

University Curriculum Committee Meeting

Meeting #10, December 4, 2023

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

Dave Paul, Chair*

Dean Panttaja

Francesca Sammarruca

Erin James*

Stacy Isenbarger*

Stacey Doumit*

Magdy Noguera*

Manoj Shrestha*

Eva Strand (substitute for Steve Shook)*

Erkan Buzbas*

Emad Kassem*

Jerry Long*

Hanwen Dong*

Lindsey Brown

Emma Johnston*

Nate Trachimowicz

Gwen Gorzelsky

Guests present: Ted Unzicker, Ken Udas, Annette Folwell, Mark Nielsen, Gabriel Potirniche, Graham Hubbs, Bert Baumgaertner, Feng Li, Yacine Chakkchoukh, and Taylor Rainey

- I. Chair Dave Paul called the meeting to order at 3:31 pm.
- II. November 27, 2023 minutes were approved.
- III. Announcements and Communications
 - I. Lindsey Brown reminded the committee that semester grades are due on December 19th at noon.
- IV. Old Business

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-025

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit PHIL 427

Speaker: Graham Hubbs, Annette Folwell

Discussion: This proposal had been previously sent back to ensure that the course description wasn't too prescriptive and specific. In addition to the course description update, the proposal always requested changing the course title. Since Stacy Isenbarger brought up the previous point of considering the course description's specificity, Dave Paul asked for her perspective on the new description. Stacy explained that she primarily brought up the point in order to ensure that the proposer had considered that angle rather than requiring the change be made. Annette Folwell also added that the committee's feedback had been carefully considered while revising the description.

Eva Strand, reading Steve Shook's comments, mentioned that the phrasing of "we will" contained in the description may cause confusion, so she suggested changing it. Graham Hubbs said that he would be fine with switching it to "students will" instead to clarify that language.

Outcome: Approved unanimously with the aforementioned edit

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-033

Item(s) Under Consideration: Add PHYS 489

Speaker: Mark Nielsen

Discussion: This proposal had been previously sent back due to confusion on its subtitles and repeatability, but the proposer had since removed the subtitles and therefore clarified the issue. Lindsey Brown suggested removing “from” in the course title due to the colon, though she noted that it was more of a cosmetic suggestion. Mark Nielsen said that he didn’t see a problem with it, and Erin James added that to be more efficient, the “from” could be removed, but either worked grammatically.

Outcome: Approved unanimously

V. New Business

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-041

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit Bioethics Minor

Speaker: Dave Paul

Discussion: This proposal requested removing the advanced science component and adding more philosophy electives. It also requested moving the number of program credits from 18-21 to 18-20

Outcome: Approved unanimously

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-041

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit POLS 480

Speaker: Bert Baumgaertner, Annette Folwell

Discussion: This proposal requested editing the course title, adding a cross-listing, and changing when it is typically offered. Dave Paul noted that the International General Education label for the course looked like it had been removed, but the course was still labeled as being a general education course. Bert Baumgaertner and Annette Folwell noted that they were no longer seeking for this to be a general education course, and Annette planned to look further into the issue. Stacey Doumit asked if this could be considered a Gen Ed course with the newly added IS cross listing, and Annette explained that it was available for them to do so, but they no longer wanted that for this particular course.

Magdy Noguera also asked if there should be a notification of some kind regarding this change from the General Education Committee, and there was a small discussion on the process of making this type of change. Dave suggested postponing this proposal until more information on the proposer’s intentions with this could be established.

Annette noted later in the meeting that after some review, she found that the proposer did want to remove the gen ed designation from this course and its cross-listed course. Lindsey said that it would need to be reviewed by the UCGE for that type of change, and there was a brief discussion on that process. In the end, the conclusion was reached that the proposal could be approved, and the UCGE could be added to the workflow after UCC. Annette also noted that no students have taken the course for the International General Education credit.

Dave also clarified that the course was available online and in person in Moscow, and Bert confirmed that information

Outcome: Approved unanimously

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-041

Item(s) Under Consideration: Add IS 311; Inactivate IS 320, 321, 370, and 426

Speaker:

Discussion: The IS 311 proposal requested creating this 3-credit course from combined information from the 2-credit IS 320 course and the 1-credit IS 321 course. Lindsey Brown asked about the term “bloc negotiations” was a term she was unfamiliar with or if it was a misspelling. Magdy Noguera said that it was a specific term, and Erin James agreed.

