Rhode Island College Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

Minutes for the meeting of 16 December 2022

2.00pm-4.00pm, by Zoom

***Present****: S. Abbotson (Chair), S. Basu, W. Becker, T. Borgerding, J. Burke, S. Dixon, N. Feinberg, A. Galvez, A. Griffin, C. McDermott-Fasy, S. Mukherjee, G. Rawson (Secretary), E. Simson, H. Shadoian (for Provost/VPAA, non-voting), T. Weinstein, J. Zornado (COGE)*

***Absent****: M. Cordeiro (student), Q. Liu, C. Masters, I. Santoro (student)*

***Excused****:*

***Guests****: M. Arthur, S. Battle, M. Brophy-Baermann, T. Ender, Y. Noh, C. Ramos, N. Rogol, T. Schmeling*

1. Call to order 2:05

1. **Motion to Approve minutes from 21 Oct. 2022**

***Action:*** *Approved: 12 in favor, 3 abstained*

1. Report of the Chair

* Programs will not be deleted unless approved by UCC or Graduate Committee, and I am helping Helen look at the list of programs that was shared with chairs to trace those that should be considered (some on the list appear not to be current), but meantime Deans are asking departments to look at their programs and I have heard from several.
* Course deletions—for courses not offered in the past three years will be on the Feb. agenda as still not heard from a few departments (so far we have ten on the list, but several departments are deleting courses when they are revising their programs, too).
* I’ve been meeting with CoOL to work out how to move forward with proposals that cover Online courses and programs. We are working out some potential updates for the Proposal form (ongoing) and CoOL will work on guidelines and advice we can add to the Forms and Information page on the UCC and Grad. Committee websites. One major problem is the lack of catalog transparency in regard to the potential formats of courses, which I feel we need to address, but it will mean each chair submitting a list of the possible modalities of each course they currently offer to be added to the catalog for next year, which is a fairly mammoth task (though these are at least indicated in the bulletin and in the MyRIC semester offerings, so it should just be a catalog fix, so a little easier than having the WID “W”s added). To ensure no one thinks ALL modalities will be offered every time the course is offered, we shall first note: Potential modalities (see bulletin): and then the possibilities for that course will be listed for––In person, hybrid, online (synchronous), online (asynchronous), hyflex (and a description of each of these I’ll have CoOL devise will be placed at the head of the course description section). Currently the college is offering more than 400 hybrid/online courses (mix of undergraduate and graduate) each semester (hardly any of these are noted in the catalog as being available in these formats—indeed, there is only ONE undergraduate course listed as “online,” and a few Modern Language ones stipulate there is some “online work required”; only 8 undergraduate courses are listed in the catalog as hybrid. This Fall semester, the college ran 274 hybrid undergraduate courses, and 144 online. 300 hybrid and 142 online undergraduate courses are scheduled for the Spring. We are working with CoOL to find a way to make sure all this online teaching is following best practices in a way that will not necessitate them all having to be resubmitted for approval to UCC.

**Discussion:** *Chair suggests that first she contact department chairs about identifying in the College Catalog the various modalities that each of their department's courses has recently been offered and will continue to be offered, perhaps "potential modalities" including such things as in-person, hybrid, online synchronous, online asynchronous, hi-flex. After that, when courses are offered in a new modality for the first time, some gate-keeping procedures could be used to monitor for best practices. Discussion included the possibilities of involving UCC when a course is offered for the first time ever in a new modality, and department-level procedures when a particular instructor is first using a new modality, perhaps through some standard form, with guidance from Committee on Online Learning, that documents plans to meet best practices. There seems to be consensus on the Committee that the first step of having the Catalog list potential modalities according to recent practices is appropriate.*

1. Monthly Reports

* COGE report

*COGE Chair Joe Zornado reported that at recent meetings COGE has discussed the relation between Gen Ed Math requirement and Math Competency requirement with Math Chair Rebecca Sparks, General Education Assessment with FAS Assessment Coordinator Tanni Chaudhuri, and a Qualtrics tool for assessment purposes. At the December 2nd meeting, a proposal to eliminate the Gen Ed universal second language requirement was withdrawn after discussion. Proposals for HIST 110 and 111 were approved, one for SWRK 200 was sent back for revision.*

***Discussion****: Much opposition to eliminating the universal second language requirement at the 12/2 meeting was based on process, with concern that it should be handled within the ongoing Gen Ed Task Force's charge of considering revisions to the general education curriculum. COGE Chair noted that opposition to a universal second language requirement need not be opposition to the importance of second language learning, and that if the Task Force comes to a proposal about second language there will be forums for faculty input.*

1. New Business

**Motion to approve #004** (S. Basu/J. Zornado)

* 22-23-004 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit course: HIST 243 Latino Peoples and US History, to be used as an elective in several programs, including History, Secondary Ed. History, Global Studies and Modern Languages (Latin American Studies).

