

Natural Sciences and Mathematics Council

Meeting Minutes for February 23rd, 2016

Student Union 2579 3:30 – 4:30 PM

Call to Order

- Presiding – Bruce Bamber
- **Present:** Tim Mueser, Bill Taylor, Tony Quinn, Don Stierman, David Krantz, H. Chen, Kathy Shan, Kevin Gibbs, Kathy Fisher, Hans Gottgens, Edith Kippenhan, Sibylle Weck-Schwarz
- **Absent:** Mike Cushing, Gerard Thompson, Peter Andreana
- **Others Present:** John Plenefisch (ex-officio), Dillon Marks (Student Representative Member), Trisha Khambadkone (who replaces Adnan Rammouni) (Absent)
- **Guest:** Mark Mason, Andy Jorgensen

Corrections to the minutes:

No corrections. Called to vote the approval of the last minutes.

Council voted unanimously to accept the minutes with no changes.

Changes to the college minor requirement – John Plenefisch.

John - This is a request to change wording regarding selecting a minor. Requesting to change who the students need to talk to once they select a minor (meet with their primary program advisor and then advisor within the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics). Second issue – students in certain majors (i.e. pharmacy) can't do a minor using courses they are taking as part of their major. Old requirements indicate that students can't use courses to satisfy a minor that they are taking for their major. Suggested to change the wording to say that 12 credit hours of the minor requirements are unique to that minor and not used to satisfy requirements of the major or another minor.

Bruce – So students may have to take additional courses beyond what is specified if there is overlap?

John – Yes, that is correct.

Bruce – Do you need us to vote on this?

John – Would like to send it to the curriculum committee so they can look at it and make sure it's okay and then bring it back for a vote.

Question – Does the wording need to be added for current and existing minors in our college?

John – No, because it is at the college level.

Question – So this will make it easier for the students?

John – Yes, it will make it easier when there is overlap to get a minor. It isn't a problem with our college because of the way we structure our majors but it is a problems for some other colleges.

College Tenure and Promotion Elaborations

Bruce – The elaborations have been through an additional round of revisions from the Dean. The document has been sent out and I'm looking for any feedback based on the document. Would like to have everyone have conversations with people within the departments to see if this is likely to pass or not. If there are additional problems now is the time to fix them. We do not want to have a ratification vote and fail. A couple departments had problems with the document in December. Chemistry had a problem with notification of individuals about the letters that would be solicited, which has been fixed. Math and Statistics wanted stronger language with respect to the scholarship of the full professor candidate which has been added per-verbatim.

Bruce will give it a week and if he doesn't hear anything from anyone then it will move forward with the ratification vote.

Sibylle – send an email out that it is open comment time.

Bruce will send out the document to everyone. The vote will be an electronic vote.

Curriculum Committee - Course Amnesty Changes

Hans (sitting in for Mike Cushing) – Two items: 1) Amnesty Courses, and 2) Normal Course Changes

1) Amnesty – course changes that are minor at the graduate and undergraduate level. Changes put in spreadsheet format. They get amnesty from the curriculum tracking system. Still need a signature associated with it. This has been approved by the respective departmental curriculum committees, the chairs and by the college council curriculum committee.

Kathy – Was everything approved that was submitted?

Hans – Yes. A member from every college department approved it.

Tim – The biology spreadsheet was not filled out properly, will it affect them later on?

Hans – I will take a look into it and have them fill it out properly.

Tim – In the math spreadsheet one of the course descriptions (1920) it just says “a more rigorous course”. Not sure what that means or compared to what.

Dillon – Does that mean more rigorous content or a more rigorous project at the end of the course? Students are unclear about that.

Hans – The amnesty changes allow for more words in the course descriptions.

Statement – They probably made it vague enough so the professor could make the honors course what they want it to be.

Dillon – Students like to see a clearer description so that they know what they are getting in to.

John P. – The description does say that it stresses proofs so the more rigorous must mean it's more proof based.

Sibylle – Would expect that it would say more rigorous than course XYZ. Should maybe take out the word “more”.

Bruce – It is an honors level course so we would expect it to be a more rigorous course. Thinks it makes sense as written. Will accept it as it is written.

Council Action

A call to vote in favor of amnesty changes.

Council voted unanimously to accept the amnesty changes.

Hans - Math and Biology need to turn in their signature pages.

Normal Course Changes – Three parts:

1) – Program modification in the PSM. This is a result of Chemistry needing thesis research.

Mark – This was a minor change requested by the chair. It's not important to the department so the department would like to withdraw the proposal. It would affect very few students. There is a different course number which is just an independent project.

