

Florida Institute of Technology
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
September 25, 2009
8:00 a.m.
F.W. Olin Physical Sciences Building
Second-floor Conference Room
MINUTES

The meeting began at 8:00 a.m.

The Chair welcomed members of the Committee.

Consent Agenda:

The following item remained on the Consent Agenda and passed unanimously:

4. Changing Restrictions in a Course – MAE 2201 (Aerospace Fundamentals)

Agenda Discussion Items:

The following item was discussed and passed unanimously.

1. Adding a New Course to the Curriculum – CSE 4272 (Computer & Info Security)

There was a minor question about the proposed grading system for the course which was quickly cleared up.

The following item was unanimously tabled until the following meeting so that a representative from Ocean Engineering could be present to address the Committee's questions.

2. Adding a New Course to the Curriculum – OCE 4572 (Structural Design of Marine Vehicles)

The following item was discussed and passed by a vote of 13-1-1.

3. Changing Graduation Requirements in a Major – B.S. Meteorology (7224)

A question arose as to whether a COM course would be appropriate as a restricted elective in light of the course being replaced. The answer was "yes" since there are two branches of meteorology that students might pursue: a research branch and a broadcast branch. For those students who wish to pursue broadcast meteorology, the Department of Marine and Environmental Sciences (DMES) felt that a restricted COM course is appropriate, and it was noted that the list of suitable COM courses would be limited.

Also asked was why it was felt that removing MTH 3201 would add flexibility into the meteorology program. It was pointed out that other meteorology programs around the country contain advanced math, that perhaps removing MTH 3201 runs the risk of removing important training from the Florida Tech meteorology program, and that removal of the course should perhaps be reconsidered by DMES. The response was

that DMES had already given this considerable thought, and concluded this was best for the program.

Other:

1. Changing the Computer Science AP exam credit award (Dr. Shoaff)
Tabled from the previous meeting.

It was announced to the Committee that the Computer Science AB Advanced Placement exam would no longer be offered. In light of this, the Computer Science Department, in consultation with the Registrar's Office, decided that credit for the Computer Science A exam would only be given for CSE 1001 rather than for both CSE 1001 and CSE 1002 as was done with the AB-version of the exam.

2. Proposal to have all curriculum changes that are to be reflected in the next edition of the University Catalog presented to the Committee by the last meeting of the previous academic year (Sr. Vice Provost Bonhomme)

The Chair reminded the Committee of Dr. Bonhomme's proposal at the Aug. 2009 meeting. Comments were generally in favor of approving the proposal however there was some concern as to whether policy concerns would then drive academic concerns. It was suggested that perhaps "big" items should be presented before the Committee at the end of the previous academic year, but relatively minor issues (e.g. changing course credits) could still be discussed and voted upon at the August meeting. It was also suggested that, if timing were an issue, that moving the last meeting of the year to earlier in April would allow the Committee more time to meet at the end of April should it be necessary to resolve any concerns about new courses or programs. It was noted that in the College of Engineering (COE), any "big" changes to the curriculum had to be approved by the COE College Council before they could be presented before the Committee, and that the COE College Council did not meet late in the spring semester, necessitating changes that are to be reflected in the next edition of the University Catalog be processed early. Another suggestion was that if the April deadline were agreed to, any questions or issues that arose could be resolved over the summer and then reconsidered by the Committee in August, but no new items would be considered in August.

A motion was made that stated the Committee would honor the spring deadline, and that changes that are to be reflected in the next printed edition of the University Catalog are to be presented before the Committee no later than the last regular meeting of the prior academic year. It was asked if an amendment stating as much should be made to the UGCC Policies and Procedures document, but it was generally thought this wasn't necessary. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion as to what constitutes a passing grade in a P/F course (Ms. Young, Dr. Baum)

At the Aug. 2009 meeting, it was noted that the grade mode for MTH 0003 and MTH 0110 had changed from ~A-F to ~P/F. This raised broader questions about P/F courses, and suggested that it should be clear what a “P” grade represents and what a “F” grade represents. It was noted that the University Catalog currently implies that a “P” grade is obtained for 60% or greater successful performance in a course. The Registrar’s Office noted that, for purposes of transfer credit, the University only gives transfer credit to courses with a “P” grade if it can be determined that the “P” grade is equivalent to a “C” grade or better at the transferring university. Dr. R. Bonhomme recounted that at his previous university, most courses were graded on a straight P/F basis, but that an exception was granted to the math department so they could grade on a A-F basis, and that a grade of “C-” was the minimum for passing. The Committee was reminded that the courses that are mostly affected by this are zero-level and do not count towards a student’s GPA nor graduation requirements. The Applied Mathematics Department’s (Applied Math) primary concern is that students in remedial math courses are not prepared to advance to higher-level math courses with a minimal “D” grade, and it is for this reason the ~P/F grade mode was implemented, to show that the students have a basic proficiency in the material. A similar concern was noted with regards to COM 0110 (Basic Writing Skills). Several suggestions were offered to resolve the issue while still satisfying the need expressed by Applied Math, including allowing a “P” grade to mean whatever the instructor deems is appropriate so long as it is stated on the course syllabus, modifying the University grading system, using a S/U grade mode, implementing a “gateway” exam or assignment into the course, and raising the course standards such that 60% successful completion constitutes showing basic proficiency.

In the interest of time, it was unanimously agreed to table the discussion until the next meeting.

The Chair noted the following items. No significant discussion followed.

4. Reminder to try to resolve questions on Consent Agenda items prior to meeting
5. Information:
 - Approval of an Undergraduate Online Course to Have the Same Number as an On-campus Undergraduate Course
 - CSE 3411 – Software Testing 1
 - CSE 4610 – Requirements Engineering
 - CSE 4621 – Software Metrics and Modeling
 - UGCC Policies & Procedures document updated to reflect the amendment passed by the Committee at the April 2009 meeting

Our next meeting is Friday, October 23 at 8:00 a.m. in the Physical Sciences conference room. Agenda items are due Friday, October 16.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Archambault – Chair