

ILLINOIS TECH UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 28, 2025

12:45pm

Online via Zoom and In-person in PS-152

(pdf version available here)

Attending Voting Members: John Twombly (SSB), Yuting Lin (BIO), Fred Weening (AMAT), Erdal Oruklu (ECE), Kindon Mills (ARCH), Braja Mandal (CHEM), Victor Perez-Luna (CHBE), Matthew Bauer (CS), Murat Vural (MMAE), Jeremy Hajek (ITM), Nicole Legate (PSYC), Erin Hazard (HUM), James Mann (INTM), Emily Leiner (PHYS), Stephen Kleps (CAEE), Keigo Kawaji (BME), Patrick Ireland (SSCI)

Chairing Meeting: Kathir Krishnamurthy (FDSN)

Also Attending: Nick Menhart (CCAC), Katie Spink (Pre-Med), Rich Klein (SSB), Nichole Novak (Libraries), Pam Houser (INTM), Jeff Wereszczynski (UFC), Keith Alexander (UGAA), Abby McGrath (Enrollment Services), Hannah Ringler (CAC), Melisa Lopez (Student Success & Retention), Kevin Cassel (VP Acad Affairs), Diane Ffiles (Univ Accred), Taylor Rojas (UGAA), Katherine Leight (CHEM), Ayesha Qamer (Registrar), Joe Gorzkowski (UGAA), Gabrielle Smith (UGAA), Ray Trygstad (ITM), Zipporah Robinson (Academic Success), Shamiah Okhai (LCSL), Mary Haynes (UGAA), Melanie Jones (Armour Academy), Georgia Papavasiliou (Armour), Mary Jorgenson Sullivan (ELS), Christopher Lee (Registrar), Kyle Hawkins (AMP)

Quorum was reached and the meeting was started at 12:46pm

1. Approval of the Meeting minutes. There were three different meeting minutes to be approved: [November 12](#), [November 26](#), and [January 14](#). Braja Mandal moved that they all be approved in one vote, this was seconded by Kindon Mills. The minutes were approved without objection.
2. Approval of the proposed meeting agenda. Kathir displayed the previously distributed [proposed agenda](#) and indicated that item 8, regarding math placement, had to be rescheduled to a later meeting. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Fred Weening and seconded by Braja Mandal. The proposed agenda, with removal of item 8, passed without objection.
3. Welcome of new members to UGSC. Kathir welcomed the following new voting members of that UGSC: Kindon Mills (ARCH), Jeremy Hajek (ITM), and Emily Leiner (PHYS). He also thanked the members who were replaced (Eva Kulterman (ARCH), Ray Trygstad (ITM), and David Gidalevitz (PHYS)) for their service.
4. The next item was a curriculum revision proposal by the Chemistry department. Kathir reminded the committee that revisions of Chemistry programs had been discussed last semester. Since then, the Chemistry department further discussed the revisions, and now are ready to present them again. The expectation is that we will not vote on the revisions at this meeting, but at the February 11 meeting so that UGSC members can get input from their departments prior to a vote.

Braja Mandal made the presentation of [the proposed revisions](#) by way of a [powerpoint presentation](#). There were two main objectives motivating the revisions:

- Reducing the total number of credits required in the BS Chem program and three concentrations to 120 (or 121) credits
- Meeting the new American Chemical Society (ACS) requirements for the BS Chem program and the three concentrations.

Some of the changes include

- reducing a required lab course from 2 credits to 1 credit,
- eliminating one required 4 credit Chemistry course and moving some of its content to other required Chemistry courses
- reducing the number of free elective credits from 12 to 9
- replacing the math requirement of Math 251 and Math 252 to Math 251 or Math 252
- adding a requirement of MATH 425 (Statistical Methods) or DS 151 (Introduction to Data Science) or CHEM 452 (Cheminformatics)

In addition, the revisions proposed would also

- reformat several combined lecture/lab courses into two new courses (one just lecture and the other just lab)

Braja indicated that there were two reasons for doing this

1. To give students more flexibility to fit courses into their schedule
2. To make the course-loads of the faculty teaching the courses more fair.

Both of these reasons were questioned: Katie Spink pointed out that students can already “mix and match” lectures and labs, and Kevin Cassel indicated that the faculty load issue is really just an administrative issue for the Chair and the Dean.

Several members of the committee pointed out that this lecture/lab-format change would require many other departments to update their curriculum since course numbers were changing. It was also pointed out that a student might now pass a lecture course but fail the corresponding lab course (or vice-versa) and this could make it harder for them to stay on track within their program. Braja understood the concerns and indicated he would communicate them back to the Chemistry department.

5. The next agenda item was informational. It has been proposed that the new course HUM 203 (Decoding and Designing Texts with Data) be given both the (H) and (C) designations. Erin Hazard, the chair of the H-subcommittee and Hannah Ringler, the chair of the C-subcommittee indicated that their subcommittees have met and reviewed the HUM 203 course syllabus with respect to the (H) and (C) learning objectives. In both cases the subcommittees voted unanimously to recommend the designations.
6. The next item was a [proposal to eliminate the minor in Math and Science Education](#). The item was presented by Shamiah Okhai representing the Lewis Dean’s office in collaboration with the Registrar’s office. Shamiah indicated that this is mainly a “house-cleaning” proposal. There is no longer a Math and Science Education program, and the courses making up the minor no longer exist. When the Math and Science Education program was removed from the College of Science and Letters back sometime around 2018, this minor was inadvertently left on the books and this proposal is meant to correct that oversight.

Jeff Wereszczynski indicated that he was in favor of getting the minor removed, but questioned the process we were following. Faculty, not administrators, are usually the ones to propose a curricular change. Kevin Cassel addressed Jeff's concerns indicating that there really are no faculty left from the no longer existent department to make this proposal.

Fred Weening moved that we vote on the proposal and this was seconded by Braja Mandal. There was no opposition to recommending the proposal.

7. The next item was the second reading of a [proposal](#) from the Biology department concerning a 3+2 back-transfer agreement with Rush university in which Biology majors finish their last year's requirements for a BS in Biology by getting transfer credits from their first year in a 2 year MS program at Rush. As part of this proposal the residency requirement: that the last 45 credits for an undergraduate degree at Illinois Tech be earned at Illinois Tech, would be waived.

Kathir asked Katie Spink if there was anything additional to add since her previous presentation. There was not. Fred Weening moved that the proposal be voted on, Patrick Ireland seconded the motion. The proposal was recommended without opposition.

8. There was no other business. Steve Klepps moved that we adjourn the meeting, and this was seconded by Victor Perez-Luna. There was no opposition.

The meeting adjourned at 1:39 pm.