

Undergraduate Studies Committee

Tuesday, April 23, 2024
12:45 p.m. Online via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Attending Voting Members: Gruia Calinescu (CS), Promila Dhar (BME), David Gidalevitz (PHYS), Erin Hazard (HUM), Steve Kleps (CAEE), Kathiravan Krishnamurthy (FDSN), Eva Kultermann (ARCH), Nicole Legate (PSYC), Yuting Lin (BIOL), Yuri Mansury (SSCI), David Maslanka (AMAT), Victor Perez-Luna (CHBE), Ray Trygstad (ITM/Secretary), John Twombly (SSB), Murat Vural (MMAE), Fred Weening (Chair)

Also Attending: Anri Brod (Libraries), Robert Ellis (AMAT), Joe Gorzkowski (AA), Mary Haynes (UGAA), Melanie Jones (Armour Academy), Sang Baum Kang (SSB), Mahesh Krishnamurthy (Kaplan), Gabriel Martinez (Armour Academy), Abby McGrath (Enrollment Services), Nick Menhart (DVP Accreditation), Nichole Novak (Libraries), Shamiah Okhai (LCSL), Kiah Ong (AMAT), Ayesha Qamer (Registrar), Zipporah Robinson (Academic Success), Gabrielle Smith (AA), Katie Spink (BIOL), Despina Stasi (AMAT), Mary Jorgenson Sullivan (ELS), Jeff Wereszczynski (UFC Chair)

1. Approval of Minutes from the April 9 meeting.

Kathiravan Krishnamurth moved for approval of these minutes and Yuri Mansury seconded.

The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

2. Update from Academic Affairs.

Academic Affairs had no update at this time.

3. The Interim Interim Fall 2023 Mathematics Core Curriculum Assessment Report was presented by Mary Jorgenson Sullivan.

Mary Jorgenson Sullivan briefed the **report** and noted that the Assessment Committee will do further analysis and will issue a final report in the fall. There were no questions.

4. A proposal to reduce the credit hours required to complete the Bachelor of Information Technology and Management Degree was presented by Ray Trygstad.

Ray Trygstad briefed the **proposal** noting reducing the required credit hours from 127 to 121 would reduce the current free electives in the degree by six hours but the proposal would change the current minor requirement to fifteen hours of minor, technical, or free electives which would still allow students to complete a minor if they so desired.

A motion to approve the proposed change to the Bachelor of Information Technology and Management Degree was made by Yuri Mansuri seconded by David Gidalevitz. **The motion passed on a vote of 15 – 0.**

Katie Spink noted that previously when a Humanities program eliminated a minor requirement it was considered to be a significant change. Ray Trygstad argued that this was purely a departmental requirement because the the only reason a minor was included is that the department was uncomfortable with the idea of 27 hours of free elective credit and believed that students needed more structure. Chair Fred Weening took a straw vote as to whether this was NOT a significant change and the vote was 5 - 1 that it was not a significant change with a presumption that those not voting had no opinion one way or the other. Fred stated it would be presented to UFC as not a significant change.

5. Ishaan Goel, new Vice President for Academic Affairs in the Student Government Association (SGA) was introduced to the committee by Jacob Thomas, the outgoing VP for Academic Affairs.

Jacob Thomas stated that when he he staarted in this position, he was offered very little guidance, but saw a lack of direction of what the role of the position should be. He understands now that the role is just getting a holistic perspective of academics at IIT. But he was still unsure how to contextualize UGAA activity and there was some discussion to help him in that, noting that SGA representative involvement in UGSC had varied greatly over the years. Katie Spink noted that active student involvement in the UGSC in the future is important as changes to core curriculum are coming, and that student input is going to be valued and critical as we work through that so it'll be important for the representative to liaise between SGA and the UGSC, and also for SGA to elicit important student feedback on some of the changes.

6. The **Periodic Curricular Review of the Bachelor of Industrial Technology and Management (INTM) Degree** was presented by Pamela Houser, Interim Director of Industrial Technology and Management. Pam Houser briefed the report noting that this is a program which really serves a niche student group, working adults in industry, and was designed as a transfer only program. Being working adults, classes are all in the evening or online, and students really value the opportunity to do the online courses which gives them more flexibility around their work schedules. There were no questions for Pam.

