Rhode Island College Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

Minutes for the meeting of 22 March 2024

2.00pm-4.00pm, by Zoom

**Present**: Sue Abbotson (Chair), Suchandra Basu, Wendy Becker, Todd Borgerding (starting with #045), John Burke, Carol Cummings, Seth Dixon, Natasha Feinberg, Anthony Galvez, Annette Griffin, Quenby Hughes, Qian Liu, Carolynn Masters, Cara McDermott-Fasy, Glenn Rawson, Traci Weinstein

**Absent**: Catherine Nobre

**Excused**: Soumyadeep Mukherjee, Kemal Saatcioglu

**Guests**: Lisa Bain, Eric Hall, Tim Henry, Suzanne Mello-Stark

1. Call to order at 2:06

1. Approve Minutes 16 Feb. 2024 (Hughes/Feinberg)

***Discussion****: none*

***Action****: Approved (12 in favor, 2 abstaining).*

1. Report of the Chair

* Given we are beginning to see the effects of the newly expanded proposal form in terms of course modalities, and the fact that UCC is not authorizing who teaches hybrid/online but just allowing the course to be listed that way in the catalog so the college can keep better track, we felt it wise to add a “disclaimer” of sorts to the course creation/revision sections: **Please note, that while the UCC requests information about a course’s modality, approval of the proposal does not constitute approval of any specific faculty to teach the course using that modality—that needs to be approved within the department/school.**
* Our proposal to Council to change the by-laws to update the UCC membership was finally approved by Council on 3/8/24 and the manual has been updated to reflect the revisions. This means this year’s elections for the Fall will reflect the “new” distribution of seats. The basic change is that one seat will switch from Education to Business, and since one Education is expiring in May (Cara’s), this will be an easy switch as that Education member need not continue, though can certainly elect to rejoin next year when the two remaining education seats are up for election. The Chair of the Elections Committee will be reaching out to department chairs to ask for nominations for the following seats (currently held by Sue, Todd, Seth, Qian [who in future is Business not Science], Cara, Nan and Wendy) with the following departments eligible to nominate: Humanities (can be from ENGL, HIST or MLAN but not PHIL); ART (can be from MTD, ART but not COMM); Social Sciences (can be from POL, ANTH or SOC, but not PSYC); Science (can be from BIOL, PSCI [PHYS/CHEM], but not MATH); Business (any department except ECON/FIN—so Qian could self-nominate for that seat); Nursing and Social Work. Those in the expiring seats will be invited to submit their names to stay on if they wish and be sent to the Elections committee, who organize the elections to be done in April. Election is a two-year commitment. More than one nomination for any seat will be voting on in time for next year’s UCC to attend a short meeting in May to elect their Executive officers for that year: Chair, Secretary and two more members (plus the Provost). SCG/Dean of Students selects the two student members, their commitment is for a single year (renewable).
* COGE––also on staggered two-year cycles––will also have expiring members and the possibility of a reshuffling of the constituencies if the new Gen Ed. will be operating in the Fall (given that this is a subcommittee of UCC and not a Council committee governed by their by-laws, we can change this membership “in house” and just report to Council). Members of COGE are not elected positions but invited by the outgoing chair and the Provost in consultation. Current members whose terms are complete are: History (Elisa Miller); Math (Stephanie Costa); NS (Karen Almeida); Education (Rudy Krauss); Second Language (Silvía Oliveira) and a student rep. Those interested in being considered can contact me to let me know. Decision on this need not be made until the end of June.

