SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES
MINUTES
December 5, 2019 ~ 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm
W.A.C. Bennett Library Room 7200


Regrets: K. Pathania

1. Approval of the Agenda
The Agenda was approved as presented.

2. Approval of the Minutes of November 7, 2019
The minutes were approved as presented.

On behalf of the SCUS committee, the Chair thanked Stephen Spector and Kevin Oldknow for their service to the SCUS committee.

Stephen Spector expressed his gratitude and how he enjoyed working with a group of people who genuinely care about students and the University.

Kevin Oldknow thanked the SCUS committee, noting how much he enjoyed sitting on the SCUS committee, and for all the good work, collaboration and collegiality that happens within the SCUS group.

The Chair shared good news from the recent SCUP meeting, where concerns regarding the minor in Creative Writing raised by the student members of SCUS were quickly resolved and approved at the meeting. Additionally, the Social Data Analytics and First Nations Languages minors will be submitted to DQAB, but will not require a full ministry review.
3. Open Discussion

a. Courses and Affordability

The Chair began the discussion regarding courses and affordability, referring to the VPA’s Joint Operations Group (JOG) review of the complexity of SFU’s curriculum to understand why students are taking more courses than required for graduation.

The Secretary distributed documents showing data on the number of new courses approved versus the number of courses deleted over the past five years. He will provide a list of courses that have not been offered in at least two years, and those that have been temporarily withdrawn for two or more years, for the Associate Deans to review.

The Chair reiterated the process for temporary withdrawing or ‘mothballing’ a course that has not been offered in the past two years.

The primary concern raised in the ensuing discussion was the net increase in new courses with little to no increase in faculty complement. The Chair commented that the process to create new courses is easier now than in the past and suggested that stricter rules should be set. There was a suggestion to have faculties not only look at courses not offered in the past two years, but to also report on those offered on a less-than-regular basis. All agreed that further discussion at a future SCUS meeting is needed to review this process.

A comment was made that the market demand is driving the proliferation of courses. For example, the same course may be taught by three different professors with different perspectives in order to keep up with the demand. All agreed that SCUS needs to review/address these issues, and to include financial analysis in the process.

CODE TRANSITION

E. Elle provided an update on the CODE transition. She asked the SCUS group what was needed to support this transition, adding that they need to know the course transition plan asap and the plan for the 2020-2021 academic year in order to project manage the building of courses.

Discussion ensued, with most members expressing concern for better communication to support the initiative and the limited time available for course development. E. Elle stressed the importance of connecting with her office for assistance in every aspect of this transition, noting that there have been misconceptions about the process and that there is money available to support the transition process.

A concern was raised regarding intellectual property; E. Elle stated that she is meeting with University senior counsel in the new year regarding this issue.
4. Old Business

a. Faculty of Science (SCUS 19-54)

1. Department of Physics

   (i) New Course Proposal: PHYS 416-3, Introduction to Quantum Information Science

Secretary’s Note: This agenda item was approved by Senate at its November 4th meeting before an overlap check was concluded. This new course proposal has now been reviewed by all faculties.

K. Oldknow and D. Hik confirmed that a concern had been raised which prompted further discussion and this has now been resolved.

5. New Business

NEW PROGRAMS

a. Faculty of Environment (SCUS 19-75)

1. Department of Geography

Motion 1
It was moved by P. Kingsbury and seconded by K. Oldknow

   “that SCUS approve and recommend to SCUP the Notice of Intent: Geographic Information Science (GIScience) Minor.”

CARRIED

N. van Houten and C. Murray expressed interest in including their courses in this GIScience Minor. P. Kingsbury was commended on how clear and concise this NOI has been formatted.

b. Faculty of Science (SCUS 19-76)

1. Department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology

Motion 2
It was moved by D. Hik and seconded by C. Murray

   “that SCUS approve and recommend to SCUP the Full Program Proposal for the Professional Kinesiology Certificate.”

TABLED

There were several concerns regarding this agenda item. Discussion ensued with focus on how to accommodate students whom already have degrees and wish to enroll in this program. S. Birnie confirmed that there is no mechanism currently in place for these types of students. A concern was raised regarding the requirement for external certification. All agreed to table this item until the January SCUS meeting for further discussion.
OTHER BUSINESS

a. Program GPA (SCUS 19-77)

S. Birnie began this discussion by providing a summary of the first meeting of the SCUS policy subcommittee and the background of the Program GPA policy. He explained there have been a few issues during graduation evaluation regarding the calculation of program GPA. The proposed change in the policy definition refers back to the original language that had been approved by Senate in 2002, which clearly states how program GPA should be calculated. He explained the different calculations of program GPA currently in practice, which prompted an analysis of how students are affected by this difference in interpretation. An analysis based on the proposed change in definition of program GPA showed that very few students would be impacted negatively and that some students’ program GPA would improve.

