The meeting began at 8:00 a.m.
The Chair welcomed the Committee.

The following items remained on the Consent Agenda and were unanimously approved.

Consent Agenda:

1. College of Business
   b. CGR – AA Management

College of Psychology and Liberal Arts

2. School of Psychology
   a. ANC – PSY 3901 – Experimental Psychology 1

Consent Agenda Discussion Items:

The following item was discussed and unanimously approved, as amended.

1. College of Business
   a. ANM – BA Human Resources Management (Online)

Before discussion on this item, it was requested that a semester-by-semester flowchart be provided for all proposed programs and proposed changes in graduation requirements of existing programs (including online programs) to help facilitate evaluation.

There were a few minor issues associated with the proposed program:

- EMG 3398 (Organization Theory) was listed as a required course, however it is slated to be deactivated in 2018. The College of Business (COB) agreed to amend the program by striking EMG 3398 as a required course, and replace it with 3 credits of Restricted Business Elective, bringing the total number of Restricted Business Electives to 9.

- There was a discrepancy between the original paperwork submitted for review, and the flowchart subsequently submitted at the request of the UGCC. The flowchart indicated that COM 1101 (Composition and Rhetoric) or WRI 1001 (First-Year Writing 2) would be a required course, and only 6 credit hours of humanities electives would be required. The original paperwork included neither COM 1101 nor WRI 1001, and required 9 credit hours of humanities electives. COB indicated that the former was correct, largely because COM 1101 or WRI 1001 is required for the University Core.

There was some confusion that went beyond the present program about the humanities electives. In several programs, the requirement states “Humanities Elective 1000-level or higher” or similar language. Confusion arose as to whether this meant only those courses with the “HU” designation or any course with a HUM prefix. In many cases, programs anticipate the latter, however not all courses with a HUM prefix have the “HU” designation. The elective definition in the University Catalog is ambiguous, saying “humanities course,” but others indicated that the
intent was for only those courses with the appropriate designation. In the present case, since not all HUM courses are considered “humanities electives” (i.e. they don’t all have the “HU” designation), at least 3 credits of humanities electives must have the “HU” designation or else the University Core would not necessarily be met by all students.

- In one of the boxes on the flowchart for a science elective, the number of credits was left blank. It was presumed that it was meant to have “3 credits” to bring the total program credits to 121. COB confirmed this, and the number of credits was added.
- In the requirements for science elective, any course with a prefix of EDS was to be permitted, however there was an objection that not all EDS courses are science courses, though the two specifically recommended (EDS 1021 and 1022) are science courses. It was noted that many programs with science elective requirements are built with any EDS course being permitted. It was suggested that this should be corrected for such programs, and in the instant program, EDS was struck from the list of prefixes that can be used to satisfy the science elective requirement, with EDS 1021 and 1022 continuing to be permitted.

Discussion Items:

1. EGN 1100/2100 – Machine Shop Certification 1 & 2: Automatic Withdrawal – Dr. Archambault
   It was explained that these zero-credit courses are very short courses that start at different times during the semester, and that one of the requirements is that students must attend all class periods, and if they do not, students automatically fail the course. History has shown that too many students miss the first lecture period, automatically fail, and thus get an ‘F’ on their transcript. Because this seems overly harsh, the College of Engineering opted to change its practice, and instead automatically drop those students who miss the first class period. The course instructor will notify Dr. Laroche ( Assoc. Dean College of Engineering) of all affected students, and he will process the Add/Drop forms. It was felt that this was a better solution than students getting an ‘F’ on their transcripts, and because the course is zero-credit, there are no implications for dropping students below full-time status.

2. Changes to the Transfer Credit Evaluation Criteria – Dr. Heck and Dr. Hsu (Assoc. VP for International Partnerships)
   Dr. Heck (Civil Engineering) briefly reminded the Committee of its discussion from last month on this issue and proposed changes to the rules of how courses are evaluated for transfer credit. He began with the first two bullet items from the “TCE transfer rules_IPO commented” document (available at www.fit.edu/ugcc) that essentially request that transfer credit be based only on course content and the student’s grade, and no other criteria.

Dr. Baloga (VP for Institutional Effectiveness and International Programs) was in attendance and noted that there have been discussions outside of the UGCC related to transfer credit evaluation and its impact on enrollment management. In fact, the Enrollment Task Force has generated a proposal to, among other things, shift most of the transfer credit evaluation functions back to the Registrar’s Office. The proposal is currently being reviewed by Dr. McCay (EVP/COO).

Regarding the proposal to no longer consider prerequisites in determining whether courses are equivalent, there were objections. An example being that similar topics in a physics course could be taught with or without the use of calculus, and it is a prerequisite of calculus that would determine whether a transferring
physics course was equivalent to PHY 1001 (Physics 1). However, in response, it was suggested that that was a content-based question, not a prerequisite issue. While topics may be similar, the content of an algebra-based physics course is very different from a calculus-based physics course. It was then suggested that this very example demonstrates why prerequisites cannot be totally divorced from content, since a calculus prerequisite immediately suggests equivalency, and without the prerequisite, the equivalency is not there.

The School of Arts and Communication suggested a compromise that hopefully would alleviate several of the issues. Because the goal is to have students leave a community college with the equivalent of HUM 2051 (Civilization 1), the School is willing to permit the transfer of courses from the community colleges with similar content, but that perhaps do not have the equivalent prerequisites as HUM 2051. However, those students who are already enrolled at Florida Tech and want to take an equivalent civilization course elsewhere would be required to have completed COM 1102 (Writing about Literature) before a Request to Study at Another Institution would be approved.

