

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
2020-21 Meeting #2, September 21, 2020

Members (those present in bold, * indicates voting member):

Jim Connors, Chair*
Mark Adams*
Bert Baumgaertner*
Julie Beeston*
Lindsey Brown

Jean-Marc Gauthier*
Kalynn Hanley*
Aleksandra Hollingshead*
Mark Nielsen*
Dean Panttaja

Diane Prorak*
Francesca Sammarruca
Steven Shook*
Sanjay Sisodiya*

Guests Present: John Crepeau, Rebecca Frost, Dwaine Hubbard, Amy Kingston, David Pimentel, Robert Zielinski

Jim Connors called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

The minutes from August 31, 2020 were approved with a few minor corrections.

Announcements and Communications - none

New Business

UCC Agenda number: UCC-21-002

Items under consideration: B.S.Ch.E. in Chemical Engineering

Speaker: John Crepeau

Discussion: The College of Engineering thinks it is important to include a Physics lab course for this degree. This will also put them in line with accreditation requirements.

Motion: Mark Adams

Second: Bert Baumgaertner

Outcome: Unanimously approved

UCC Agenda number: UCC-21-002

Items under consideration: B.S.C.E. in Civil Engineering

Speaker: John Crepeau

Discussion: The department felt that Technical Writing no longer met their needs. Bert Baumgaertner asked whether the English and Communication departments are aware of this change. John Crepeau replied that he does not think they have been made aware, but he will let them know. Bert also asked if this is related to the fact that Technical Writing was dropped as a General Education course. John replied that it may be an ancillary issue, but not the direct cause of the change.

Motion: Mark Nielsen

Second: Aleksandra Hollingshead

Outcome: Unanimously approved

UCC Agenda number: UCC-21-002

Items under consideration: CS 443 and 543

Speaker: John Crepeau

Discussion: The Computer Science department has a new faculty member with expertise in Embedded Systems who would like to begin teaching this course.

Motion: Jim Connors

Second: Bert Baumgaertner

Outcome: Unanimously approved

UCC Agenda number: UCC-21-002

Items under consideration: INDT 475

Speaker: John Crepeau

Discussion: The Nuclear Engineering and Industrial Management department is newly-formed and exists only in Idaho Falls. This course will be offered in association with Idaho National Laboratory. They would like to offer this course, which has been offered in the past as a Special Topic.

Motion: Steven Shook

Second: Aleksandra Hollingshead

Outcome: Unanimously approved

UCC Agenda number: UCC-21-003

Items under consideration: Dropping ENVE Subject Prefix

Speaker: John Crepeau

Discussion: The college stopped teaching ENVE courses several years ago but never officially dropped the subject prefix. John Crepeau has checked with all relevant department chairs, who agree that the prefix is no longer needed. Jim Connors asked whether it could be reactivated as a subject prefix in the future, if needed. Amy Kingston replied that yes, it can.

Motion: Mark Nielsen

Second: Aleksandra Hollingshead

Outcome: Unanimously approved

UCC Agenda number: UCC-21-004

Items under consideration: NS Lab Courses

Speaker: Robert Zielinski

Discussion: This is part of a realignment of the Naval Science courses. The creation of 10 new Naval Science labs will allow students to take a graded lab course each semester they are here. The need for the extra two 400-level courses is that students can apply for up to five years of benefits, and those students would still be required to take a lab each semester during that fifth year. These are just 1-credit labs. Sanjay Sisodiya asked what the repeat options are if a student did not pass one of the labs. Robert Zielinski replied that there is no requirement to retake a lab if a student fails. They have to be enrolled each semester and will receive letter grades, but they are not required to pass every lab to complete the program. Steven Shook asked if the proposed change to NS 103 is related to these changes. He also wondered if this would resolve the current issue where departments are often asked to give overrides to students for these courses. Robert responded that it will. That is the reason for the change.