The IS 370 course was being inactivated because the professor teaching those courses was retiring, and there wasn’t anyone to replace them in that role. The IS 426 course was being inactivated due to the creation of a similar replacement course.

Outcome: Approved unanimously

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-042

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit ENVS 520

Speaker: Eva Strand

Discussion: This proposal requested adding a cross-listing with LAW 520 and removing the BIOP 520 cross-listing. Stacey Doumit asked for more information on the collaboration with the College of Law, and Eva Strand explained that multiple discussions had already taken place between the colleges, and the College of Law was in favor of this proposal passing.

Stacy Isenbarger noted that the section regarding rationale and assessment didn’t carry a particular distinction between what was required at the 400 vs the 500 level. Dave Paul said that would be a good discussion point to be added to the future discussion on the CIM proposal forms. Erin James asked if the LAW 520 course should be a four-digit code due to the switch from three to four digits that the Law School had already undergone, and Ted Unzicker explained that the conclusion reached on this topic from previous discussions was that 500-level courses would remain with the three digits until the rest of the university switched over next year.

Outcome: Approved unanimously

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-042

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit ENVS 523

Speaker: Dave Paul

Discussion: This proposal requested removing the BIOP 523 cross-listing and making it available only online. Dave Paul noted that the rationale discussed adding a cross-listing with the College of Law, which wasn’t applicable for this proposal. Erin James suggested that the rationale had been copied over from the previous proposal (ENVS 520). Stacy Isenbarger said the lack of a cross-listing with a law course could indicate that the cross-listing may not have been added by mistake.

Dave Paul suggested postponing this proposal until the correct rationale could be added or the cross-listing could be added to correctly address the existing rationale.

Outcome: Postponed

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-043

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit Physics (MS)

Speaker: Dave Paul

Discussion: The proposal requested an editorial change to remove a paragraph of text that had been mistakenly copied from the Ph.D. description as well as a restructuring of the core requirements table for the thesis option to better mirror the structure of the content for the non-thesis option. Lindsey Brown noted that some of the footnotes contained HTML language that should be removed before it is added to the catalog.

Erin James pointed out the passive voice used in the following line: "If a student's undergraduate preparation is considered deficient, then certain undergraduate courses will be required in the study plan." She explained that this language could be confusing to students who may be wondering how this determination is made. Stacy Isenbarger noted that the previous explanation regarding this that had been in the paragraph clarified this question and followed the language given on this topic by COGS, so by changing the language, it may cause confusion. Franscesca Sammarruca explained that there is an academic standard committee that makes this decision based on the student's transcripts. Erin added that changing the language to the Physics MS to mention the committee by name could help clarify this for students, but as long as students would be able to access that information in some way, she did not see it as an issue. Stacy Isenbarger also said that adding this specific language regarding deficiencies for other degrees could be helpful in the future.

Outcome: Approved unanimously

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-043

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit Statistical Science (MS)

Speaker: Dave Paul

Discussion: The Statistical Science MS proposal requested the removal of STAT 597 from the list of required courses. Lindsey Brown noted that this change would lower the number of required courses from 24 to 22, and she asked if the corresponding curriculum text should reflect that change or if a replacement elective course should be added in place of STAT 597. Erkan Buzbas said that when the proposal was discussed, they decided that they wanted it to stay at 30 credits. After a short discussion, with Erkan's support on behalf of his department, it was decided that the language should be changed to reflect the 22 core required courses.

Outcome: Approved unanimously

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-043

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit Chemistry (PHD)

Speaker: Dave Paul

Discussion: This proposal requested removing the CHEM 509 requirement. Lindsey Brown noted that there was an unusual request to change the CIP code and asked if it was intentional. After a brief discussion with the representative, it was decided that the change was a mistake and would be removed.