S. Birnie added that the Academic Progress Report (APR) can be set up to calculate program GPA according to the new definition, and that students and advisors can use this tool to keep track of their progress.

A question was raised regarding how the APR calculates program GPA chronologically and if there was a way to modify the APR to calculate GPA on the best grades or the most recent. It was confirmed that the APR can be coded to calculate GPA chronologically, or in reverse chronological order, or based on the best grades achieved to meet program requirements.

Terminology was discussed as most members supported this agenda item, but wanted to ensure the definition would be clearly interpreted. S. Birnie stated that this is the first step in ensuring that this policy is clear and concise in order to ensure consistency across the University. Members felt further discussion on the definitions is required in order to finalize and approve this agenda item. The main purpose is to ensure students are treated equally.

All agreed to table this agenda item until the New Year for further discussion.

b. SCUS Annual Report

The report was presented to the SCUS committee for information.

COURSE CHANGES (SCUS 19-70)

The following course changes, effective Fall 2020, were approved under delegated authority.

a. Beedie School of Business

   (i) Equivalent Statement for BUS 232
b. Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology

1. School for the Contemporary Arts

   (i) Title change for CA 117 and 118
   (ii) Course number and equivalent statement change for CA 227
   (iii) Changes to course number, title, description, prerequisite and equivalent statement for CA 237
   (iv) Description change for CA 270 and 271
   (v) Title and description change for CA 312 and 314
   (vi) Changes to course number, units and equivalent statement for CA 317
   (vii) Description change for CA 325
   (viii) Course number, title, prerequisite and equivalent statement change for CA 335
   (ix) Course number, title, description, prerequisite and equivalent statement change for CA 337
   (x) Description change for CA 389
   (xi) Title, description and prerequisite change for CA 412W
   (xii) Title and description change for CA 414
   (xiii) Prerequisite change for CA 430
   (xiv) Course number, title, description, prerequisite and equivalent statement change for CA 436


c. Faculty of Science

1. Department of Biological Sciences

   (i) Equivalent Statement change for BISC 204

2. Department of Physics

   (i) Prerequisite change for PHYS 120, 121, 125, 126, 132, and 133
   (ii) Title and prerequisite change for PHYS 233
   (iii) Course number, title and prerequisite change for PHYS 234
   (iv) Prerequisite change for PHYS 326, 332W, 365, 421, 455, 465 and 490

NEW COURSE PROPOSALS

a. Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue (SCUS 19-71)

Motion 3
It was moved by E. Elle and seconded by S. Spector

“that SCUS approve under delegated authority and send to Senate for information the New Course Proposals:
   • DIAL 393W-5, Semester In (Dialogue Component)
   • DIAL 394-5, Semester In (Seminar Component)
   • DIAL 395-5, Semester In (Final Project Component) effective Fall 2020”

CARRIED

There were two amendments: adding that these courses can be repeated for credit only if the topic changes and to remove the W designation and add ‘pending’ to the form.
PROGRAM CHANGES

a. Beedie School of Business (SCUS 19-72)

Motion 4
It was moved by S. Spector and seconded by K. Oldknow

“that SCUS approve under delegated authority and send to Senate for information the requirement changes to the Business Technology Management Certificate effective Fall 2020.”

CARRIED

b. Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (SCUS 19-73)

1. School for the Contemporary Arts

Motion 5
It was moved by P. Pasquier and seconded by A. Parmar

“that SCUS approve under delegated authority and send to Senate for information the:

- Changes to description, admission and upper and lower division requirements for the Dance Extended Minor program
- Changes to description, admission and lower division requirement changes to the Film Extended Minor program
- Changes to admission and lower division requirements for the Music Extended Minor program
- Changes to the admission and the upper and lower division requirements for the Theatre Extended Minor program
- Changes to description, admission and the upper and lower division requirements for the Visual Art Extended Minor program

CARRIED

c. Faculty of Science (SCUS 19-74)

1. Department of Biological Sciences

Motion 6
It was moved by D. Hik and seconded by C. Murray

“that SCUS approve under delegated authority and send to Senate for information the requirement changes to the Cells, Molecules, and Physiology (CMP) Concentration for the Major and Honour Programs in Biological Sciences effective Fall 2020.”

CARRIED

The Chair wished everyone a great holiday season and again thanked Stephen Spector and Kevin Oldknow for their time and commitment to the SCUS committee.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:25 pm

Minutes prepared by R. Balletta