

**UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**  
2019-20 Meeting #4, September 30, 2019

**Present:** Julie Beeston, Manoj Shrestha, Mark Adams, Jim Conners, Aleksandra Hollingshead, Jean-Marc Gauthier, Mark Nielsen, Diane Prorak, Steven Shook, Sanjay Sisodiya, Lindsey Brown.

**Absent:** Lori Baker-Eveleth, Francesca Sammaruca, Cher Hendricks, Jesse Smith, Hannah Spear, Stephen Fox, Dean Pantajja.

**Also here:** Amy Kingston, Mark Warner, John Crepeau.

Sanjay Sisodiya called the meeting to order at 3:34pm.

The September 23, 2019 minutes were approved.

### **Announcements & Communications**

Rebecca Frost introduced Amy Kingston who was recently hired as the Academic Publications Editor. This position acts as the secretary for the UCC and compiles the agendas and items for the committee. She comes from the Registrar's office, and has been working in academic scheduling. Her start date is October 7<sup>th</sup>.

Jean-Marc Gauthier indicated that he was unhappy with VandalStar feedback that was sent to students on his behalf. Students get email notices when a flag is cleared. The email was sent on his behalf to students and it was not a communication that he would not have sent, nor was it in a tone or manner in which he would normally address his students. He was also concerned that including the student's grades in these emails may have been a FERPA violation.

Mark Nielsen is on the VandalStar committee and was interested in the feedback from the faculty members so that he could better relay it to the VandalStar committee.

Lindsey Brown addressed the FERPA issue and indicated that the email was not a violation because the communication is internal. Should any request ever be made for these communications they would be redacted to not include the student information.

Jean-Marc Gauthier stated that he felt these communications were unnecessary and made himself and other faculty very uncomfortable given the tone of the communications to the students.

Mark Nielsen indicated that he hasn't seen email himself but that he has heard complaints from multiple sources. He also indicated that he doesn't like things communicated on his behalf when he has no input in it. He further indicated that he believed the committee had fixed this issue last year and that he would take it to the VandalStar committee as it should not be happening.

### **Unfinished Business**

#### **UCC-20-003 Department of Civil Engineering**

CE 494 had been tabled at the September 16 meeting to get further clarification with regard to some of the included language. John Crepeau was available to speak to the clarifications. The language with regard to registering before fall recess was specifically included because simply requiring permission was not addressing the issues in the course. CE 494 is a senior design experience where the department brings in industry projects with local partners for the students to work with. In order to match students to projects the department needs to know early on in order to insure that there are a sufficient number of projects available. In the past there have been students who have gotten permission but have not registered until too late in the term to

assign a project. This led to the language that "Permission is not guaranteed if not registered before Fall recess" being included in the description.

The second concern with the course was that the prerequisite course, CE 491, indicated in its description that it be taken in the student's last semester which would make it unreasonable to use as a prerequisite. John Crepeau explained that there was another course change form for CE 491 that was currently in the process of being submitted that will eliminate the "last semester" language and will take care of the issue.

There was no further discussion by the committee on the item.

Jim Connors moved to approve, Aleksandra Hollingshead seconded.

The change to CE 494 was unanimously approved.

## **New Business**

### **UCC-20-010 College of Business**

Sanjay Sisodiya spoke to the changes.

EMBA 536 was being introduced as a new course. The material for this course had been included in EMBA 543 which will be discussed later in the agenda. The students were struggling with having these two separate facets of the EMBA included in one course. This course pulls out that information and makes the other course smaller.

Aleksandra Hollingshead moved to approve the course, Jim Connors seconded.

The addition of EMBA 536 was unanimously approved.

The changes to EMBA 512, 543, 544, 546 were addressed next. EMBA 512 includes a reduction in credit for redundant materials. EMBA 543 was reduced in credits due to the creation of EMBA 536. EMBA 544 is being renamed and changed to better reflect the course materials. EMBA 546 is an update on catalog description.

Lindsey Brown asked if the courses would meet contact hours as their credit load and face-to-face meeting times seemed to be somewhat odd.