Outcome: Approved unanimously with the aforementioned edit

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-043

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit GEOG 487, GEOG 488, GEOL 102, GEOL 212, and MATH 143

Speaker: Renee Love and Mark Nielsen

Discussion: The GEOG 487 proposal requested a change in the course title, number of credits, repeatability, the semester typically offered, and the availability in Moscow and via distance education. Lindsey Brown asked if it should have subtitles, and Mark Nielsen said that it would.

The GEOG 488 proposal requested adding a joint listing with GEOG 588, making it a cooperatively offered course, and making it available online and in Moscow.

The GEOL 102 proposal requested editing the course description, updating when it is typically offered, making it available cooperatively, and adding availability online and in Moscow.

The GEOL 212 proposal requested a change in the course title and the course description. Renee Love noted that the course title had already been changed in a previous proposal that UCC had reviewed, so she was unclear why it was appearing as a change, but she explained that this was largely a change to the course description to add more information for students.

The MATH 143 proposal requested a change in the course title and course description. Dave Paul asked for clarification on the rationale that said the change was instructed by SBOE. Mark Nielsen explained that they were told to make the change to bring the course into alignment with courses at other institutions, and that some U of I faculty (himself included) did not want to make the change, but they had to.

Outcome: Approved unanimously

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-044

Item(s) Under Consideration: Add EMBA 520 and inactivate EMBA 509

Speaker: Magdy Noguera

Discussion: This proposal was replacing a proposal that had previously been reviewed by the UCC, but it had been decided that there was too much being changed to be considered the same course, so a new course (EMBA 520) had to be created. Lindsey Brown asked if there was an inactivation proposal for the old course, and Magdy Noguera said that proposal was forthcoming. Magdy also noted that Sydney Beal planned to edit the General Management MBA to reflect the course change from EMBA 543 to EMBA 520.

They also requested EMBA 509 be inactivated to maintain consistency with other changes that were previously made to the MBA curriculum.

Outcome: Approved unanimously

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-044

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit FIN 302 and MIS 350

Speaker: Magdy Noguera

Discussion: The FIN 302 proposal requested a change in the course description, the removal of some of the prerequisites, an update to when it is typically offered, and making it available in Moscow.

The MIS 350 proposal requested changing the prerequisites, updating when it's typically offered, and making it available online and in Moscow, Coeur d'Alene, Boise, and Idaho Falls. Magdy Noguera requested an amendment to correct the proposal to make it only available in Moscow without online availability.

Erin James suggested that one of the "or"s in the prerequisites should be removed and replaced with a comma.

Outcome: Approved unanimously with the aforementioned edits

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-045

Item(s) Under Consideration: Add the Advanced Semiconductor Design Graduate Academic Certificate and the Smart Grid Cybersecurity Graduate Academic Certificate

Speaker: Dave Paul

Discussion: Magdy Noguera pointed out that the certificates had attached PDFs with program descriptions, and Lindsey Brown said that they could reformat the proposal to ensure that the descriptions would be seen in the catalog.

Outcome: Approved unanimously

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-046

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit MVSC 486 and EDCI 321

Speaker: Taylor Raney

Discussion: The MVSC 486 proposal requested to change the course title, edit the course description, update the typically offered section, and add availability online and in Moscow.

The EDCI 321 proposal requested updating the course description and making it available online and in Moscow. Dave Paul requested that the phrasing "EDCI 321" be replaced with "this course" in the course description, and Taylor Raney agreed to the change.

Outcome: Approved unanimously

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-046

Item(s) Under Consideration: Edit EDCI 201

Speaker: Taylor Raney

Discussion: The EDCI 201 proposal requested changing the course description and when it's typically offered. Lindsey Brown noted that it appeared that the proposal requested adding a joint-listed 500 level course with a 200-level course, which was irregular. She explained that it is normally a 400-level course with a joint-listed 500 level course, and 300-level courses are occasionally permitted, but a 200-level course shouldn't be connected to a 500-level course. Dave Paul pointed out that wasn't a new addition to the course.

Taylor explained that the courses were equivalent in terms of teacher certification, but he would be happy to work with the Registrar's Office to remedy the situation. Lindsey followed up by asking if the content appropriately matched the 200 level, and Taylor said that it did when looking at it through the lens of teacher certification, but additional research was required for the 500-level joint-list. Lindsey talked through a few options available to adjust the joint-listed courses, and the committee decided to postpone the proposal until the situation was resolved.