***Discussion****: Proposer T. Ender notes that the title includes Latinos (rather than Latinx or Latine) because, while this terminology is currently debated, "latinos" is accepted not only by many academics but also in the wider community. This debate can be brought into the subject matter of the course itself.*

***Action****: Unanimously approved*

**Motion to approve #005** (N. Feinberg/T. Weinstein)

* 22-23-005 Approve a revision to simplify the prerequisites for three SWRK courses: SWRK 301 Policy Analysis and Practice; SWRK 324: Diversity and Oppression I; SWRK 325 Diversity and Oppression II, to allow students more flexibility in when to take them.

***Discussion****: Proposer S. Battle explains that the courses removed from prereqs will still be offered in the program, and their removal as prereqs will aid timely movement through the program.*

***Action****: Unanimously approved*

**Motion to approve ##007, 008 and 009** (T. Weinstein/W. Becker)

* 22-23-007 Approve a proposal to delete several GEOG courses (which also affects Environmental Studies major and minor who have been notified): GEOG 301 Natural Resource Management GEOG 303 Historical Geography of The United States, GEOG 307 Coastal Geography, GEOG 309 New England Landscapes Pre-1900, GEOG 310 New England Landscapes Since 1900, GEOG 339 Metropolitan Geography Past, Present and Future, and GEOG 460W Senior Seminar: Theory and Research.
* 22-23-008 Approve Deletion of a Gen Ed. Connections course GEOG 261 Globalization, Cities and Sustainability.
* 22-23-009 Approve the renumbering, retitling and cross-listing of what was GEOG 304 to become GEOG 209 Political Geography of Rhode Island and be added to the catalog also as POL 209, to allow it to be open to students earlier in their program and with the POL prefix to allow them to satisfy POL requirements. A note will be added to the description to ensure student know they cannot take credit for both.

***Discussion****: As these three were originally bundled also with #006, but then detached from #006, some discussion that pertains specifically to #006 were raised here but have been reported below in connection with #006 as a stand-alone proposal.*

***Action****: Unanimously approved*

**Motion to approve #0010** (J. Burke/W. Becker)

* 22-23-010 Approve the creation of a Certificate of Undergraduate Study (CUS) in Geographic Information Systems for 16-18 credits.

***Discussion****: Geography Faculty Seth Dixon notes that the GIS system taught in this program is of use to a wide range of programs beyond Geography, any for which the data of locations on a map is an important variable. The courses in this certificate program could be useful to upper-level undergraduate students planning on such graduate programs.*

***Action****: Unanimously approved*

**Motion to approve #011, 012, 013, 014, 015 and 016** (S. Basu/J. Zornado)

* 22-23-011 Approve the cross-listing of GEOG 338 as POL 338 Peoples, Houses, Neighborhoods and Cities to be added to the catalog. The prerequisite is being revised and an extra credit hour to accommodate the addition of a semester long a research project (which also affects several other programs that will be notified).
* 22-23-012 Approve the addition of a credit hour to the currently cross-listed POL/GEOG 337 Urban Political Geography course, hour to accommodate the addition of a semester long a research project (which also affects several other programs that will be notified).
* 22-23-013 Approve a revision of the Political Science BA major to update with the various course changes, including deleting the “London Course” offering, and, also, allow for more flexibility over the additional required courses beyond the core. This will raise the bottom range of total credits’ bottom number from 40-44, to 41-44 and a note will need to be added to ensure any variable credit upper level options have to be taken at a minimum of three credits to count.
* 22-23-014 Approve a revision of three foundational POL courses (that are also Gen Ed. options in SB) to go from 200-level to 100-level to better reflect their use by freshmen. POL 202 American Government becomes POL 102, POL 203 Global Politics becomes POL 103, and POL 204 Introduction to Political Thought becomes POL 104, all with their titles and content unchanged. TES needs to be updated.
* 22-23-015 Approve the revision of POL 306 to become POL 206 State and Local Government to allow students to take it earlier in the program, and for which the prerequisite will be removed. Though it will cover the same basic content, it will be at a 200-level, which the department feels is more appropriate for the content.
* 22-23-016 Approve a proposal to delete several POL courses (which also affects several other programs that will be notified): POL 318 Crises of Liberalism, POL 333 Law and Politics of Civil Rights, POL 342 The Politics of Global Economic Change, POL 444 British Politics and Cultural Studies, and POL 445 European Political Geography.

***Discussion****: none*

***Action****: Unanimously approved*

**Motion to approve ##017, 018 and 023** (S. Dixon/S. Basu)

* 22-23-017 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit POL course POL 240 Model United Nations for use in several programs.
* 22-23-018 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit POL course POL 340 Global Politics and Film for use in several programs.
* 22-23-023 Approve revision of the INGOs certificate and minor to include the two new POL courses above (POL 240 and 340) as restricted electives (will not affect total credits).