David Maslanka moved and Ray Trygstad seconded the motion approve the report from the Industrial Technology and Management program. **The motion passed on a vote of 15 – 0.**

7. **Reinstatement of the I-Course Pilot Program** was discussed by Mahesh Krishnamurthy. Mahesh Krishnamurthy briefed the proposal as follows: In previous years there has been an option for an I-Course which really is a designation just like you would have for C and H and S. There was a designation for a course that was assigned to specific courses proposed by certain academic units which were then also used for credit towards an IPRO. The idea was to give students some free electives so that they could take other courses that normally would not be possible within the range of the 120-odd courses that they have to take to graduate. The idea has now been modified with the primary incentive being that the way it was previously defined was creating a lot of inconsistencies between the courses, because if an academic unit proposed a course that was already in the department they were not necessarily able to confirm or guarantee that they would follow the learning outcomes for the IPRO, so some elements could get left out. It was becoming logistically extremely challenging for the Kaplan Institute to manage the associated information. As a result, the entire assessment process became really complicated, and it was not reproducible or scalable. The current proposal we call I-Course Two Point Oh. Instead of having an elective from the academic unit be used as an IPRO, we are proposing that the academic unit actually teach or propose the IPRO and then bring it back into their academic units; this is just a reversal model. The goal is that when a faculty member is teaching a course, this allows the academic unit to work with the faculty member to ensure that it meets the requirement of their specific tech elective. They are only working with one elective, or two in some scenarios. So Kaplan institute does not have to manage IPROs that are coming from different academic units. There is a table in the document to show you what the differences are between the two models. The main difference to be considered is that if a course is coming from an academic unit to an IPRO, it should not be a lecture based model. It should be an experiential coaching-based model in which there's open ended problem solving. The questions that have also come up is whether or not they are approved for cross listing and double counting. There is a policy currently that's being discussed. But there needs to be something more concrete so it can be communicated to students. In 2023, the I-Course 1.0 basically reached the end of its pilot stage, and there was no renewal at that point specifically from the Kaplan Institute, because the administrative load was too high to manage. Kaplan institute did not ask or seek a renewal. The only reason right now we're talking about is because, even though it was allowed to lapse or to expire, several courses had been precoded in students' minds about courses that should be listed as an I-Course. This proposal is a model that allows decentralization of a lot of the administration to make it more scalable, and the overall objective is any IPRO can be adopted by an academic unit. So if for example, an IPRO course is offered by Electrical Engineering, and ITM and Mechanical Engineering decide it fulfills the requirements of any one of their tech electives, it can be used in that manner. The courses may be cross-listed, but the onus of crosslisting is on the departments. The goal is to create a system that is scalable which is also consistent in terms of what the student experience is going to be with all the deliverables of the IPRO met. So they present at the end of the semester, and there should not be confidential information present and all those types of things sometimes found in senior design classes. That will not be addressed at this point. The idea is, a department can use all the IPRO learning objectives and feel free to adjust that as necessary to fulfill department or academic unit course requirement, whatever format it might be in, a 497 or an existing class, that Kaplan does not want to have any control over because it is not in their purview. There's information here in the document. One critical question here is can one IPRO be adopted by multiple departments? The answer should be, yes, because if the same course meets multiple departments requirements. let the students take those courses in a way that reduces the number of courses they have to take from their major. This allows them to take skill based course without necessarily only focusing on major based courses because we have shortened degree times. Are any questions?

Katie Spink asked for clarification of her understanding that what was being proposed was that UGSC was being asked to approve that students who take a particular IPRO can basically double count it as an elective in their degree program. Mahesh Krishnamurthy replied yes and no with the caveat that we're

not asking for that. We are asking for the structure to be in place so that academic units can make that request, and currently, there is no such mechanism. We want that mechanism to exist. So that if an academic unit decides to adopt an IPRO UGSC has basically given them the stamp of approval that such a mechanism exists. All courses would still IPROs period; this would just create a pathway for academic units to bring them into their program.

Kathleen Nagle asked if someone in architecture proposes an IPRO, then that IPRO could be listed as an IPRO, but also cross listed as an ARCH 49-Whatever. Her impression was that the student would then opt register, if they wanted it to count as an IPRO would register for it as the IPRO course number. If they wanted to count as their architecture elective, they register as the architecture elective, but you would not double dip. It would not count for both. Is that correct? Mahesh Krishnamurthy replied that this is the tricky part. It is not set in stone that that has to be done, so it would be good to if we are trying to reduce the number of credits from 126 to 120, allowing focusing on the skill rather than the number of credits would mean that double counting is something that we should probably allow, and I know Nick also has some thoughts here, as well as Rob Ellis.

Robert Ellis stated that he was putting aside the question of double counting. But he has run for the past two years a course that essentially meets substantially meets all the objectives of the IPRO I-Course 2 Point 0 column that Mahesh displayed. It's called Data Science Projects and had a slightly different name last year. Last year it was successful in Innovation day; this year it's it's run as a cross listed IPRO and and Data Science 480 Data Science Projects course, it's completely ready to be executed under this under this model. Otherwise he'll have to continue to cross list it and deal with the administrative overhead. One huge benefit of being integrated with the IPRO program is funding for an honorarium for a subject matter expert from outside, which was extremely and which is extremely important to connect data science methods with with real world topics.