1. Monthly Reports

* COGE report: *COGE Chair Suchandra Basu reported that at this morning's meeting COGE approved proposals for BIOL 201 and 202 (also on today's UCC agenda). They also discussed today a proposal for an online RN to BSN program that involves requesting exemption from general education Second Language and Connections requirements and involves some challenges in how some transfer students would satisfy any remaining general education requirements in the online 7-week format. A possibility being discussed is somehow arranging to use courses that have been approved for the online BPS general education curriculum. She also reported that Provost Masters' proposal for a new General Education curriculum was discussed again today, including especially whether Gen Ed would be changed significantly again soon after this, whether Computer Science belongs in the proposed "Science" category given the corresponding learning outcome about scientific methods of hypothesis formation and testing, and whether RIC 100 would continue to be a Gen Ed requirement. After the Provost considers modifications this week accordingly, the probably revised proposal will be discussed again at COGE on Friday March 29, and that its final form would be presented for a COGE vote on Friday April 5.*
* ***Discussion****: Provost Masters confirmed that although the proposal has been called an "evolution" and "transitional" proposal, the proposal that would take effect in fall 2024 would be the new fixed structure for quite some time, with provisions for just some faculty-driven modifications to learning outcomes in the coming year. UCC Chair Sue Abbotson confirmed that the proposal would then also pass through UCC with the standard forms required and with the usual opportunities for changes at that point. The plan is to seek votes at COGE on Friday April 5, then at UCC on Friday April 19, and then at RIC Council on Friday May 10.*

1. New Business

***Motion to Approve #033 through #039*** *(Griffin/Basu)*

* 23-24-033 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit course for use in a Major/minor in Artificial Intelligence: CSCI 141 Applications of Artificial Intelligence, taught in person.
* 23-24-034 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit course for use in a Major/minor in Artificial Intelligence: CSCI 342W Social and Ethical Issues in Technology. This will be one of the new major’s Writing in the Discipline course and will be taught in person.
* 23-24-035 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit course for use in a Major/minor in Artificial Intelligence: CSCI 348 Artificial Intelligence in Gaming, and it will be a hybrid course (51% in person).
* 23-24-036 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit course for use in a Major/minor in Artificial Intelligence: CSCI 443 Natural Language Processing, and it will be a hybrid course (51% in person).
* 23-24-037 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit course for use in a Major/minor in Artificial Intelligence: CSCI 444 Computer Vision, and it will be a hybrid course (51% in person).
* 23-24-038 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit course for use in a Major/minor in Artificial Intelligence: CSCI 445 Reinforcement Learning and Autonomous Systems, and it will be a hybrid course (51% in person).
* 23-24-039 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit course for use in a Major/minor in Artificial Intelligence: CSCI 446 Cognitive Robotics, and it will be a hybrid course (51% in person).

***Discussion****: Proposer Tim Henry explained that the new courses are all for specific needs in the proposed major, including a dual-enrollment introductory course for high school and RIC students, and a professional ethics course. Other new courses address various areas of AI in depth. In response to questions, Tim explained that although the introductory course might sound technical to some outside the field, it requires no prior knowledge because it is not about building AI but works with the user's perspective. Suzanne Mello-Stark, Chair of Computer Science and Information Systems, who would teach the introductory course this fall, added that is in fact a somewhat technical course, but not to the extent that the upper-level courses are. Tim also explained in response to questioning that much of the online work in the hybrid courses is AI lab work.*

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

***Motion to Approve #040 and #041*** *(Feinberg/Cummings)*

* 23-24-040 Approve the revision of a CSCI 427 Introduction to Artificial Intelligence to make it more useful in the Artificial Intelligence programs; the title will be revised to become Artificial Intelligence Foundations, the description will be revised, and the prerequisite update to include MATH 240, which contains necessary skills and experience for success in the revised course; one credit will be added to make it a 4-credit course, and when offered will be updated to Fall.
* 23-24-041 Approve the revision of a CSCI 428 Machine Learning to make it more useful in the Artificial Intelligence programs. The description will be revised, and the prerequisite updated to become CSCI 209, CSCI 427, and MATH 212 or consent of department chair, and when offered will be updated to Spring.

***Discussion****: Proposer Tim Henry explained that the revisions to these courses are called for because now so many of the new courses in the proposed AI major will build on these.*

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

***Motion to Approve #042*** *(Liu/Burke)*

* 23-24-042 Approve the creation of a new 52 credit major in Artificial Intelligence B.S.

