

Council on General Education Minutes
April 10, 2018
10-11:00 a.m., Stevenson Hall 140

Presiding: Rocio Rivadeneyra

Present: Brian Aitken, James Cunningham, Rebekka Darner-Gougis, Sally Parry, Carla Pohl, Rocio Rivadeneyra, Jon Rosenthal, Jean Standard, Benjamin Stiers, and Chad Woolard

Rivadeneyra called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Guests:

Pamm Ambrose, Associate Director, University College

Angela McCombs, Instructional Assistant Professor, University College

Dr. George Seelinger, Chair, Department of Mathematics

Dr. Yimin Wang, Associate Director, Office of International Studies and Programs

Action Items:

1. Approval of Minutes

The question was called. Pohl made a motion to accept the February 27, 2018 minutes. Aitken seconded. All in favor, none opposed. The minutes were accepted.

2. IDS 133A27, Study Abroad, History, & Urban Life in Western Europe (proposed for Humanities)

The course was proposed by Dr. Richard Hughes, Associate Professor, in the Department of History.

Rosenthal reminded members HIS 285, Study Abroad, was approved for the Humanities designation earlier in the academic year by the Council. HIS 285 is a study abroad course offered during the summer for History majors. IDS 133A27 is being proposed so that non-History majors could participate in the study abroad experience as well. Students in both courses will participate in the same tour but there are different course assignments and outcomes for each course. Rosenthal felt the course was an appropriate fit for the Humanities designation.

Darner-Gougis questioned why the course was proposed in IDS rather than as a History course. Rosenthal explained IDS 133 is traditionally used as an umbrella course for study abroad courses with different locations/experiences receiving a separate decriminalization. Rosenthal asked Aitken for confirmation to which Aitken confirmed the explanation was correct.

The question was called. Woolard made a motion to approve the course for the Humanities designation. Pohl seconded.

All in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

Rosenthal will notify Hughes of the Council's decision.

3. IDS 114, Mathematical Principles for Learning (new course)

The course was proposed by Pamm Ambrose, Associate Director, University College.

Ambrose informed Council members that there are three courses as part of the developmental math program housed in University College. While these courses count toward a student's academic load status, they do not count toward the number of hours required for graduation. The courses range from three to four credit hours and students are charged standard tuition and fees when enrolling in them.

Students are placed in math courses based upon the scores they receive on the ALEKS placement exam. Those students who place into MAT 104, Intermediate Algebra, will then be directed to take MAT 119, College Algebra following completion of MAT 104. For students placing in MAT 102, Basic Algebra, they will then need to complete, MAT 102 and MAT 104, in addition to any additional coursework required by their respective majors. Those students placing into the MAT 102A01, Basic Algebra: Developmental Numerical Reasoning, pathway will complete MAT 104 and then be directed toward MAT 130, Dimensions of Numerical Reasoning.

Ambrose explained the other methods course that is offered, MAT 113, Elements of Mathematical Reasoning, is not an algebra course. MAT 104 is an algebra course and is more likely to help students who need to enroll in MAT 119 than MAT 113 would. Staff wanted to determine a better way to support students who were not quite at the level of taking the credit-bearing courses which is how the course proposal for IDS 114 came about.

According to Ambrose, staff from University College and the Department of Mathematics worked with ALEKS data to determine which test score ranges should have the additional intervention of the new course. Aitken explained students receiving a score of 46 on ALEKS are automatically placed in MAT 113. Those students who fell in the 24-45 range place into MAT 104. The students falling into the upper tier of that range, specifically 40-45, are those that would be targeted to enroll in the proposed course. These students would be provided additional support in regards to study skills in a just-in-time learning environment in IDS 114 which would be taught by Angela McCombs.

Ambrose informed the Council the statistics for what is commonly known as remedial education, are not great. Illinois State has a good program and our students do better than the national average. However, there is large room for improvement and both University College and Mathematics staff felt this was a great opportunity for the University to try this program as it is gaining popularity nation-wide.