Nick Menhart noted that the idea of double counting is a recommendation that's really under the control of UGSC and that that's really what this body needs to decide. Are you allowed to double count or not? That was a discussion at the original I-Course pilot, and now Mahesh is sort of changing the structure, which is a good thing. But UGSC should consider both double counting. He is onboard. Other people in this meeting are on the Core Curriculum Revision Committee, and there seems to be a great interest. Jennifer's presentation at the full faculty meeting discussed an increase in double counting where appropriate. If learning objectives are met, why not double count? Because it increases student progression and student success. We still have to meet the minimum 120 hours but it it allows more flexibility for students. That's not a decision for the IPRO Office. That's a decision for UGSC and Mahesh is just deferring to this body. UGSC can sign that double counting policy. He can kind of run the IPRO program and and has to work out in that fashion. Mahesh Krishnamurthy replied that we are hoping that we will focus on the skill rather than the number of credits. If we have accomplished certain skills and giving them credits for that, specific course requirements would benefit the students so that they do have the flexibility to explore a course, let's say, in design or in law, for that matter, that they normally would not have taken. So just give them one extra free elective to explore this skill growth as they join the workforce.

Fred Weening asked Mahesh Krishnamurthy at this moment what what are you asking of UGSC? Mahesh Krishnamurthy replied that at this moment we are asking for a revised I designation for certain courses. The model, as it is currently presented, is where an academic unit proposes IPROs with a long term goal, with a long term plan, that can then be brought back to fulfill both a tech collective requirement and the IPRO requirement. That is what needs to have a vote. Perhaps there are 2 different things—one is creating the I designation because that designation expired, and the second thing is a mechanism for that I designation to be carried forward and double counted by individual academic units.

Katie Spink observed that it was it's her understanding that all of these courses will have the designation of IPRO. I-P-R-O. Right? Mahesh Krishnamurthy responded yes, and all of them technically, could also have the I designation should we so choose. Katie Spink then noted that if everything's going to be an IPRO, no other designation is needed unless you're asking to cross list it, like it's not like there needs to be an N designation or a C designation. But they're labeled as IPRO—you don't need any other designation. Mahesh Krishnamurthy replied that this is correct in many ways. That is exactly what it does. Katie Spink then stated so what she was trying to figure out what it is you're asking if everything's going to be an IPRO, then there's no other designation needed? Nick Menhart responded that it's a little different, a little more nuanced. If UGSC allows that you can double count, then you don't need any designations, because it'll just count. Katie Spink replied that that's not on the table at this discussion.

That's not what Mahesh said. What Mahesh said was, he just wanted this framework. But do we actually need this framework? Because if a course is an IPRO, it's an IPRO, and no other courses will be allowed to count as IPROs other than those with IPRO designation. If you're crosslisting and double counting, that's a separate issue.

Mahesh Krishnamurthy replied that I do understand what where you're coming from. So the I-Course model previously was a framework that was UGSC approved. So if you are saying we don't need an approval—we can just kind of run with it. We wanted to make sure we were not missing any clear approvals that were needed before we allowed other academic units say, yes go ahead, use it as a tech elective. We got the impression that UGSC has to approve this, for it to go across that from the IPRO Office into the academic units. My understanding was, it needs that approval and that approval has to go to the Interdisciplinary Committee because we won't force an academic unit to decide. We are actually making the Interdisciplinary Committee deliberate. So we are reducing one task from the Interdisciplinary Committee. They don't have to police bwhich academic course counts as an IPRO. We are making all the IPROs available and an academic unit can decide can you take it? So you are correct that there might be, and this might become a non issue. But we just want to make sure there is no clear policy or no clear structure we are missing, because that was the main concern that came out about a month back. This needs UGSC approval; make sure you're not missing something, and Nick, you can correct me if I'm wrong.

Nick Menhart replied that IPRO is going to set the IPROs They're all going to get designation. Any two departments, any two programs can cross list a class that's under the program authority. Maybe they want to bring it to UGSC, it's not clear if there's an official policy. Definitely the double counting policy is something UGSC should decide on. If UGSC decides that they will allow this double counting, then the I classes will happen. Then any of these classes, will be an IPRO, so there's no need for any sort of designation. What would need to happen is the academic programs, biology, electrical engineering, psychology, whatever would need to decide which, if any, classes they would want to designate as satisfying their requirements. That's generally a program decision. That might either be a minor change, or it might just be a cross listing issue, and I don't know that UGSC needs to approve it. But UGSC should decide if they're going to allow the double counting. That's the big issue that should be decided today to allow student to count them in two different ways. And that's the student success issue as well to allow students to to integrate these things a little bit better.

The Chair noted that we were out of time and members should bring this document back to their academic unit. Mahesh Krishnamurthy stated that everything was in the document and Katie Spink pointed out that the document was confusing. Jeff Wereszczynski made a point of order that we should table this but there was no time remaining to take a vote on tabling. Fred Weening noted that we still needed a volunteer to be Vice Chair and if someone else was willing to take minutes he would be happy to allow them to serve as Secretary.

As no more time was available, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 1:48 pm.