***Discussion****: Proposer Tim Henry explained that major programs in AI are still rare, but about to become more common; and that this one is designed to be well-rounded, with not just technical courses but also courses about using AI, which other schools have not been thinking about so much. Suzanne Mello-Stark, Chair of Computer Science and Information Systems, adds that this program was designed in consultation with the NSA, and that at the conference she and Tim are attending this week, they are discussing this proposal with colleagues in the field while discussing with the NSA how AI major requirements should be specified; she anticipates that RIC will be receiving the NSA certificate of excellence for AI early in the program's implementation.*

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

***Motion to Approve #043 and 044*** *(Burke/Becker)*

* 23-24-043 Approve the creation of a new 27-28 credit minor in Artificial Intelligence (4 credits double count with Gen Ed. M)
* 23-24-044 Approve the creation of a new 20 credit minor in Applications of Artificial Intelligence.

***Discussion****: Proposer Tim Henry explained that the AI minor is designed for students majoring in CSCI, CIS, DATA and MATH: with their major and this minor, they could probably get a job in the field. The AAI minor is a less technical minor not geared for such students, but for those who need to use AI and understand how it works without knowing how to build it.*

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

***Note:*** *Biology proposals #045-052 were just approved at COGE this morning, and have secured all required signatures except for two of the Deans, which are expected to be secured soon.*

***Motion to Approve #045 and #046, on condition that the remaining two Deans' signatures are secured soon.*** *(Galvez/Basu)*

* 23-24-045 Approve the creation of a new 3-credit BIOL 201 Anatomy and Physiology I Lecture that will also be a Gen Ed. NS course alongside BIOL 202.
* 23-24-046 Approve the creation of a new 1-credit BIOL 202 Anatomy and Physiology I Laboratory that will also be a Gen Ed. NS course alongside BIOL 201.

***Discussion****: Proposer Eric Hall explained that by disarticulating labs from lectures, these proposals make student scheduling easier; that by integrating anatomy and physiology, they follow a disciplinary trend and make transfer of credits easier; and that by making the removal of the BIOL 108 prereq. possible in a responsible way, they help our Nursing programs satisfy accreditation pressures. That last point calls for making the proposed BIOL 201 and 202 combined a general education Natural Science course, as the BIOL 108 currently is. There was also discussion of the proposal's recent updates to its account of satisfying the Ethical Reasoning learning outcome for that general education category, which was considered and approved at COGE this morning. There was agreement that, even though biologist do have to work with many ethical demands, it is difficult for such biology courses to seriously teach ethical reasoning as contrasted with emphasizing ethical behavior, as the professors are not trained to do so.*

***Action****: Approved: 14 in favor, 1 abstaining.*

***Motion to Approve #047 through #050*** *(Griffin/Burke)*

* 23-24-047 Approve the creation of a new 3-credit BIOL 203 Anatomy and Physiology II Lecture
* 23-24-048 Approve the creation of a new 1-credit BIOL 204 Anatomy and Physiology II Laboratory
* 23-24-049 Approve the creation of a new 4-credit BIOL 345 Advances in Human Physiology.
* 23-24-050 Approve the revision of the prerequisite of BIOL 348 Microbiology to include the option of BIOL 201 and BIOL 202, the new courses that were proposed above.

***Discussion****: Proposer Eric Hall, in response to questions, explained that BIOL 231 and 335 will be phased out. Students would now take these proposed Anatomy and Physiology courses, and those who want more advanced coursework in that area would take BIOL 345.*

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

***Motion to Approve #051*** *(Hughes/Becker)*

* 23-24-051 Approve revision to the Health Science programs to include the new BIOL courses (201, 202, 203 and 204) in place of BIOL 108, 231 and 335

***Discussion****: none*

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

***Motion to Approve #052*** *(Griffin/Weinstein)*

* 23-24-052 Approve revision to the Medical Imaging programs (except Computer Tomography which has different cognates) to include the new BIOL courses (201, 202, 203 and 204) in place of BIOL 108, 231 and 335.

***Discussion****: none*

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

***Motion to Approve #053*** *(Weinstein/Liu)*

* 23-24-053 Approve the creation of a 20 credit CUS in Professional Writing.