Motion: Jim Connors

Second: Steven Shook

Outcome: Unanimously approved

UCC Agenda number: UCC-21-004

Items under consideration: NS 103

Speaker: Robert Zielinski

Motion: Steven Shook

Second: Aleksandra Hollingshead

Outcome: Unanimously approved

UCC Agenda number: UCC-21-004

Items under consideration: NS 101

Speaker: Robert Zielinski

Discussion: Originally, this course was two credit hours and NS 103 was a one-credit lab. However, all Naval Science courses are now required to be three credits. Jim Connors asked if they have added content to justify the additional credit hour. Robert Zielinski replied that Naval Science content is standardized nationwide. They have been cramming three credit hours' worth of work into two credit hours. This will resolve that. Lindsey Brown asked if these changes will impact the Naval Science Minor, which is currently set at 21 credits. They may, and Robert will work with Amy Kingston to get that submitted correctly.

Motion: Sanjay Sisodiya

Second: Bert Baumgaertner

Outcome: Unanimously approved

UCC Agenda number: UCC-21-005

Items under consideration: College of Law Dean's List Policy

Speaker: David Pimentel

Discussion: Last year, the College of Law adopted a new grading policy to align program-wide grading standards. Under the new policy, they expect average grades to shift so they are adjusting the Dean's List threshold to match the rest of the university. Bert Baumgaertner asked whether students will recognize this change. He feels a .5 GPA change is a big jump in one year, so he wonders if this change should be made more gradually. David Pimentel replied that since the grading policy went into effect immediately, they expect the grades to shift dramatically right away, at the end of this semester. They don't expect to see the number of students ending up on the Dean's List to change substantially. This led to a discussion about the timing of this change. David was hoping it could go into effect immediately, but per policy, it cannot go into effect until the 2021-22 catalog. Francesca Sammaruca expressed concern that a 3.0 GPA is a very low GPA for law students. David reiterated that in the past, some faculty (especially in Boise) graded on a much easier scale than other faculty (especially in Moscow). Since class rank has a huge impact on a law student's prospects after graduation, that created an unfair imbalance. This is an attempt to correct that and they expect GPAs to drop some as part of balancing that out.

Motion: Mark Nielsen

Second: Bert Baumgaertner

Outcome: Unanimously approved

Additional Questions or Discussion

Francesca Sammarruca mentioned that a faculty senator from CALS asked about extending the October 1 UCC deadline. Lindsey clarified the reason for the deadline and stated that we need to stick to those deadlines. Amy Kingston added that historically and per the UCC website, things are sometimes accepted after the deadline but there are consequences, including a risk of not making it on an agenda for this UCC cycle and in some cases, fees from NWCCU. Steven Shook said that his program has the same issue. Faculty do not work during the summer and were not talking about curriculum changes during the first few weeks of this semester. There was discussion about past deadlines, which have been later. Sanjay Sisodiya pointed out FSH 4110, which says that proposals for new or expanded programs must be to the Faculty Secretary “no later than October.” The committee discussed extending the deadline this year to October 15. A concern was raised that people will wait until that new deadline to submit proposals, leaving the committee with little to vote on until then. Bert Baumgaertner suggested keeping the official deadline as October 1 but granting case-by-case exceptions through October 15. Rebecca Frost reiterated the impact on students of delaying the deadline. Students are already expected to register for summer courses and begin fall advising without having a new catalog published, meaning they may not know if their degree requirements have changed. Extending the deadline could make that worse.

Motion to extend the curriculum deadline this year to October 15: Jim Connors

Second: Steven Shook

Outcome: Approved with abstentions (3 in favor, 1 opposed)

Amy Kingston asked for feedback about the new agenda item format with links to CIM. Overall, the feedback was positive. There was some discussion about the best ways to interact with the links.

Chairperson Jim Connors closed the meeting at 4:20 pm. UCC will reconvene on Monday, September 28, 2020.

Amy Kingston
UCC Secretary