

Council on General Education Minutes

January 24, 2023

10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m., STV 140

Presiding: Gregory Ferrence

Present: Brian Aitken, Mary Elaine Califf, Allison Antink Meyer, Gregory Braswell, Linda Clemmons, Gregory Ferrence, Joseph Goodman, Amy Hurd, Tony Marinello, Kimberly Nance, Bothwell Piason, Yvette Pigman, Rocio Rivadeneyra, Chris Worland, and Haiyan Xie

Ferrence called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Guests:

Malinda Aiello, Program Director, Illinois Articulation Initiative
Dr. Yun-Ching Chung, Professor, Department of Special Education
Derrek Drenckpohl, Program Coordinator, Department of Special Education

Action Items:

1. Introductions

Guests were introduced to Council members.

2. Approval of November 1, 2022 Minutes

Ferrence asked if there were corrections to the minutes as submitted. There were no corrections. The minutes were accepted as submitted.

3. Approval of November 15, 2022 Minutes

Ferrence asked if there were corrections to the minutes as submitted. There were no corrections. The minutes were accepted as submitted.

4. SED 101 Disability, Learning, and Education: Foundations and Philosophical Perspectives (revised course proposed for UST designation)

The course was proposed by Dr. Yun-Ching Chung, Professor, Department of Special Education.

Ferrence explained that Council members had previously discussed the proposal and needed additional clarification. Specifically, members were unsure if there was sufficient documentation in the proposal to qualify for the UST designation. The Council also thought the course should be considered for the IDEAS designation as well.

Ferrence noted there was discussion regarding the language in the syllabus not being exclusive to the United States which is the initial intent for the UST designation. There was concern that the course could be taught with a global perspective with such ambiguous language. Hurd added the Council had suggested updating either the course title or the catalog description to better identify the United States perspective. Upon reviewing the new proposal and syllabus provided, Aitken noted the old descriptors may have been inadvertently left in the new syllabus. Ferrence noticed new language involving “professionals” had been added in several places but was unsure if additional language regarding the United States had been added as well.

Based on the Council's previous feedback, Chung explained that the department had added more explicit information regarding disabilities in the context of history and ableism. She added the course was intended to be an introductory course for those pursuing teaching but had been expanded to have a larger focus on education professionals as well. Hurd reminded the Council of their concern the course was geared more teacher education students and had asked the department to change language to professionals.

Califf noted the new syllabus did not match the catalog copy and did not specifically call out UST as a focus. She thought while the updated description was helpful, it would be too easy to veer off having a United States focus. Ferrence noted he didn't think the Council was critical of the proposal as a whole. Rather, the concern was how the course would continue to uphold the UST designation in the future as originally designed based on the current proposal. He noted he understood and expected the syllabus would change over time but feared if the United States focus was not called out persistently throughout the syllabus and description, the focus of the course could inadvertently move away from having that focus. Clemmons suggested making the focus on the United States perspective more explicit in the syllabus by changing wording such as "through the history of education" to "throughout the history of United States education."

Rivadeneyra thought the course would be a good fit for the IDEAS designation and noted that the course could still count toward IDEAS without having a General Education designation. She was concerned if the course was general enough to be in General Education and asked Chung and Drenckpohl what their thoughts were. Chung responded she believed the department would want both the IDEAS designation as well as the General Education designation. With the teacher shortage, the department had hoped by having a General Education designation, it would encourage more students to take the course and thereby possibly attract more students to pursue education as a major.

Ferrence asked if the course was primarily for education majors. Drenckpohl responded the course was open to all students. Nance thought the course was a great fit for the IDEAS designation but was not certain it fit UST designation requirements. She expressed the concern of setting a precedent of adding "within the United States" to a proposal/syllabus to get automatic UST approval.

Drenckpohl noted the second sentence is what the focus of what the course was about which is ableism and its change over time in American culture. He added they could hash this out more explicitly. Antink Meyer noted the topics are general for teachers but needed to be drilled down into more specifically. Aiello asked if there was a threshold for how much of a course's content had to have a focus on history to meet the UST designation. Hurd responded there was not a certain percentage/amount outlined for the designation.