***Discussion****: none*

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

***Motion to Approve #054 and #055*** *(Liu/Becker)*

* 23-24-054 Approve the revision of CIS 421 Networks and Infrastructure to add CSCI 212W Data Structures as an alternate prerequisite to allow more students to include the course in their program.
* 23-24-055 Approve the revision of CIS 455W Database Programming to add CSCI 212W Data Structures as an alternate prerequisite to allow more students to include the course in their program.

***Discussion****: none*

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

***Motion to Approve #056*** *(Cummings/Weinstein)*

* 23-24-056 Approve a revision to the CIS program to add CSCI 157 Introduction to Algorithmic Thinking in Python as an alternative for the currently required CIS 301 Computer Programming in Business (which will eventually be retired). This will not change the total credits as they are the same number of credits.

***Discussion****: none*

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

***Motion to Approve #057 through #066*** *(Feinstein/Griffin)*

* 23-24-057 Approve the deletion of CIS 324 Dynamic Web Development, which will no longer be needed due to the phase out of the Web Development minor.
* 23-24-058 Approve the revision of the prerequisite of CIS 416 Web Design to add CSCI 211 and revise the description to take out the reference to CSCI 416 which is being deleted.
* 23-24-059 Approve the change of title of CSCI 209 Discrete Structures Using Python to Programming Implementations Using Discrete Structures and a revision of the prerequisite to add CSCI 211.
* 23-24-060 Approve a revision of the prerequisite of CSCI 211 Computer Programming and Design to remove CSCI 157 and ask for completed college mathematics milestone instead.
* 23-24-061 Approve the deletion of CSCI 305 Functional Programming which is no longer attracting enrollment.
* 23-24-062 Approve the deletion of CSCI 324 Dynamic Web Development, which will no longer be needed due to the phase out of the Web Development minor.
* 23-24-063 Approve a revision of the prerequisite of CSCI 401W Software engineering to become “CSCI 212 or CSCI 212W or CSCI 315, and at least three additional computer science or computer information system courses at the 300-level or above. Or consent of department chair” to allow for more potential choice.
* 23-24-064 Approve the deletion of CSCI 416 Web Design; it was previously cross-listed with CIS 416 Web Design and will now just have the single prefix.
* 23-24-065 Approve the deletion of CSCI 437 Network Architecture and Programming, as it is very similar to CIS 421 which shall effectively take its place as an elective in the CSCI programs.
* 23-24-066 Approve the deletion of CSCI 455 Introduction to Databases as it is very similar to CIS 455W which shall effectively take its place as an elective in the CSCI programs.

***Discussion****: Qian Liu explained that this set of proposals better utilizes the recently combined CIS and CSCI resources, and that they are aimed at better supporting student retention and opportunities to explore more current topics.*

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

***Motion to Approve #067 through #069*** *(Dixon/Galvez)*

* 23-24-067 Approve revisions to the CSCI BA that will change the total from 49-51 to 50 credits. Several elective courses will be removed, some have been combined with the CIS equivalent and so added, and the CSCI 402 Cyber Security Principles will now be required, while CSCI 309 Object-Oriented Design will become an elective along with CSCI 432 Network and Security. NOTE: CSCI 422 has been deleted on the catalog copy since this course no longer exists and must have been missed on a past catalog update (it has not been taught in over ten years).
* 23-24-068 Approve revisions to the CSCI BS that will change the total from 75-78 to 75-77 credits. Several elective courses will be removed, some have been combined with the CIS equivalent and so added, and the CSCI 402 Cyber Security Principles will now be required, while CSCI 309 Object-Oriented Design will become an elective along with CSCI 432 Network and Security.
* 23-24-069 Approve the deletion of the Web Development minor due to lack of student interest—teach out will need a simple substitution for three students of one course that will be available and relevant.
* 23-24-070 Tabled until April.

***Discussion****: none*

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

1. Any Other Business

***Motion to adjourn*** *at 3:35*

*Respectfully submitted by Glenn Rawson*