Rivadenebra asked if students would be required to take IDS 114. McCombs replied students would not be eligible to take MAT 113 if they had not taken IDS 114. Rivadenebra then asked if that was because these students did not qualify to take MAT 113 which Ambrose confirmed. Ambrose added there would be less than 40 students that would need the full support of MAT 104. Rivadenebra asked how many students Ambrose predicted would be enrolled in the new course. Ambrose predicted it would be around 40 but cautioned that it was hard to predict as University College staff need to know the majors of the incoming students in order to determine their math-related needs and many come in as Undeclared. Based on last year's numbers, there were 50 students who fit the criteria. However, the course would be capped at 40 students.

Rosenthal asked if 40 represented the number of students falling within the specified ALEKS test band and Aitken confirmed it would like cover those students. Aitken added that many of these students come from non-STEM majors, such as Humanities and the Fine Arts, as STEM majors have different math requirements. According to Aitken, those students who test below a 46 generally do not take MAT 120, Finite Mathematics, unless required to do so.

Dr. George Seelinger, Chair of the Department of Mathematics, further explained the purpose of IDS 114 was to target those students who do not need the College Algebra gateway. Half of majors at Illinois State do not need this gateway. From the half of the population that does, many will place high enough that the course would not be needed.

Standard asked if there has been an increase from 5-10 years ago in the number of students who need the lower-level math courses. Ambrose responded that it is difficult to compare as the University changed to the ALEKS placement exam around two years ago. Darner-Gougis mentioned that if high schools are committed to the Common Core, the number of students needing lower-level math should decrease. Seelinger said a multi-prong approach is being taken at the state level and that transitional math courses to be offered in high school. Southern Illinois University is already offering a similar program through the use of co-requisite courses. According to Seelinger, studies conducted at the national level show that targeting students can be successful in helping them overcome obstacles when taking developmental math as they are likely to do well with extra help.

Ambrose added a big consideration of this type of course is that is the study skills component embedded in the course. Students learn how to learn and develop critical thinking, as well as other life skills. McCombs added that many of the students who would take the course are math-phobic due to unfavorable past experiences. The course would focus on a growth mindset in that students would be encouraged that it is alright not to know the answer right away. Rather the course would emphasize a focus on math study skills which would translate to skills that could be used outside of math-related courses to the students' other coursework. According to McCombs, this structure would be particularly helpful to incoming FTIC students.

Seelinger informed members MAT 113 is typically a mid-to-large lecture course. Students in this targeted group would find the additional support to be beneficial to them. Rosenthal commented that the targeted group for the course needs the additional support. Illinois State's General Education program is the opposite of most institutions as it requires two Mathematics courses and only one English course. Those students placing in MAT 102, who have more than likely had bad experiences with math previously, are required to then take MAT 104, 114 and a possible statistics course, and as such, deserve the additional support.

Rivadeneira asked if it was typical for this type of course to be classified as an IDS course rather than a Math course. Ambrose replied that as the course has such a strong focus on study skills, it would be more appropriate to house it in the IDS category. Pohl asked if the course would mirror MAT 113, thereby making it more of a tutoring session. McCombs assured the Council that this would not be the case. Ambrose explained the new course would be a lecture course while providing additional support. Students would be required to attend the MAT 113 lecture, lab and IDS 114 course as well.

McCombs added instructors of MAT 113 will focus solely on the 113 course content and will not focus on study skills. These additional skills will be taught in the IDS 114 course. Darner-Gougis asked how the just-in-time teaching methodology would be deployed. McCombs responded that there will be one section of MAT 113, taught by Jane Clair that will be linked to the IDS 114 course. The targeted population of 40 students would be taken from that section and would utilize the syllabus and course outline. Clair and McCombs would work together to ensure course topics and assignments correspond to each other.

The question was called. A motion was made by Woolard to approve the course. Stiers seconded.

All in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

4. INTO AE Pathway Courses

The courses were proposed by Wang as part of INTO's Academic English Pathway.

Rosenthal reminded members the University had entered into a partnership with London-based firm, INTO, in an effort to increase international recruitment. INTO has currently partnered with between 11 and 14 other institutions in the United States to recruit international students.

There are several levels at which a student maybe admitted: Academic English (AE) is similar to the University's English Learning Institute (ELI) program. AE and ELI students participate in non-credit bearing courses. For students whose level of English is closer to the University's admission requirement may enroll in a one, two, or three semester pathway that will combine English instruction along with student support and an introduction to the American education system. Courses will be credit-bearing and based on syllabi outcomes, resemble the 112 and 115 courses currently taught by the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. The courses proposed for the first semester of the three-semester pathway will be considered as English for academic purposes and will have the abbreviation of ESL in the Catalog and in Campus Solutions.

