

**Council on General Education Minutes**  
**November 30, 2021**  
**10 a.m.-11:00 a.m., STV 140**

**Presiding:** Amy Hurd

**Present:** Brian Aitken, Mary Elaine Califf, Linda Clemmons, Genevieve Fritz, Amy Hurd, Yvette Pigman, Rocio Rivadeneyra, Indira Robinson, Amy Wood, and Haiyan Xie

**Guests:**

Malinda Aiello, Program Director, Illinois Articulation Initiative

Dr. Wouter Van Alebeek, Interim Director Academic Programs, International Pathways

Hurd called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

**Action Items:**

**1. SPA 119 Academic Spanish for Spanish Speakers, Part I (new course proposed for QR designation)**

The course was proposed by Dr. James Pancrazio, Professor, Department of Languages, Literature, and Cultures. The course was discussed at the previous meeting. Discussion was tabled due to time constraints.

Hurd informed Council members the department split the current SPA 120 into two different courses. SPA 119 is a new course while the SPA 120 proposal is a course revision to the existing course. Aitken had previously chatted with Hurd regarding his concerns with the proposal as there seems to be confusion with languages counting for the QR designation. Aitken explained this is a common misconception across campus as students who pursue a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree are exempt from taking a course in the QR category as they must take a 115 or higher language course. If the course were to be approved for the BA requirement, this would be different than the counting toward the QR general education requirement. Also, if the course is approved for the QR designation, those students who complete the Bachelor of Science degree will still need to fulfill the requirement.

Wood questioned why the department wanted SPA 119 to fulfill the QR requirement while SPA 120 fulfills the LH requirement. Aitken explained that the traditional language courses offered are 111, 112, 115, and 116. The 116 courses all fulfill the LH requirement because of the extensive writing requirement in those courses. SPA 120 is the equivalent to SPA 116 but is geared toward native Spanish speakers. Aitken believed that was why SPA 120 also fulfilled the LH requirement and felt the designation was still appropriate for that course. He went on to explain the 115 courses do not fulfill any General Education requirement but do satisfy the BA graduation requirement.

Wood wondered why 115 did not count toward General Education. Xie then asked if the program needed a QR course. Aitken explained students are not allowed to double dip these courses. For those students completing a Bachelor of Science degree, they must complete a BS-SMT course as part of their graduation requirements. For those completing a Bachelor of Arts degree, they must take any language course at the 115 level or higher.

Califf noted this rule does not make sense. Hurd noted per the catalog, any Language course at the 115 level or higher counts toward the requirement so this course would automatically fulfill the BA

requirement. Aitken pointed out the wording for the requirement is misleading on Course Finder and that it should be referred to as a graduation requirement as opposed to a General Education requirement. Califf asked how the BS-SMT requirement was treated. Hurd responded that it was an additional graduation requirement. Aitken added the wording for the requirement was accurate on Course Finder and brought up MAT 147 as an example. Hurd said she could check with Registrar staff to see if there was a way to list 115 so as not to be so confusing to students. Aitken agreed and noted those students who switch majors are often confused as they believe the 115 course fulfills their QR requirement, when in reality, it does not.

Wood asked if the Council could accept SPA 119 for the LH designation instead. Rivadeneyra responded as the proposal did not ask for the designation, the Council could not automatically assign or approve it as such.

A motion was made by Aitken to reject SPA 119 for the QR designation. Rivadeneyra seconded.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

## **2. SPA 120 Academic Spanish for Spanish Speakers, Part II (existing course revision)**

The course was proposed by Dr. James Pancrazio, Professor, Department of Languages, Literature, and Cultures. The course was discussed at the previous meeting. Discussion was tabled due to time constraints.

Hurd reminded the Council the proposal was for a revision to an existing course. Wood asked what the revision to the course was as it was unclear in the description. Hurd responded there was a change in the course title to include "Part II." Rivadeneyra noted the course was being split into two semesters between SPA 119 and SPA 120. Aitken added the Council's decision was needed to determine if the revised course had changed enough to remove the LH designation or if it still fulfilled the spirit of the requirement.

Aiello asked if SPA 119 would be the prerequisite for this course. Aitken responded SPA 115, SPA 119, or consent of the instructor would be the prerequisite. Upon reviewing the updated syllabus, Aitken felt the course still had the same level of writing as it previously did. Wood asked how many in class writing assignments would be required. Califf responded there were five total assignments with three of them being out of class assignments.

