

MINUTES

CALS Curriculum Committee Meeting
Tuesday, March 13, 2012, 12:00 p.m.
250 Agricultural Hall

Present: Bednarek, Barak, Bland, Fadl, Hayslett, Jackson, Oosterwyck, Paustian, Pelegri, Pfatteicher, Stubbings

Absent: Gisler, Mitchell, Pearson, Whillock

CALS Undeclared Plan

Pfatteicher gave an update on the CALS Undeclared Plan, and we went over the Draft Undeclared Plan document. As a review, we are looking at opening up this option for summer SOAR (June 2012), and the classification will be ALS 000. The intended audience is students choosing between CALS majors under the B.S. degree, and it is not explicitly intended for students considering professional programs within CALS. The message we want to give at SOAR is that we would not exclude somebody considering a professional program, but we would encourage them to declare that professional program at first, because these are usually more exclusive. This is different from the CCAS undeclared option, because ALS 000 is for students looking primarily in CALS, and CCAS is for students looking at majors across colleges. At least initially, only new freshmen would be admitted to this program. There are currently no “undeclared” students in CALS, and if students are undeclared, they are in CCAS. Students will be allowed to remain undeclared until the end of their third semester, and after that, a ‘may not continue’ hold will be placed on their record that will be automatically removed when they transfer to another program. One or more MIU advisors will be assigned to these students.

One thing CCAS brought up is that we want to be very careful about how much we sell this option during the first year. We probably want to start out with a lower number of students (~50-75), and instead make sure the process is done well the first time around. CCAS has agreed to partner with us in this attempt to not sell or announce this plan at first, but by instead identifying students who should really be in this option. The approach to this could be similar to last summer’s approach to the online sections of Inter-Ag 155: we did not expressly advertise the online sections, but we would place people in the sections if they were right for that particular student.

Undeclared students will be required to complete the CALS First-Year Seminar requirement during their first semester. CCAS recommended that we do not restrict the number of First-Year Seminar options available to undeclared students, at least during the first year. For example, we would not tell undeclared students that they cannot take a particular FIG that is unrelated to CALS, but we would encourage them to choose CALS-related FIGS that would be more helpful for them.

There has been encouragement from people that the recommended curriculum should be as rigorous as possible, in order to keep as many doors open as possible, and students should not see this as an easy

way to get through their first year. A chart may be created that shows how doors close when specific limiting courses are taken.

There was discussion on the First-Year Seminar options available to undeclared students. Inter-Ag 155 and Biology 375: Exploring Biology will probably be the two best options for these students, and they will have the option to fulfill the requirement with the other eligible First-Year Seminar courses. There was concern about these students taking more specific First-Year Seminar courses, and it was determined that these students might have to do some exploring on their own within the college, and their advisor(s) might help out with this. There was also a concern about capacity, and there will most likely be enough capacity in the First-Year Seminar courses to accommodate all the undeclared students in the fall. Finally, there was a question about how much mentoring will be going on, and this would probably depend both on the MIU advisors and the number of students enrolled in the undeclared option. It was suggested that there should be some language about mentoring in the Draft Undeclared Plan document.

There was also discussion on the progress with the Biology major. Pfatteicher reported that the Intro Bio proposal was due to the Chancellor last week, and there was also a meeting this morning between Dean VandenBosch and one or more deans in L&S. It was stated that no matter what happens on that front, we will still go ahead with the CALS Undeclared Plan.

Minutes

The February 14 CALS Curriculum Committee meeting minutes were approved.

Capstone memo: Department specific paragraphs

The purpose of this discussion was to determine how to approach drafting department-specific comments. There are different groups of departments with similar capstone evaluations, so we could potentially come up with some sort of template or similar language. A summary document of previous CALS Curriculum Committee minutes regarding the capstone review was provided. The format of the general outline would be:

Department:

Major:

Courses Allowed for Capstone:

Curriculum Committee feedback/assessment/review:

Course 1: ...

Course 2: ...

Etc.

General/summary comments (if any): "Overall, the Curriculum Committee found that..."

The committee then brainstormed on forming groups of major capstones that were similar to one another. Here are the different groups:

Acceptable/approved/no concerns:

- Genetics
- Biochemistry
- Microbiology
- Biological Systems Engineering
- Forest Science
- Wildlife Ecology
- Dietetics
- Dairy Science
- Entomology
- Landscape Architecture (professional program ONLY)
- Community & Environmental Sociology

Some Issues (we will note these issues for future reference, but departments do not necessarily need to change anything now):

- Nutritional Sciences
- Soil Science
- Agronomy
- Animal Science
- Poultry Science
- Food Science

Bigger Issues (need to be addressed):

- Biology*
- Agricultural & Applied Economics**
- Agricultural Business Management**
- Horticulture (moderate concerns)

*Biocore 324, one of Biology's current capstone course options, was actually approved by the CALS Curriculum Committee in 2009. We would be reversing this committee's decision about approving the course with our memo. There was discussion about whether this information should be included in the memo to the Biology major, and it was agreed that we should do so. This is because we should hold Biology to the same standard that we are holding the other majors to, and the point of the most recent capstone review was to closely review courses and let departments know what the findings were.

**Pfatteicher noted that she had been told that with new hires in AAE, someone (possibly Bruce Jones) will be teaching AAE 500 in the fall of 2012. AAE 500 is the capstone course that was previously offered by the department.

No notes or capstone review:

- Life Sciences Communication
- Landscape Architecture (non-professional program)
- Plant Pathology
- Environmental Sciences (the major did not exist at the time of the capstone review)

There was some additional discussion regarding the capstone review. It was noticed that there was not consistency between departments about course numbering, so the solution of excluding things like 300-level courses in all instances would not be possible. Instead, we can say that students should be taking more advanced courses, and capstone courses should be taken during their senior year. There is a footnote in the document that states that if departments create a new capstone course, we recommend course numbers 500 or 550 because these are typical capstone course numbers.

Finally, there was discussion on what to include in the department-specific memos. It was decided that even for departments on the “acceptable” and “some issues” lists, we still need a summary of what was reviewed. Also, we should include a note that if things have changed since the time of review, the department should let us know. Bednarek proposed to draft some template language that we can use for each department; specifically, for departments with minor issues, we can draft some similar language to be used with all of these departments, and for the departments with bigger issues, each letter should be drafted separately. Pfatteicher suggested that we draft these letters and have each committee review a certain number of them (ex: each committee member can review a couple “acceptable” departments and one “some issues” department. Also, for the departments with no capstone review, we should obtain information from these departments, probably by sending letters to the departments. In these request for info letters, we can mention that we will be sending information regarding the capstone review to Dean VandenBosch.

Bednarek made a motion to adjourn, and Bland seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.