Califf commended Chung and Drenckpohl for the edits they already made and noted they were moving in right direction. However, she felt while there were elements of the UST designation present, the course wasn't quite there yet. She recommended looking at the course's goals to see if they were in agreement with the program's objectives. She added the syllabus was not super explicit on how students would fulfill the course's objectives and that certain pieces would be helpful if the syllabus called them out, especially in regards to assessment. Ferrence responded that to be fair, there was nothing wrong with the course's intent, just with how it was articulated. He added that while certain topics/areas may be obvious to those who teach education, at the General Education level, for students

who do not have a background in education, it could prove to be challenging for them to understand what is being referenced and expected of them.

Council members all thought the course had potential but just needed to provide more explicit information. Aitken thought the course topic was highly relevant and suggested it be taught as a new course as opposed to SED 101. Chung thought it would be best to remain as SED 101 as the course's intent is to serve as the fundamental knowledge course and as a way to gain a basic understanding from a different approach than the previous deficit mindset.

Chung and Drenckpohl thanked the Council for its feedback and will work on editing the proposal. Hurd will meet with them to discuss.

Aitken made a motion to table the SED 101 course proposal pending receipt of additional information from the department. Nance seconded.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

5. IDS 133A29 Study Abroad: Prague, Czech Republic (new IDS course proposed for H designation)

The course was proposed by Dr. Lauren Lowell, Associate Professor, School of Theatre and Dance.

Ferrence reminded members the proposal had been reviewed by the Council earlier in the semester. At the time, the Council tabled the proposal and asked the Lowell to provide a syllabus. Hurd added the Council was concerned the proposer did not initially request the Humanities designation. Many, but not all, of the IDS 133 courses have this designation and Council members thought this may cause confusion for students by not having it as well. Lowell updated the proposal to include the syllabus as well as a request for the H designation.

Rivadeneyra noted the proposer did not provide supporting documentation associated with requesting a General Education designation. Hurd responded she had looked at the curriculum forms system and it is not notated anywhere that the supporting documentation is a requirement. Nance noted the supporting documentation was evident on the syllabus and did not feel it was necessary to have it as part of the course proposal to move forward. Ferrence suggested the system may need to be updated to inform proposal submitters of the supporting documentation requirement going forward.

Nance made a motion to accept IDS 133A29 as a new IDS course with the H designation. Califf seconded.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

Informational Item:

6. Data Science (new program/courses)

- a) IDS 398A05 Professional Practice Internship in Data Science (new IDS course)
- b) IDS 388 Capstone/Directed Project in Data Science (new IDS course)
- c) Data Science, Individualized Plan of Study Sequence (new IDS program)
- d) Data Science Major (new IDS program)
- e) Data Science, Business Analytics Sequence (new IDS program)
- f) Data Science, Social Demographic/Public Policy Analysis Sequence (new IDS program)
- g) Data Science, Population Health Sequence (new IDS program)
- h) Data Science, Big Data and Computational Intelligence Sequence (new IDS program)

Ferrence told Council members the group would review the Data Science proposals as a package. The package consists of two new IDS courses, a new IDS major, and several new sequences within the new major. He noted the proposals were made by various departments and each proposal had the necessary letters of support.

Hurd explained the package had been worked on for several years and the former College of Arts and Sciences Dean, Diane Zosky, had started the charge at the request of the provost. Hurd hoped to have the Council review the package over the next several meetings in order to get it sent to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) for review. It will then need to be sent to IBHE for approval as it involves the creation of a new major. Staff from the Registrar's Office have already reviewed the package for potential issues. Hurd noted each sequence has a core set of courses and that the major currently does not fall under one department. Hurd did not know where it would be housed going forward. For now, it will be attached to the IDS unit.

Aitken noted the Department of Mathematics recently created a Data Science major which already has admitted students. He asked if they would be getting rid of that major. Rivadeneyra responded that would be the plan and noted Mathematics had been involved in the conversations regarding this new Data Science major/sequences. The Department proposed the Big Data and Computational Intelligence Sequence.

Council members discussed a plan to begin reviewing the Data Science package at the next Council meeting.

Aitken made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Clemmons seconded.

Meeting adjourned: 10:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons