Offer courses with low enrollments on a rotational basis such as every other semester or every other year. Consider reducing the number of options or tracks within a program.
* When possible, if another section is needed for only a few students because existing sections are full, consider moving an existing section to a larger room and increasing the class size. Rooms in other buildings on campus can be identified using the EMS calendar system.

**Summer Sessions –** Summerofferings should be determined based on student needs and an awareness of tuition revenue generated versus salary costs per section offered. Prior to the first day of class, enrollments should be reviewed and if courses have low enrollments, consideration should be given to cancellation; however, exceptions will exist. Department chairs and deans will be responsible for managing the summer schedule using the same guidelines noted above.

1. Improvements to Christian Cafeteria
	1. **Concern background:** Recently we attended a state conference held on the Arkansas Tech University campus.  Our luncheon session was held in a room adjacent to the cafeteria.  We were incredibly impressed.  The room is bright; access to the cafeteria is easy; and, most of all, the food is great!  The ATU cafeteria offers a wide variety of healthy meals unlike the limited choices meals offered in the UCA cafeteria.  The cost is reasonable and everyone at the conference was able to choose individual meals.
	2. **Concern recommendation 1:** UCA has invested in refurbishing the Student Center and the HPER Center.  It is time to refurbish the cafeteria.
		* Background from the VP of Finance: it has been considered off and on for the last two to three years. There is no real traction at this point because of the costs that would have to be passed along to the students on the meal plans. There is a fragile balance between increasing costs to enhance our facilities with keeping our costs competitive and affordable to our students and their families. In a climate of unpredictable enrollment, funding formula changes, and an unstable CFI, in my opinion, there should be careful consideration of this or any new construction project.
		* Action: The HPER was primarily driven by a student initiative and SGA supporting an increase in student fees to cover this. I have forwarded this to the SGA president who will discuss it with SGA.
		* Other possible action: If a private donor could be found, that would enable this idea to move up the list of building projects.
	3. **Concern recommendation 2:** It is time to contract with new caterers who offer the variety of healthy meals such as the meals offered at ATU.  (The current UCA menus are served at every event.)
		* Follow up: The POC for third party contracts is Megan Bennett. If you have a copy of the menu and want to offer suggestions, please pass on to Megan Bennett. That would help.
	4. **Concern recommendation 3:** UCA needs a larger meeting room such as the room at ATU where faculty, staff, students, and community members can host events and access improved food services.
		* Action: Same as recommendation 1.

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1. ASKED and STILL PENDING = None