Darner-Gougis asked if students in the Pathway would be able to get credit for both the proposed courses and LAN courses or if they would be excused from the language requirement. Parry responded that as these students would already be proficient in a different language, it is assumed the language requirement would be waived. Rosenthal added it would be possible students would also have the AMALI requirement waived if they came from a non-western country.

Woolard noted the syllabi from the proposed courses were similar to the one for COM 110 and wondered if COM 110 would be waived as well. Rosenthal responded that COM 110 would not be waived and while these students may be fluent in 112-level in a foreign language, it would not be the same level of fluency or understanding taught in COM 110. Wang added when designing the proposed courses, the intent was for them to serve as preparation for both ENG 101 and COM 110.

Wang then explained there were two different ways a student would qualify for the 3-semester Pathway. The first way was for the student to be admitted directly into the Pathway Program. The second way was for the student to receive a TOEFL score of 50-60 which indicates the need for additional English preparation. Currently, a TOEFL score of 79 is needed to be admitted directly to the University.

Standard wondered how many students were anticipated to be in the Pathway. Rosenthal responded that President Dietz's goal is to increase international enrollment to 10% of overall enrolment in the coming years. The current administration in Washington has not been helpful in regards to international recruitment. INTO is predicting about 100 students this fall. As the partnership grows in the future, the University will need to make sure additional systems and supports are in place to accommodate the growth.

Woolard questioned if students in the AE Pathway would be required to take all four proposed courses. Wang confirmed that those students in the 3-semester Pathway would take five courses, the four IDS courses as well as a Math course. Woolard asked if these courses would be taken prior to the student enrolling in General Education courses. Rosenthal and Wang confirmed the courses would be taken prior to students being allowed to register for General Education courses. Pohl asked if any of the IDS courses would be available online. Rosenthal responded courses would be taken on campus, in a face-to-face setting. Wang added that per federal regulations, Pathway students were not allowed to take coursework online.

Darner-Gougis commented graduate students may find the IDS courses useful as well and asked if they would be offered over the summer or would be eligible to be covered by tuition waivers. Wang explained the 3-semester Pathway was for undergraduate students only. However, graduate students would be eligible to participate in the 1-semester Pathway. Graduate students in the Pathway would not be eligible to hold as assistantship until they were admitted into their academic program. Rosenthal added there would be no summer start option for the graduate students and the courses would not be offered in the summer. Undergraduate students would be allowed to start in any semester. Rivadeneyra asked if the courses would count toward graduation. Rosenthal explained that while the courses would not count toward major requirements, they would count toward the 120 hour graduation requirement.

A motion was made by Rosenthal to approve the four ESL courses. Woolard seconded.

All in favor, none opposed. The motion passed.

Information Items:

5. IDEAS Course Update

Rivadeneyra reminded members of the proposed U.S. Diversity requirement currently being considered on campus. Based on recommendations from the ad hoc committee, Provost Murphy sent the proposal to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) for consideration this spring. As part of its deliberation, the UCC held two open forums to garner thoughts from the campus community.

Rivadeneyra thanked Standard for facilitating the two IDEAS open forums the previous week. Both forums had good attendance with 47 and 50 individuals attending respectively and Rivadeneyra, Rosenthal and Standard felt there was good conversation held at both.

A survey was sent out to the campus community the week prior asking for feedback. Standard reminded members to check their Junk email boxes as several individual across campus noticed the emails ended up there. Rosenthal informed members an email reminder to submit feedback would be sent out on April 20th with the survey closing on April 27th. At the time of the meeting, 1,088 survey responses had been received with 31.7% of those responses containing written comments.

Standard noted that most of the feedback received during the forums was in favor of the requirement with most questions geared toward the implementation and process rather than the actual need of the requirement. Rivadeneyra noted that following the forum, she participated in an interview that was aired on WGLT. Standard informed the Council the next step would be to gather the survey information and then for the UCC to discuss. As it is toward the end of the semester, the UCC will begin discussions in the fall. If the UCC approves the recommendation, it will be forwarded to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate for consideration.

Rivadeneyra made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Parry seconded.

Meeting adjourned: 10:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Soemer Simmons