***Discussion****: none*

***Action****: Unanimously approved*

**Motion to approve ##019, 020, 021 and 022** (A. Griffin/N. Feinberg)

* 22-23-019 Approve the revision of GEOG 202 Geographic Information Systems I to have a cross-listing with a new PBAD 202 to allow for its clearer use in the PBAD program.
* 22-23-020 Approve the deletion of PBAD 326 Public Sector Information Systems which will no longer be required in the PBAD program.
* 22-23-021 Approve revisions to the Public Administration (PBAD) program that switch around some course from elective to required, delete one but keep the total credits the same.
* 22-23-022 Approve the revision of GEOG 308 Geographic Information Systems II to have a cross-listing with a new PBAD 308 to indicate its suitability as an elective for those in the PBAD program, while it will be a requirement in the GIS CUS.

***Discussion****: Just some clarification of how cross-listing courses works generally.*

***Action****: Unanimously approved (though one voting member had stepped away)*

**Motion to approve #006** (J. Zornado/E. Simson)

* 22-23-006 Approve a proposal to delete the Geography BA major (keeping the Minor).

***Discussion****: Political Science department chair Michelle Brophy-Baermann notes that the department was told they had to propose this elimination after last year's program review. There is currently one student in the major and one in the minor. The department would rather have waited since this is the only Geography BA in the state. If demand can be demonstrated in the future, a Geography program could be started again. Geography faculty Seth Dixon notes that the elimination of this major and maintenance of the minor is coordinated with the creation of the new Certificate program today (above), which includes various current upper-division GEOG courses; he also notes that it is difficult to maintain the major with just two current Geography faculty. FAS Dean Earl Simson notes that it will still be possible for students to design individually a student-designed major in Geography, because the GEOG courses that still serve Gen Ed, the Geog Minor and the new Certificate program make that possible, as was part of the plan.*

***Action****: Approved: 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 4 abstained (one voting member had stepped away)*

**Motion to approve #024** (T. Weinstein/J. Burke)

* 22-23-024 Approve the creation of an elective one-credit course SOC 215: Careers and The Social Sciences.

***Discussion****: Proposer Mikaila Arthur reports that current courses don't cover important career matters like finding available jobs and applying for them, and that courses like the one proposed here are more effective when offered relatively early in the major. The title includes "Social Sciences" rather than just "Sociology" because majors in Sociology and Justice Studies enter a broad range of careers, but not Sociology until they have a graduate degree. This is comparable to the corresponding ENGL course for careers in Humanities more generally. Proposer Mikaila Arthur, Political Science Chair Michelle Brophy-Baermann, Sociology Chair Carse Ramos, VP for Undergraduate Affairs Holly Shadoian, and UCC Chair Sue Abbotson all agree that the creation of this course does not preclude other departments from proposing similar courses, even ones concerning social sciences.*

***Action****: Unanimously approved (though one voting member had stepped away)*

* **Motion to approve ##025 and 026** (J. Zornado/J. Burke)
* 22-23-025 Approve the revision of the three ENGL concentrations, English BA, English with a concentration in Creative Writing BA and English with a concentration in Professional Writing BA to make them more flexible and to reduce all three from 44 credits to 40 each, and a revision to ENGL 477 Internship in Professional Writing to update the description and prerequisite (to a simple 3.0 GPA rather than specific courses) to make it more clearly apply to all three majors. Students will have more required elective choices and less single required courses.
* 22-23-026 Approve the revision of the three ENGL minors, English, Creative Writing and Professional Writing to make them line up better with the Major revisions and to have all three be 20 credits (PW was 24).

***Discussion****: none*

***Action****: Unanimously approved (though one voting member had left early)*

1. Any Other Business

**Motion to approve revisions to Manual Appendix III** (J. Zornado, E. Simson)

* Revisions to the Manual, Appendix III on Student Designed Majors to reduce the minimum GPA required from 2.5 to 2.0 (We would like to make this change retroactive to this current semester—Fall ’22).

***Discussion****: FAS Dean Earl Simson, as Chair of the Student Designed Majors Committee, reports that this committee has evolved to be largely about enabling some few students, who have learned that one of our professional majors isn't for them after all, to graduate in a timely fashion anyway, with a "student-designed" major that makes use of most of what they've taken already. At the moment, two such students will be able to graduate now if this proposal passes retroactively to this current semester, fall 2022.*

***Action****: Unanimously approved (though one voting member had left early)*

* Initial discussion of prospective revisions to the UCC Proposal Form, for including more criteria related to online teaching.

***Discussion:*** *Some noted the need for making such additions to the form friendly to online teaching that's required due to ADA accommodations. Some advocated for clearly requiring that online teaching technology be specifically RIC-supported tech, such as the Learning Management System (currently Blackboard, though that may change.)*

***Motion to adjourn 3:42*** *(J. Burke/S. Basu)*

***Action****: Unanimously approved.*

*Respectfully submitted by Glenn Rawson.*