Several agreed that this could resolve some of the problem, however it was asked if the community college version of Civilization 1 was taught without the need of a COM 1102 prerequisite equivalent, what does requiring FIT students to have taken COM 1102 actually gain them? Additionally, the question was raised that if the content of a community college version of Civilization 1 was the same both before and after the state changed prerequisites, what was it that suddenly made the course non-equivalent? In response, it was said that it wasn’t entirely clear what content, if any, was changed, and that it could be different at different community colleges, and that is why the prerequisite was being relied upon.

A related issue, having to do with Chinese students, was the complaint that some of the Chinese students were taking the same courses (designed to mirror COM 1101 and COM 1102 and taught in English), getting the same grade, yet only some students received transfer credit and other did not, based upon their TOEFL scores. It was not clear why this was occurring, but it was stated that international students must demonstrate English proficiency. The policy that Florida Tech does not generally give transfer credit for English writing courses taken at non-English-speaking institutions was raised, and it was pointed out that other U.S. institutions have similar policies (e.g., University of Wisconsin). It was suggested that the Chinese 2+2 programs were negotiated so that students would transfer these courses, but in contrast, Dr. Baloga, who oversees the agreements related to the 2+2 programs stated that such course-to-course transfer was not included in those articulation agreements. She stated, not just for the 2+2 programs but also for other institutions, that FIT needs to have strong and specific articulation agreements that resolve these issues. It was asked who the “articulation officer in the Undergraduate Admissions Office” was (referred to the University Catalog), to which the answer was that there isn’t one. It was also stated that a number of the articulation agreements Florida Tech holds could not be found, particularly those unrelated to A.A. degrees. It was then suggested that those agreements should be reviewed, however because times change, if the agreements are as old as everyone claims, perhaps it is time they are renegotiated.

Since A.A. degrees were mentioned, it was conceded that it is necessary at times to find courses completely unrelated to HUM 2051 (and others) that can transfer credit and substitute for HUM 2051 (or other courses, as needed) to satisfy articulation agreements for students who transfer to Florida Tech with an A.A. degree, and that it is not appropriate to suggest that another student who does not have an A.A. degree but takes the same course far removed from the subject matter of HUM 2051 also receive equivalent credit. However,
it was also noted that ambiguity comes when such transferred courses are similar in content, but deemed non-equivalent.

In the interest of time, Dr. Heck moved on to his next point. He proposed that when an academic unit receives a course for transfer evaluation, if it is not equivalent to a named course, but its subject matter is best-suited to that academic unit, then the course should transfer with the prefix of that academic unit with the appropriate Xxxx level rather than use the FREE prefix. There were some objections to this. For example, the Chemistry Department objected to placing a CHM prefix on a very low-level chemistry course out of concern that another program might deem it appropriate to substitute that course for CHM 1101 (General Chemistry 1) or another lower-division named chemistry course. Instead, the Chemistry Department would prefer to transfer such a course with the SCI prefix for science elective. Similarly, the Chair explained that his department objects to placing the MAE prefix on courses that are not substantially similar to named courses, particularly if other programs might use that credit, instead preferring to use the EGN prefix.

Because time was running very short, and several in attendance wished to reach the next topic, discussion was tabled.

3. Changes to the University Core Curriculum – Dr. Heck

The Chair explained that there have been calls for a review of the University Core Curriculum, in part because it was almost 30 years old, and in part because some deemed it was no longer in line with the practices of other institutions. The Chair also felt that a more flexible core (should it be revised) could resolve many of the transfer credit issues previously discussed.

Dr. Baloga commented that a review of the core would be welcomed, but that any changes to the core should focus and be built on core competencies; what do we want the students to get out of the core? What the core should not include are skill-specific courses. She also cautioned that this would not be a quick process, as any sweeping change to the core is considered a substantial change from a SACS perspective.

Dr. Heck explained that adoption of the current core was largely driven by ABET mandates that included a “breadth and depth” requirement, leading to the COM 1101, COM 1102, HUM 2051, and HUM 2052 (Civilization 2) sequences, but ABET has since relaxed those requirements. He suggested that we could continue to have such sequences, but open it up to topics in perhaps languages or sustainability.

The Chair described an idea for the core wherein the COM 1101 and COM 1102 sequence would be retained but that the other 15 required credits in the current core (not including math and science, which might be addressed differently) be fulfilled by requiring the students to take courses in broadly-defined categories (e.g. humanities, social sciences, languages, psychology, etc.), but no more than 6 credit hours in any one category. By not requiring any named courses, transfer students would have a much easier time retaining credit for courses they have already taken. Also, if specific programs wanted to require electives at a higher-level (say, 2000 or higher), that could be accomplished at the program level while still satisfying the core.

It was suggested that a subcommittee be formed to address these issues, and that the subcommittee consist not only of UGCC members, but also those involved in SACS accreditation. The Chair offered that each College should be represented on the subcommittee, and invited the representatives to discuss with their respective Colleges who might serve on a subcommittee.
As the meeting had run past its allotted time, the Chair announced the next meeting date.

Our next and last regular meeting of the academic year is Fri., Apr. 22 at 8:00 a.m. in the Physical Sciences Bldg. conference room. Agenda items are due Fri., Apr. 15.

*The meeting ended at 9:15 a.m.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Mark Archambault – Chair*