A motion was made by Califf to accept the SPA 120 course revision and approve the course for the LH designation. Rivadeneyra seconded.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

## **3-7. ESL 50 Academic Speaking and Listening V (new course)**

**ESL 51 Academic Reading V (new course)**

**ESL 52 Academic Writing V (new course)**

**ESL 53 Grammar in Context V (existing course revision)**

### **ESL 54 Special Topics in Academic English V (existing course revision)**

The courses were proposed by Dr. Wouter Van Alebeek, Interim Director Academic Programs, International Pathways. The Council chose to discuss and the five proposals together.

Hurd informed the Council that three of the proposals were for new courses while two were revisions of existing courses. Van Alebeek explained that ESL 53 and ESL 54 were created when INTO began. However, due to the timing of the INTO implementation, the courses were created with no content/descriptions. INTO currently has ESL 30-34 and ESL 40-44 courses. These courses are non-credit bearing Academic English courses that students take when their English score levels are not sufficient to begin in a Pathway program. Students complete the Academic English program, matriculate and complete the Pathway program, and then matriculate to Illinois State in their respective degree programs. Students may also elect to complete a standalone Academic English program and not pursue a Pathway or degree program. Van Alebeek added staff has noticed bridge courses are sometimes needed between the Level 40-44 courses which is why it was suggested a Level 5 be created with the proposed five courses.

Aiello asked if the courses were just for ESL or if other remedial courses were offered at the University. Hurd responded remedial courses were just offered in Math. Van Alebeek noted these courses were in development prior to him being in the Interim Director role. Program faculty had already began assessing current course outcomes and had written the proposals. By adding the Level 5 courses, students can succeed in language skill development just as well as they could in a two semester Pathway program. This would help make the Academic English program more accessible to potential students, especially for those from countries whose sponsors do not allow students to enroll in the Pathway programs.

Wood asked if the courses were part of the Pathway program. Van Alebeek responded they were not as students who tested into Academic English would not be eligible to be in the Pathway program until they had completed the Academic English courses. Wood then asked how students progressed through the program. Van Alebeek explained students completed a placement test which assessed the level of courses the student must complete. If students began at Level 2, they would take three semesters of Academic English courses, Levels 2 through 4, before matriculating to the Pathway. If students tested at Level 4, they would just need to complete the Level 4 courses before entering the Pathway.

Clemmons asked if students were required to take all the courses in a particular level. Van Alebeek confirmed all courses in a level were required. Wood asked for clarification regarding the five contact hours for the courses. Van Alebeek explained the contact hours had more to do with student visa requirements. Per visa requirements, students must have at least 18 hours of in person instruction per week. Currently, Academic English students have 20 hours per week to be certain all requirements are met. Van Alebeek noted the number of required contact hours is currently being reviewed by staff.

Wood noted one of the courses dealt with special topics in Academic English and asked if Van Alebeek could provide an example of what that meant. Van Alebeek explained that the course was a little bit of a combination course in that students engaged in critical thinking, citations, and now to navigate the University and its services. All of the things that don't fit in a "regular" course. He was unsure of why it was originally created as a special topics course as it was more of an academic skills course. However, the proposals were submitted with the same title so they would align with courses already approved for Levels 2-4.

Aiello suggested it may be better to change the name of the course as it automatically has connotations of being a course where topics could/would change. Rivadeneyra thought it would depend on who the target audience and felt for this population of students, the title may be alright. Califf asked if the courses were available only to INTO international students or if anyone could enroll. Van Alebeek responded that during the current INTO mothball period, students from outside INTO were being allowed to enroll. Simmons added all courses were blocked and students must have the consent of the program in order to enroll.

A motion was made by Aitken to approve the ESL 50-ESL 54 course proposals/revisions as presented. Pigman seconded.

All in favor, none opposed, none abstained.

The motion passed.

**Information Items:**

**8. CGE Bylaws Update**

Hurd informed the Council the CGE Bylaws had been approved by the Academic Senate.

A motion was made by Rivadeneyra to adjourn. Wood seconded.

Meeting adjourned 10:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Soemer Simmons