Outcome: Postponed

UCC Agenda Item Number: UCC-24-040

Item(s) Under Consideration: Review policy proposal for Academic Certificate Credits (Catalog O-10-a)

Speaker: Annette Folwell

Discussion: The State Board of Education recently changed the requirements for certificates from 12 credits to 7 credits, and this proposal requested that this change be adapted into the University of Idaho's policies. Annette Folwell clarified that this proposal was made to start a discussion on this topic, and she recognized the authority held by faculty in the committee, but she was concerned that the university was losing students by not updating to match the new state policy.

Dave Paul read the current Idaho State Board of Education statement regarding certificates, focusing on the phrase "coherent body of knowledge." Stacy Isenbarger questioned if seven credits was significant enough to warrant being considered a "coherent body of knowledge," particularly when seven credits could be attained by only taking two courses. Stacey Doumit agreed, and Annette Folwell added that it could also be obtained by taking one credit courses. Stacy Isenbarger said that she'd like to see examples of certificates that follow these requirements.

Erin James asked Gwen Gorzelsky for further information on the rationale behind this change. Gwen shared that both nationally and in the state of Idaho, the current conversation on certificates has focused primarily on coherency. She explained that one key difference in these conversations was the difference between coherence and scope. Coherence can be considered in a broad scope or a narrow scope, or it can be missing entirely. Gwen gave the example of new instructors who create new courses, but who do not maintain coherence throughout. In contrast, a curriculum with a larger scope could have strong coherence. Gwen added that she could send more information and web links to be distributed to the committee.

This means, Gwen continued, that a student can have strong coherence in a narrow scope after obtaining seven credits of coursework, and this requires clear and specific learning outcomes and promotional materials as an illustration of this. She gave an example of when she taught a writing program at a previous institution: in this program, students were required to take three courses. The first two courses were general education writing courses, and one was specific to a student's chosen discipline. She explained that if she were to make a certificate for the first two courses, she could

include things such as a knowledge of composition, foundational competency in using evidence to support an argument, and reflection of the writing process within the learning outcomes. In contrast, she could not claim that the students were prepared to write in their discipline. Additionally, at a national level, many employers have expressed frustration that they're unsure about whether a particular certification qualifies a student with desired skill set. Increasing specificity in a certificate addresses this concern.

Dave asked why it should be changed to seven credits specifically, and Stacy Isenbarger said that curriculum is typically sequential (100 to 200 to 300, etc.), and 12-15 credits of educational coursework is typically what makes a student cohesively move from one level to the next.

To address Dave's question, Gwen explained that the State Board defines an academic certificate of completion as 1-6 credits, which embodies a coherent body of knowledge but does not lead to an academic undergraduate certificate. Thus, it may be seven credits specifically because it directly follows the required six credits for certificates of completion.

Stacey Doumit clarified that a student could hypothetically earn a seven-credit certificate without receiving another degree such as a bachelor's degree, and Gwen agreed. She added that many people believed this was a good thing to ensure students had something to show for their time (she clarified she was merely reporting the information, not weighing into the discussion). She explained that there's many different scenarios in which a student would want to complete a certificate, including adding it while pursuing a larger degree, pursuing it without pursuing another degree, or adding it on after completing a bachelor's degree, such as when in the workplace. This last collection of potential students would be helped immensely by the lowering of the credits requirement because it would help already qualified individuals receive further instruction in particular areas.

Stacy Isenbarger thanked Gwen for the information, but she shared a concern that by voting on this issue now, they wouldn't have all the information needed to make this decision. She also pointed out the impact that the new budget model has on this type of change, and it may be helpful to discuss in conjunction with other committees what policies should be in place regarding requirements for certification.

Dave asked Annette for examples of employers who would employ someone who only had a certificate of seven credits, and she said that she did not have specific examples at that point. However, she said that she understood the concerns that the committee had, but she was concerned that the university would lose students in the future if a potential student saw they could take the same certificate from a different university for fewer credits.