Hans – 2) – Also dealing with Chemistry. The Green Chemistry Course (4200) – the new course that is tacked on to the existing 6200/8200. Council had a question about crossing listing the 4, 6, 8 courses and questioning what the uniqueness was at the 8000 level. It was suggested to remove the 8200 and just have 4200/6200. Chemistry said “no” and a syllabus was submitted with specified requirements for the PhD.

Mark – One of the issues with dropping the 8000 level course is that the 6000 level course cannot be counted toward the graduate requirement for PhD students. It is clearly stated in the requirements that they need 24 credit hours, minimum, of 8000 level coursework. So removing the 8200 level would preclude this and the environmental chemistry course from counting toward the doctoral requirement. It would require a change in the program if they removed the course. The other problem – every one of the graduate courses are cross listed 4000,6000, and 8000 and that has been approved over the past 10-12 years. Sent Hans a modified syllabus to Hans clearly stating the difference between 6200 and 8200, in regards to learning objectives and grading differences between 4, 6 and 8. Patsy says this is not just an issue with the chemistry department other departments are doing the same thing.

Hans – Other departments do accept 6000 level courses in the degree requirements for a PhD.

Mark – If we wanted to do that we'd have to make the program change within our department.

Question – Does your department bring in candidates to go all the way to the degree, not getting a Master's, just heading straight to PhD? Do you have that many 8000 level courses in your department?

Mark – Yes. Historically there has been no difference between the 6000 and 8000 level courses. PhD's spend an extra 3-3.5 years in the lab doing research. So, the number and degree of difficulty of the courses doesn't differentiate the two degree programs.

Hans – So why even do 8000 level courses?

Mark – I think the state gets more subsidy for an 8000 level course. Let's wait and see how the new administration wants to do this and do it the correct way in the future and do it all at once instead of changing it now and then possibly having to change it again.

Hans – So, we have a proposal to add the 4000 level course and the chemistry department has gone beyond the call of duty to amend the syllabus to explain the

differences between the 6000 and 8000 level courses. The curriculum committee did not vote on this, according to Mike's notes.

Mark – The differences are in objectives 5, 6, 7 and 8. It wasn't in the previous editions is because the course is still under development and there isn't a good textbook for this course. For the undergraduates it's just covering the fundamentals, the Master's doing the Q-Cat but the PhD's are doing the complete green screen analysis. PhD course is more in-depth.

Hans – So these are new learning outcomes for an existing course?

Mark – For 8200, yes.

Question – Prerequisite line has changed?

Mark – Yes, prerequisite is admission into a graduate program in chemistry. Prereq for undergraduate is just Chem 2420. One of the things that came up, is this dumbing down a graduate course or too rigorous for an undergraduate course – no, neither of those. Most of the undergraduates taking 4000 level courses go on to graduate school.

Hans - A call to vote for adding the 4200 course. Council voted unanimously in favor.

3) – Chem 4210 (Environmental Chemistry), again 6210 and 8210 courses in place.

Mark – Very similar to what we just discussed. Andy had to leave but he had some differences in the courses. He did send the syllabus. Gave Hans a hard copy.

Hans – A very similar course is being taught in Hans's department (4220 and 5220 – Environmental Geochemistry. Mark and Andy met with Allison in his department who teaches the course and she has indicated that the two courses are different enough to justify the new environmental chem course. She would like to ask two things of the chemistry department – 1) asking if her course could be considered as one of the chemistry departments possible electives.

Mark – In talking with Allison 2 years ago it was agreed that her course could count as an elective in the professional science Master's degree in green chemistry and engineering. At the undergraduate level we planned to do and accelerated BS/MS degree and it would count as an elective in that program as well, but the paperwork needs to be moved forward on that.

Hans – So is this going to be a program change or how does it get counted as an elective? Does it require anything?

Mark – No. The students are required to take 12 credit hours of elective at the graduate level. The student just has to say that want to take it and Mark will approve it. Also, the course that Allison teaches on hazardous waste management is another suitable elective course.

Hans – Allison also asked can it be considered for a minor?

Mark – 2 years we didn't push it forward and we still haven't because we think it is too rigorous. We will go back and redesign it.

Question – I was looking at the topics covered and these do not overlap substantially with what is typically covered in geochemistry. It's slightly closer to what is covered in hazardous waste management. The emphasis is very different. I agree with Allison's assessment that they are different enough.

Council Action

A call to vote of approving the new 4210 course.

Council voted unanimously in favor.

There are 2 physics courses that will be on the docket for next time.

Faculty Senate Highlights

David – Strategic enrollment planning is going on right now. An outside consultant was brought in. The first report should have gone into the president last week for her review. Catalog corrections and revisions on-going with more to come as the next provost comes in we may be going through the whole catalog.

Ohio State has new guidelines setting limits to what a program can require for credit hours, in between 120 and 126. Faculty senate committees for which this is appropriate reviewed all 110 programs and 25 were above 126 credit hours. All were reviewed relatively quickly and there are good reasons which include external accreditation or skills such as musical performance.