Sanjay Sisodiya replied that the students met for 4-5 hour blocks on Thursday and then full days on Friday and Saturday. The contact hour information was included on p 27-28 of the agenda.

Steven Shook asked if EMBA 544 moving from a risk to a strategy course was a problem.

Sanjay Sisodiya said there might be some concern, but the course may have just changed over time and the title change is meant to reflect those changes.

Lindsey Brown asked if the course outcomes were the same.

Sanjay Sisodiya indicated that he was unsure as the documents submitted haven't specifically addressed the learning outcomes. He suggested that the committee seek more input from MBA faculty as it wasn't technically part of the Department of Business and operated as a separate unit.

Aleksandra Hollingshead commented that it would be good to hear from program faculty on EMBA 544 to further explain the changes.

Sanjay Sisodiya commented that it would be helpful to have John Larsen who is the Faculty lead for the EMBA program to come to speak to the changes.

Jim Connors moved to approve EMBA 512, 543 and 546. Aleksandra Hollingshead seconded.

The changes to EMBA 512, 543 and 546 were unanimously approved.

EMBA 544 was tabled.

EMBA change of curriculum to lower the credit requirements had no discussion.

Aleksandra Hollingshead moved to approve.

Jim Connors asked if the reduction of credits from 42 down to 36 was ever done earlier.

Sanjay Sisodiya replied that this had been the intention but the paperwork may have been lost. It should have been listed as 38 credits previously, but this new change was bringing the total down to 36 credits. Part of this change is resulting from the removal of redundant information. Some of the material being reduced was due to the faculty including areas of specific interest and these changes were streamlining the program.

Mark Nielsen seconded Aleksandra Hollingshead's prior move to approve.

The change to the EMBA curriculum was unanimously approved.

Sanjay Sisodiya explained that the change to the Marketing Analytics option was to eliminate the "Tier 1" marketing language as we had seen in other changes to the options of this major. In addition STAT 407 and 436 were added to the catalog last year and were found to be appropriate to include as an undergraduate option to allow and encourage a statistics minor.

Jim Connors asked why the marketing electives took out AGEC 333 as an option.

Sanjay Sisodiya replied that as there were specific courses needed as a capstone within the major, some students could take the AGEC course and not realize they had not met the specific capstone requirement until it was too late as this was often discovered in their last term.

Steven Shook moved to approve, Jim Connors seconded.

The change to the Marketing Analytics option was unanimously approved.

#### **UCC-20-011 Final Exam Schedules – 2020-2021**

Rebecca Frost spoke to the final exam schedules. She explained that they were similar to last year's with the exception of the date change and the normal day rotation to ensure that finals moved by one day for every time slot.

Mark Nielsen observed that he likes how the final schedule is created now as it is much easier to determine your final time.

Aleksandra Hollingshead moved to approve, Jim Connors seconded.

The Final exam schedule was approved. Diane Prorak abstained as she entered as the discussion was taking place.

#### **UCC-20-012 College of Letters Arts & Social Sciences, multiple departments**

Mark Warner spoke to the CLASS changes. He asked the acting UCC secretary limit the snark in the minutes, while Mark Nielsen indicated that it should be included that AD Warner plead unsuccessfully to have the snark removed.

#### **Modern Languages**

Sanjay Sisodiya indicated that the committee would consider the course and curriculum changes for modern languages separately.

The addition of SPAN 426 is a result of having been offered as a 404 for a couple of years. There has been high enrollment in the past which was confirmed as being 24 students last time it was offered. For a special topics course this is well-attended.

Aleksandra Hollingshead moved to approve, Jim Connors seconded.

The course addition was unanimously approved.

Modern Language Business curriculum is adding FL 401 to the course requirements and the STAMP language to the degree requirements.

Lindsey Brown asked if the Study Abroad requirement was a constraint on the students.

Mark Warner indicated that most students planned for this and there were scholarships available so it did not usually produce an undue hardship on the student.

Steven Shook moved to approve, Aleksandra Hollingshead seconded.

The curriculum change was unanimously approved.

### **Latin American Studies**

The curriculum is adding STAMP language to the requirements. Mark Warner indicated that there is a lot of housekeeping coming from CLASS to take care of issues within courses and curriculum similar to this item.

Jim Connors moved to approve, Manoj Shrestha seconded.

The curricular change was unanimously approved.

### **Philosophy**

Submissions include a course number change, language change in the major and adding new course.

For the course change of PHIL 405 to PHIL 406 Lindsey Brown asked if the change was solely for evaluation as this seemed to be indicated in the rationale.

Jim Connors remarked that it was unusual for a course to have gotten this number in the first place as it is a professional development course number.

Manoj Shrestha moved to approve, Aleksandra Hollingshead seconded.

The number change for PHIL 406 was unanimously approved.

The Philosophy curriculum change adds the new PHIL 406 and strikes the language of “non-Western thought” from the electives.

Diana Prorak moved to approve, Manoj Shrestha seconded.

The curriculum change was unanimously approved.

### **Communication**

Mark Warner indicated that COMM 455 has not been taught in a number of years and its equivalent, COMM 359, has been used instead. This change serves to streamline the curriculum and eliminates an extraneous course.

Sanjay Sisodiya observed that COMM 455 had no pre-requisites and COMM 359 did, but title is the same and the descriptions are near identical other than COMM 359 referencing communication scholars. He asked if this could create a transfer issue.

Mark Warner indicated that it doesn't matter which course is transferred as it is equivalent.

Lindsey Brown mentioned that we should seek to avoid this in the future.

Jim Connors moved to approve, Aleksandra Hollingshead seconded.

Dropping COMM 455 was unanimously approved.

The Communications curriculum change removes COMM 455 and adds COMM 359 as well as adding a statement with regard to communication in residence credit requirements.

Sanjay Sisodiya asked if there was a reason for the in residence credit requirement.

Mark Warner indicated that there were some problems that arose this summer which prompted the requirement but the idea behind this addition is that a significant body of the degree credits should come from the University of Idaho.

Aleksandra Hollingshead moved to approve, Jim Connors seconded.

The Communications curriculum change was unanimously approved.

### **Psychology**

Psychology is seeking to drop 4 courses, which Sanjay Sisodiya observed coincided with rather large minor which they are trying to make more attractive by reducing the required credits.

Mark Warner pointed out that the current budgetary issues also make this an attractive option.

Aleksandra Hollingshead moved to approve, Jim Connors seconded.

Dropping the 4 psychology courses was unanimously approved.

Changing titles in the submitted Psychology courses garnered no discussion.

Aleksandra Hollingshead moved to approve, Connors seconded.

The course title changes were unanimously approved.

The Addictions minor submission was a clean-up of credit hours and removal of emphases. This resulted in a drop of total credits required from 30 to 24.

Aleksandra moved to approve, Jim Connors seconded.

The changes to the Addiction minor were unanimously approved.

### **Theatre Arts**

Rebecca Frost spoke to the reactivation of THE 469. The course had been previously combined with THE 498 which was not working for the students as it did not allow enough time to cover all of the content.

Lindsey Brown asked if this would be a problem for student who might seek to repeat the previous iteration.

Rebecca Frost indicated that the previous THE 498 course which still exists was close enough to suffice and it should cause no issues for repeatability.

Aleksandra Hollingshead moved to approve, Jim Connors seconded.

The reactivation and change to the course was unanimously approved.

THEA 468 requested a change in the course description to remove the era that THEA 469 would now cover.

Aleksandra Hollingshead moved to approve, Jim Connors seconded.

The course change was unanimously approved.

### **Discussion Items**

#### **UCC-20-013 Posthumous Degree Policy**

Lindsey Brown was seeking input on the posthumous degree policy. In the past we have had a policy that was approved by the Associate Deans in 2000, but no one was really aware of the policy and it hadn't gone through proper approval channels. The Registrar's Office is currently trying to identify the proper channels now and is currently working to pass this as an addition to the Faculty Staff Handbook. The proposed policy relaxes the rules a little bit as the current policy calls for the student to be in their last term at the time of death. The new policy now allows the student to be in their last 30 credits of their degree. Comparisons to other affiliate schools were provided to the committee members. It was

noted that this proposed policy was also being taken to the Graduate council who would likely have changes due to the nature of their degrees. Lindsey Brown is currently seeking input and comments on the proposed policy change.

