

**COMMITTEE ON INSTRUCTION**  
**13 October 2010**  
**Meeting Minutes**

Present: K. Barnhill, P. Crovella, D. Daley, Klaus Doelle, J. Hassett, R. Hoffman, C. Whipps, J. Williamson, Rutkowski, L. Lianjun Zhang  
Others in Attendance: R. Beal (representing Outreach)  
Ex-officio: S. Shannon, S. Vandeburg

**1) *Call to Order/Welcome***

The meeting came to order at 2:04

**2) *Minutes from the September 15, 2010 meeting.*** A motion was made to approve the minutes by D. Daley and was seconded by C. Whipps.

**3) *New Course Proposal***

ESC 200 - Climate Change Science and Sustainability- D. Daley raised several questions related to how this 1 credit course can satisfy both natural sciences and social sciences within the general education requirements of SUNY. Social and natural sciences are commonly considered mutually exclusive, and it can't count toward two categories. Students will need to select which category it should be applied to.

The course is set up for non-matriculated undergraduate students. The course is structured into 16 modules, which all add up to one credit hour worth of work. It uses a cohort model, moderated by an instructor, and delivered by David Eichorn.

Course description needs to be streamlined to read: Introduction to climate change, the evidence of modern climate change, and an evaluation of some proposed solutions, exploration of personal and societal climate change solutions.

D. Daley moved to accept course proposal as amended based on discussion. The motion to approve the new form was seconded by C. Whipps. Motion was approved.

**4) *New Policy Initiatives***

**Minimum GPA Requirements for Minors and Study Abroad-**

S. Shannon raised idea of lowering the minimum gpa threshold to 2.3 for all students who want to participate in academic minors, and 2.5 for all students who want to study abroad. The current threshold of 2.7 or 3.0 seems a little high. The vast majority of students who participate in study abroad usually go through ESF and third party vendors. OIGS sees a lot of petitions asking for waivers of the minimums or some students may self select not to participate based on their gpa being lower than the current minimums.

C. Whipps expressed concern over students with lower gpa's being allowed to take minors. S. Shannon indicated that any student can take a set of courses that would add up to a minor

anyways. SU sets their own thresholds; SU's minimum threshold is 3.0 for students who study abroad.

Minors have been set at the department level, while the study abroad threshold is college wide. J. Hassett would not want to set a 2.3 campus wide threshold on minors as departments may set different thresholds.

S. Shannon will pole departments who host minors to determine if they would agree with setting a consistent threshold of 2.5.

S. Shannon made motion to approve a minimum 2.5 threshold on study abroad. D. Daley seconded. Motion passed.

#### **Emeriti Faculty Serving as Co-Major Professors-**

S. Shannon discussed the idea of adding Emeriti faculty to qualified participation lists for co-major professor. This would allow faculty members who are serving as major professors at the time of retirement, to continue serving as co-major professors. Only full-time faculty members are allowed to serve as major professors. This would be similar to adjunct professors who are allowed to serve as co-major professors. Co-major professors are often both involved in the decision to accept a student, particularly at the PhD level. This could potentially give emeritus permission to viewing graduate applications, elevating them to advisor capacity. Having emeriti faculty serve as co-major professors would also be advantageous for graduate students.

It was decided that this issue should be addressed at Faculty Governance, and possibly voted on by that body. Table until next CoI meeting.

#### **Adding Time Limit for Degree Completion for Students who Stop Out-**

S. Shannon recommended that the addition of a time limit, and listing it in the catalog, for students who leave a program and then return back after years to finish their degrees under their original curriculum. There should be a set time limit as to how long the student can count courses toward the original degree. It was determined that 10 years would be a appropriate time limit. This would close off the option to graduate from their original program if more than 10 years have passed. S. Shannon made more motion to approve; it was seconded by C. Whipps. Motion was approved. (S. Shannon will send notification to departments that this has passed). This will also need to be added to the course catalog.

### ***5) Reports from Subcommittees***

#### **Subcommittee Membership on General Education:**

D. Daley asked that Pat Lawler (*recently retired*) and Sarah Vonhof be added to the subcommittee.

#### **Subcommittee Membership on Instructional Quality:**

P. Crovella followed up on course survey. It has generated interest at Faculty Governance. A question was raised regarding the current format and whether it is something P&T would use. There will be an open discussion at the October meeting of the Faculty Governance.

Switching to an electric-based survey from a paper-based survey has saved significant money.

**Subcommittee Membership on Academic Standards:**

J. Williamson indicated the Academic Appeals meeting will be held on January 13, 2011, at 10:30 a.m. Lunch will be served at noon. J. Williamson has approximately half the representatives in place now.

**6) Updates from the Dean:**

**New “Flexible” Standards for General Education-**

SUNY Board of Trustees voted to reduce the specificity of the general education requirements. ESF has 27 credit hours of general education. In the past students were required to take 27 credits in 9 course areas of general education. In the future students will only need to fulfil 7 of the 9 requirements instead of having to fulfil all 9 requirements. This would potentially impact transfer students the most.

ESF does not need to make the requirements more flexible, however, we are now empowered by SUNY to make this change if we want to. Each department may choose to implement slightly differently. Engineering, chemistry, and EFB may see an advantage in changing the general education requirements. If we leave the current policy in place, then the petition process could provide for greater leniency.

S. Shannon asked COI to take this back to individual departments for discussion. S. Shannon will also e-mail graduate chairs and curriculum coordinators from each department and ask specifically for a recommendation from each department on how each would like to handle this. We should have the college policy in place by the end of December 2010. SUNY Central has asked that we post our policy by the end of the calendar year. Our existing policy is perfectly fine to keep as we have met all of our reporting requirements. Changes would come through CoI.

Minor changes to course proposals can go through the dean as an administrative change. SUNY is hoping schools will implement college policy by the end of the calendar year. Our existing general education structure is perfectly fine with SUNY.

**7) Other CoI Business Topics: None to report.**

**Meeting adjourned at 3:28 pm. Next meeting, Wednesday, November 10, 2010, 12:00 pm-2:00pm, 217 Bray Hall.**