Provost search – last of the 4 candidates last week. The budget process formulating the next year's fiscal budget is much more open, including challenging assumptions, for example the assumption that we are going to increase enrollment 2-3% next year thus creating a structural deficit immediately when you don't reach the increase. President wants to move at a reasonable pace toward sustainable budgets.

The state does have a composite scoring system for financial health and UT is doing okay. We are running at a deficit, short by 14 million, down from 30 some million in previous years. We are not in any real danger and that's reasonable.

Another thing being pushed by the state is the governor's task force on affordability and efficiency. For a point of information: ALEC – American Legislative Exchange Council. If you want a quick tutorial go to Wiki and get a background, then go and do a Google search. It is largely funded by the Koch brothers. The commentary from the governor's task force sounds really, really like what ALEC would have put forward and that is coming down to our level in higher education.

Master plan for the physical facilities at the university is moving forward. They are reviewing basically everything and it sounds like they are approaching it in a reasonable manner. We have projected reductions in enrollment for the next 5-10 years and we need to scale back as to what we have for physical facilities at the campus.

A call went out from the graduate students (GSA) for judges for the graduate research symposium (April 9th) if anyone is interested.

There was a proposal to monetize parking like Ohio State but all proposals that came from the outside were turned down – for now.

Electronic Voting

Sibylle – The voting system has been checked out, seems to work and we are going to go forward with electronic votes in the faculty senate pretty soon. There is a debate to accommodate those who don't want to do electronic voting.

Question – Will it be ready in time to vote for ratification of the changes in the constitution and can it handle that?

Sibylle – No, it can't. Currently it's set up just exactly for the faculty senate with respect to the ballot language. They could probably create one for us. Elections are coming up and we should probably start the nomination process. We had set up the ratification as a blackboard survey and started doing the voting in early December but we didn't get any results, so we don't know the end result. Do we want to conduct the ballots for grad council and vote electronically? Checked on BlackBoard and only tenure and tenure track faculty vote for these 2 elections. It would be possible because the multiple selection survey question has a cap of 100 multiple choice answers, so that accommodates all the tenure/tenure track faculty but that is all. It can't be used for everything. We should request a specific website so we don't hijack the NSM teaching site forever.

Group – We should try the ratification vote and see how it works and go from there.

Sibylle - Nominations should be done the last week of February/first week of March.

Discussion – Ratification should be done on black board site.

Question – Does the election committee have any recommendations?

Answer – Just need to change the survey from the ratification to the nomination because it is the same poll. Only need to change the names.

Student Rep – IT can set up a poll very quickly on the My UT portal.

Discussion – The difference is it is a poll versus an election.

Back to David's Report from the Faculty Senate – there was quite a bit of discussion on giving an incomplete and using the incomplete forms and how many extensions do they get once the incomplete is signed. It did not come to a consensus. It was a heated discussion and will be coming back up in the Faculty Senate and then voted on.

David – It wasn't only incompletes, a number of non-letter grades were discussed, including drop times and withdrawal times. Nothing was resolved.

Graduate Council Update

From the college – full enrollment projections are way up. Number of applications and number of students being admitted. Four times as many students as last year. Bad news is the budget. COGS will have a 1.5% operating budget cut. COGS didn't meet state revenue projections. It is not the only college getting a cut because they didn't meet their projections. NSM had the same problem. Cut 67K plus 1.5% of the remaining operating budget. 3% cut overall in academic year 2017.

Student health insurance report – a copy will be available for council members. Bottom line for the students (mainly graduate students) – they are asking for bids to reduce the costs. They were being asked to pay for premiums before they even got benefits. F1 students are not required by the US state department to have health insurance. They are required by the university to have health insurance.

Pipeline programs were discussed at graduate council and they need help in terms of enrollment. The programs are not very well advertised. Departments are going to look into it.

Edith – do we have an update on a new dean for the college?

Answer – No. Not aware of any nominations. The actual position is supposed to be a 2 year position. It is an internal search.

Chairs Council Update

Bruce – Angela Koenigs has moved on to another job.

Tony did a great job presenting his STEM and summer bridge programs.

Talked about amnesty. A new tracking system is coming in. Might have another amnesty in the fall.

Spring enrollment is up but it is mainly college credit plus students so it doesn't really help financially (they only pay \$40/credit hour).

There is a AGEAP Grant for minority PhD graduate students.

Budget cuts are official now. The budget and campus master planning and strategic enrollment are all three inter-digitated processes moving forward now. There will be some changes and it's pretty hard to predict how everything is going to interact. The digitization plan is too aggressive and slowing down the enrollment.

The Provost search – urging everyone to go to the forums and give feedback.

Meeting adjourned.