Erin said that she had two conflicting ideas within the discussion: 1) she understood the context, but it still made her nervous to move from 12 to 7 credits, and 2) she also understood the context of employed students who were returning to receive further certification, but she was concerned about the students coming in right after high school who would also be earning these same certificates because these types of students required different advising paths and education styles. She also asked if the University of Idaho was competing with universities that offered micro credentials, or if the University of Idaho is primarily focused on degree granting programs.

Annette pointed out that in her 23 years at the university, she had seen many things change, citing an example of moving from requiring 128 credits to 120 credits for a bachelor's degree. Magdy Noguera

pointed out that moving from 128 credits to 120 credits was not proportional to moving from 12 credits to 7.

Stacy Isenbarger suggested that there may be a way to sort these certificates so that all are benefited, and Stacey Doumit said that discussion should come before any sort of conclusion is reached with this proposal. Stacy Isenbarger also added that if employers in certain industries are seeking students with lower credit requirements, the University could partner with these employers to better benefit students who are continuing their education while employed. There's a way to become versatile, she continued, but she was concerned about becoming too versatile.

Stacey Doumit asked Gwen if there was more information on the current budget model and when it may be re-evaluated. Dave said that to his knowledge, certificate, a bachelors' degrees, a masters' degrees, and doctorate degrees are all counted the same. Gwen explained that was true that those conferrals were counted the same, but there is another aspect that's weighted so that degrees are counted for more credit than certificates. She hoped to have more specifics on that topic by the next UCC meeting, and she planned to email the information to Dave when she received it. Dave pointed out that this meant that if a certificate is added as a requirement for completing a degree, they are counted twice in the budget model because they will receive the degree and the certificate.

Mark Nielsen stated his displeasure with the current model, but he also added the other state institutions would likely be doing this to increase their conferral numbers.

Stacy Isenbarger asked if there was a better way to address this issue. She added that similar conversations on certificates in conjunction with the budget model has been brought up on multiple occasions, and new ideas have emerged each time, and she hoped that a better solution could be found that doesn't create animosity.

Lindsey Brown said that there is the option to pursue a standalone certificate, but students rarely pursue that option: they usually add certificates with other degrees. She also said that because of the credit requirements for certificates, none of them are eligible for financial aid. She pointed out that departments and colleges had historically been in charge of the amount of overlap between certificates and degrees but changing that regulation could be part of the discussion.

Dave said that the discussion has largely been about the current issues with certificates, and he was concerned that lowering the credit requirements would only compound them. Mark Nielsen said that he saw two issues with this, referring to them both as a "Pandora's box": 1) The budget model currently motivates faculty members to change programs to be comprised of only earning certificates to increase a department's funding, and 2) the State Board policy change is another issue, and by leaving it at 12 and not implementing it, other institutions will receive more conferrals than U of I.

Stacy Isenbarger said she was glad that they were talking about it, and she thanked Annette for bringing the issue to light, but she said that she felt more conversation needed to occur before the proposal could be voted on.

Magdy agreed with what had already been said, and she said that it was really a matter of deciding what the University of Idaho wanted to do and if they wanted to compete with what other universities were doing. Magdy also pointed out the difference in graduate certificates, and Erin pointed out that graduate certificates only required 9 credits, and that change would also require another discussion

since the current policy was that graduate certificates should have 12-15. Erin also referenced a University of Phoenix discussion by Torrey to the Faculty Senate, which focused particularly on micro credentials.

Dave asked if it would be helpful to have Torrey come and speak about the implications of this in terms of the impact on the budget model, and the committee agreed. Gwen said that she could ask him if he would be willing to do so, and she said she thought he would be willing to.

Dave pointed out that there are many implications and interconnected issues at play, and for the sake of time, it may be best to postpone it to gather more information. He asked that Annette look into the issue and find examples of where this may be helpful in terms of what employers are looking for, and Erin suggested also looking into how peer institutions are handling this policy change. Stacy Isenbarger also suggested finding disciplines where having a 7-credit certificate would be more beneficial as examples to help the committee visualize the change. Erin also asked for Torrey to speak on the difference between micro credentials and certificates since one idea could be for the University of Idaho to add micro credentials separately from certificates.

Outcome: Postponed

VI. Chair Dave Paul closed the meeting at 5:00 pm.

Sydney Beal
UCC Secretary