Jean-Marc Gauthier commented that their college had recently experienced a student's death that was very painful for all involved. He remarked that if somebody has a disease or condition that is lingering there should be some flexibility in the requirements as making the 30 remaining credits threshold could be difficult in some cases. In this case, the person was unable to be awarded an honorary degree so the College had to improvise. He argued that there should be flexibility on the number of credits.

Lindsey Brown agreed and indicated that the new policy did relax those credit requirements. She indicated that any policy could relax these requirements as much as the faculty would like. If a student does not qualify, there an appeals process available.

Sanjay Sisodiya asked if the appeals process existed on the graduate side as well as the undergraduate. He wondered if there should be separate appeals section for graduates.

Lindsey Brown indicated that the current appeals process should already apply to both.

Mark Warner confirmed that the appeals committee hears graduate appeals.

Lindsey Brown remarked that she would amend A-3 to indicate this.

Sanjay Sisodiya noted that depending on the program 30 credits would apply to anyone under current graduate credit requirements for Master's degrees.

Lindsey Brown commented that this is why the graduate committee needed to look at the policy to come up with appropriate guidelines. She is open to comment.

Jean-Marc Gauthier asked if this could just be dependent on the department because it is often on a case-by-case basis. In their case they had a student who really fought to be present and not being able to give a degree was hurtful. Would there be any harm by allowing this as there is no risk of abuse of a posthumous degree.

Lindsey Brown agreed with that sentiment. She pointed out that in the comparison schools, some are stringent some are much more lenient. Putting our practice into a policy can help remove any ambiguity in how these are awarded.

Mark Warner indicated that sometimes there are reasons for having a specific policy on this manner. The manner of death can sometimes come into play and make an award be more ambiguous than it should be, or indicate a level of judgment on the students that is not warranted. Without a policy, the circumstances of a student's death may make a difference as to when some deaths prompt seeking a posthumous degree and some do not. Circumstances like this led to conversation at the Dean of Students level and eventually led to both student not receiving a degree. While there is an understanding that a department would love to allow this for the student's family the policy doesn't always allow for it.

Doug Adams noted that the policy may need to also come to the law school for discussion.

Mark Warner commented that this is a difficult conversation to have, and there have always been concerns that this type of recognition could be a trigger for students in a worst case scenario.

Lindsey Brown agreed that this is why guidelines are helpful. At her previous university there were four students who passed during her time there and having a policy as a guideline while having flexibility is helpful.

Sanjay Sisodiya asked if this item was just discussion or called for a vote.

Lindsey Brown indicated that this was still just a discussion and this garnered good information. She asked Doug Adams for input for law school in this matter.

Doug Adams said there may need to be a separate line for law students.

Mark Warner commented that there should at the least be a policy for standard practice and then there could be departmental discretion.

Lindsey Brown agreed and let the council know that this item could come back depending on the processes moving forward.

### **UCC-20-014 Graduation Honors**

Lindsey Brown opened the discussion noting that we award our honors in a way that is difficult to explain to students. She provided supporting materials to allow for comparison to peer institution policies. She noted that it is difficult to explain to students the necessary GPA for honors as it fluctuates over time due to how it is awarded. Students don't actually know if they will be close to honors until grad fair.

Mark Warner noted that there was no language about dual credit being excluded from the GPA and asked if it was counting. He noted that this was not listed on credits that do not count towards the student's GPA.

Lindsey Brown confirmed that if the student takes dual credit it would come over as transfer work and is counted towards their GPA and the credits calculated for honors. She asked if the University were open to changing how this was calculated and if so, what would we like to see.

Steven Shook clarified that the main concerns is that students don't know what they need to work for. This is particularly important to the students trying to apply to grad or law school.

Aleksandra Hollingshead asked why we don't have a graph similar to the other schools.

Mark Nielsen commented that looking at this by college it is important. He was in favor of the way it is currently set up in practice, although it is unfortunate that students don't know what standard they have to meet. He definitely want to preserve it by college, as the rigor of the college could eliminate many excellent student just by the nature of their major.

