



SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

MINUTES

July 8, 2021 ~ 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm
Remote Connection via Zoom Video Conferencing

Attendees: E. Elle (Vice-Chair), K. Nordgren (Secretary), S. Bains, L. Campbell, M. Crouch, D. Hik, A. Kandikova, P. Kingsbury, M. MacDonald, K. Masri, T. Nault, E. Park, A. Parmar, P. Pasquier, J. Sutherland, N. van Houten

Regrets: W. Parkhouse (Chair)

Introductions were made for the benefit of the new members.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Agenda was approved as presented.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of June 3, 2021

The minutes were approved as presented.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

No business arising from the minutes.

4. NEW BUSINESS

COURSE CHANGES (SCUS 21-55)

The following course changes, effective Summer 2022, were approved under delegated authority.

a. Faculty of Applied Sciences

1. School of Mechatronic Systems Engineering

- (i) Description and prerequisite changes for MSE 300
- (ii) Equivalent statement changes for MSE 411
- (iii) Prerequisite change for MSE 498

b. Faculty of Environment

1. School of Environmental Science

- (i) Unit change for EVSC 201W
- (ii) Prerequisite change for EVSC 305

2. School of Resource and Environmental Management

- (i) Prerequisite change for SD 381 and 481
- (ii) Prerequisite changes for PLAN 300, 302, 400, 406, 408 and 443

c. Faculty of Science

1. Department of Biological Sciences

- (i) Prerequisite change for BISC 435 (Fall 2022)

2. Department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology

- (i) Title and description change for BPK 303

PROGRAM CHANGES

a. Faculty of Environment (SCUS 21-57)

1. School of Environmental Science

Motion 1

It was moved by P. Kingsbury and seconded by A. Parmar

“that SCUS approve under delegated authority and send to Senate for information the changes to description and the upper and lower division requirements, effective Summer 2022, for the:
Environmental Science Major
Environmental Science Honours.”

CARRIED

There was brief discussion regarding the changes to these two programs with focus on the addition of the general concentration in the Environmental Science Major.

P. Kingsbury explained that the majority of students do not declare a concentration and the general concentration will allow students to choose from a broader set of options.

Committee members made recommendations to clarify the Calendar language, as it wasn't evident how students navigate the program.

P. Kingsbury agreed to take the item back to the UCC for revisions and forward on to the secretary of SCUS for approval at the next Senate meeting in September.

analysis of the impact of our transcripts for current and former students

It was suggested by the Secretary, in terms of gathering data, to also consider reviewing graduate school admissions averages and how SFU students are evaluated/admitted relative to other institutions. He noted that it's up to the graduate school to ensure that the admissions criteria are standardized for all applicants.

There was much discussion comparing the advantages and disadvantages between percentages and letter grades on a transcript. All agreed that a standardization is needed as there are different gradings practices within faculties and programs.

The general consensus was in support of gathering more information and moving forward with this project to determine if a change is needed to revise student transcripts and grading system to accurately show a student's academic standing and success, and how to use those grades to their advantage in their future endeavours.

The Vice-Chair concluded that she will consult with the Registrar about how to move forward with this project, to gather information for analysis on what other schools do with their transcripts, whether SFU students may be disadvantaged as a result, and see if there is capability for the recommended modifications.

b. Future SCUS meetings

The Vice-Chair posed the question to the committee members, if they were ready for in-person meetings for fall as we gradually return to campus or if Zoom video-conferencing is still an option.

She noted that some committees are meeting 50% in person and 50% virtually.

Suggestions/comments made:

- meet virtually for the summer months (June & July) as meeting agendas are smaller
- hybrid approach; every second meeting in-person/virtual
- all meetings in-person; as it was done in the past; for those who cannot make it can join via video-conference

L. Campbell further explained that Dr. Zwagerman found that other countries have similar legislation. She noted that there was interest expressed at a meeting of B.C. Deans in April 2021 to pursue a pan-college/pan-university approach to deal with this issue.

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SCUS Policy Sub-Committee

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1. Course Units

The Vice-Chair began the meeting by sharing the discussion notes from the last Policy Meeting regarding the principles and definitions of a course unit.

PRINCIPLES

With blended courses and online courses, the issue is not just about the number of contact hours; it's about workload

A 15-unit load should fit within an average work week (i.e. 40 hours of total work or 8 hours per class on average)

DEFINITIONS

There was discussion and feedback provided regarding various definitions and which fit best with SFU students and faculty:

Based on Concordia's definition, assuming a 15-week term including the finals week

Based on 10 to 12 hours per week

Combination of other institutions' definitions

E. Elle will send an updated document to the committee based on revisions made at this meeting and will draft a memo to bring to the September SCUS meeting for further discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 pm

Minutes prepared by R. Balletta