Sanjay Sisodiya commented that looking at percentages could we give them this information over time.

Lindsey Brown said that currently there is a significant amount of analysis that must be done manually in order to determine the honors placement. It is done by hand and posted which can only be done at certain times. Colleges are using a rolling 5 years and have to recalculate every term. For some students this creates a moving target and trying to explain to students how this works is difficult.

Manoj Shrestha indicated that he was trying to understand if this is a concern with regard to the standard, or to the communication of the standard.

Lindsey Brown answered that it was most difficult to communicate as it is a moving target.

Jim Connors asked how many institutions used a set standard.

Lindsey replied that it varied by college. The University of Idaho is in the minority doing it by college and percentages.

Aleksandra Hollingshead asked if it would it be easier to have a set cut-off.

Mark Nielsen remarked that it would be more difficult for students within certain colleges to meet a standard GPA requirement. Not having a percentage would not be fair comparing majors against each other. He doesn't want to write students in tough majors out of these honors, and likes the percentages because it allows for this.

Lindsey Brown suggested that her office could look at percentages over time and come up with a historical threshold that could vary by college.

Aleksandra Hollingshead noted that this solution may not work for all students, as you would likely see objections as they might think it unfair that one student has to get a lower GPA for the same honors. Steven Shook asked if the current system was broken.

Mark Nielsen noted that the moving target simply makes it difficult.

Lindsey Brown commented that this issue is most evident when trying to explain to students as there is a lot of variation and no set GPA they need to get.

Manoj Shrestha asked if we come up with the 5 year and post it.

Lindsey Brown replied that a new threshold would need to be posted each year.

Steven Shook asked if there were students taking easy courses simply to bump up their GPA's to meet the requirements.

Jim Connors noted that students want a number to shoot for.

Manoj Shrestha added that trends might show that the average GPA is going up, so we would have to review this periodically and adjust numbers. With this, going the threshold route may just create more problems.

Jean-Marc Gauthier observed that it was kind of a consumer mindset where you're shooting for something like mileage.

Aleksandra Hollingshead added that honors should be something a student works for and finds out at the end whether they reached that goal or not. That is what makes it honors.

Mark Nielsen asked if students need to know what this number is, as their work is what earns them the honors, not knowing a number.

Lindsey Brown noted that some want to work towards this and find as a senior that they aren't quite there.

Jean-Marc Gauthier noted that the message should be to work for a high GPA over the course of their studies. They may only find out at graduation if they earned the designation. This is an award.

Lindsey Brown noted that we are different and the question was why are we different and do we need to be different. She observed that there did not seem to be a lot of good sentiment that we need to change.

Mark Warner commented that while he supported things that could make this easier for the staff calculating these percentages moving in this direction may be something that causes students to look to inflate what they're doing and not do what they need to do.

Lindsey commented that students seeking to enter graduate school and medical students were particularly interested in what the threshold is.

Mark Warner commented that based on your cohort and you don't always know until the end if you will receive honors. This is the more of a traditional way of doing this.

Lindsey Brown noted that nationally the norm is to have set requirements. The way we do it now is in the minority.

Aleksandra Hollingshead commented that simplifying it might be easier, as waiting to the end is complicated.

Lindsey Brown again pointed out that currently our practice is difficult to explain to students.

The committee agreed that it was open to Lindsey Brown coming up with a possible new policy.

Mark Warner indicated that collectively we don't want to have too many students getting honors as it devalues the award.

Mark Nielsen want to be sure we avoid the issue where the harder colleges receive less honors. As a University we don't want to punish more robust majors. There is a differential of expectations across campus. He wants these honors to reflect that.



Aleksandra Hollingshead asked if we could pull stats as to how this would apply across colleges. This might give a better idea of how our students would be affected across colleges, giving a better view of how this works to better make a decision.

Sanjay Sisodiya added that grade distribution across colleges would help as well. This will give us a better idea on how this would apply.

Hearing no additional questions, Acting Chairperson Sanjay Sisodiya closed the meeting at 4:51pm. UCC will reconvene Monday, October 7, 2019

Rebecca Frost  
Acting UCC Secretary