

ILLINOIS TECH UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 26, 2024

12:45pm

Online via Zoom and In-person in PS-152

(pdf version available here)

Attending Voting Members: Matthew Bauer (CS), Yuting Lin (BIO), Ishaan Goel (SGA), Fred Weening (AMAT), Braja Mandal (CHEM), Victor Perez-Luna (CHBE), Murat Vural (MMAE), Erin Hazard (HUM), , Ray Trygstad (ITM), Erdal Oruklu (ECE), Nicole Legate (PSYC), Stephen Kleps (CAEE), John Twombly (SSB), Eva Kultermann (ARCH), Patrick Ireland (SSCI), Emily Leiner (PHYS), Keigo Kawaji (BME)

Chairing Meeting: Kathir Krishnamurthy (FDSN)

Also Attending: Katie Spink (Pre-Med), Jennifer deWinter (LCSL), Abby McGrath (Enrollment Services), Mary Jorgenson Sullivan (ELS), Jeff Wereszczynski (UFC), Nick Menhart (CCAC), Melisa Lopez (Student Success & Retention), Nichole Novak (Libraries), Gabriel Martinez (Armour Academy), Shamiah Okhai (LCSL), Katherine Leight (CHEM), Taylor Rojas (UGAA), Gabrielle Smith (UGAA), Joe Gorzkowski (UGAA), Maryam Saleh (Kaplan Institute), Pam Houser (INTM), Kyle Hawkins (AMP), Kevin Cassel (VP Acad Affairs), Mary Haynes (UGAA), Kindon Mills (ARCH), Kathy Nagle (ARCH), Norma I Scagnoli (VP Learning Initiatives), Zipporah Robinson (Academic Success), Edoarda Corradi (IPRO)

Quorum was reached and the meeting was started at 12:47pm

1. Approval of the proposed meeting agenda. Kathir Krishnamurthy displayed the proposed agenda, he noted there were two more items on the agenda from the previously distributed agenda. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Matt Bauerl and seconded by Victor Perez-Luna. The motion passed without objection.
2. Approval of the November 12 minutes. The minutes are not yet ready due to some technical issues with obtaining the zoom recording. They will be supplied later and their approval will wait until the next UGSC meeting.
3. At a previous UGSC meeting in Spring 2024, the Chemistry Department presented a motion to put the following three programs on hiatus status:
 1. [BS Environmental Chemistry](#)
 2. [BS Forensic Chemistry](#)
 3. [BS Medicinal Chemistry](#)

but a vote was never taken on the motion. Braja Mandal gave an updated presentation regarding the motion. He indicated that the collective enrollment in these specialized programs is between 10 and 15 per year. However the Dean has notified the department that to keep offering these programs they would need enrollment on the order of 20 students per program. Since this enrollment is not expected, the Chemistry department would like to convert these programs into concentrations. The first step in this process would be to put these programs into hiatus. Braja moved to vote on the motion and this was seconded by Eva Kulterman. The motion was passed without objection.

4. At our last UGSC meeting Nikki Legate presented motions concerning the [BS in Behavioral Health and Wellness program](#) and a [minor in Psychology](#). The proposed change to the minor in Psychology was to remove a requirement of a specific statistics course and replace it with any 300 level or above Psychology class. Based on the feedback from the committee, the proposal has been modified to replace the stats course with any 200 level or above Psychology course. The proposed motion for the BS in Behavioral Health and Wellness, which is just a change in CIP code, has not been modified. Fred Weening moved to vote on these proposals and Braja Mandal seconded the motion. The motions passed without opposition.

5. The next item was a proposal to make a small name change to two coterminal degrees

1. BS Chemical Engineering / MS Biological Engineering

2. BS Chemical Engineering / MS Chemical Engineering

Victor Perez-Luna made the presentation of the motion. Currently there is a

Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering / Master of Engineering in Biological Engineering coterminal degree.

The proposed change would be to call this

Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering / Master of Science in Biological Engineering coterminal degree.

Similarly the current dual degree in

Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering / Master of Engineering in Chemical Engineering coterminal degree would be renamed as

Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering / Master of Science in Chemical Engineering

There are no proposed changes to the requirements of any courses in these dual degree programs. The rationale for the change comes from senior level leadership which wants to consolidate Masters level programs. They want degrees listed as Masters of Science rather than professional masters or other designations.

There will also be future proposals of a similar nature involving coterminal programs.

Braja Mandal moved to vote on the proposal and the motion was seconded by Matt Bauer. The motions passed without objection.

6. The next agenda item was a second reading of a motion proposed at the last UGSC meeting concerning some [changes to the BS in BioChemistry program](#). Kathir asked Nick Menhart, who described the proposal at the last meeting if he had any updates to add. Nick did not.

Yuting Lin indicated that the chair of Biology has some concerns with the proposal and would like to have the Biology department discuss the proposal before UGSC votes on it. Nick pointed out that this proposal was discussed in the Biology department and the department voted in favor of the proposal at their September 11 meeting. He indicated that there are other tracks in which the Biology chair can express his concerns about the proposal and we should respect the department's previous vote. Both Jennifer deWinter and Jeff Wereszczynski supported Nick's opinion.

Eva Kultermann moved and Ray Trygstad seconded that the proposal be put to a vote. Yuting Lin abstained to vote on the proposal, otherwise the motion passed without objection.

7. The next agenda item was [a report from the Core Curriculum Assessment Committee on their assessment of IPRO](#). Nick Menhart made the presentation. Nick displayed the report and summarized the document: There are four learning objectives for IPRO

1. Problem Solving
2. Teamwork
3. Communication, and
4. Ethics

and all of these were assessed in all IPRO courses. Nick indicated that there was some difficulty in getting data from all of the 22 IPRO classes offered last spring (15 of the classes gave comprehensive data). In the first three learning objectives, the CCAC used instructor feedback on the artifacts as a basis for the assessment while in the Ethics objective the CCAC did an independent assessment. The Ethics center on campus helped develop the rubric for this assessment. This is particularly relevant since many of the instructors of the IPRO have not had any formal training in assessment of ethics. The independent assessment seemed to help reduce heterogeneity in the assessments across all of the IPRO classes, and the CCAC did some statistical analysis which supports this observation.

The committee found that the first three learning outcomes were being achieved at a fairly high rate (85+%). While the Ethics learning outcome was being achieved at a significantly lower rate (about 56%). The committee was also able to analyze the data with respect to the year (U2 through U5) the students were in currently. They were also able to do an analysis comparing results between whether this was a student's first or second IPRO, and also based on what college the student was in. The results are interesting and can be found in the report.

Among the recommendations of the CCAC in this report are:

1. Students should be at least U3 (i.e., have at least 60 credits earned) when they take their first IPRO.
2. We should continue to require two IPROs.
3. There should be more systematic ethics education early on in the core curriculum.

There are other recommendations in the report which deal primarily with improving the assessment process.

Braja Mandal moved to accept the report and this was seconded by Ray Trygstad. The motion passed without objection.

8. Katie Spink presented the next agenda item: Back Transfer Agreement for BS in Biology at Illinois Tech and MS in Medical Laboratory Science from Rush. She displayed a document describing a cooperative program with Rush University Medical College in which Illinois Tech students would complete 3 years at Illinois Tech and then enroll in a 2 year MS program at Rush. Credits from successful completion of their first year at Rush would then transfer back to Illinois Tech and they would be awarded a BS in Biology from Illinois Tech. So, Illinois Tech would be accepting transfer credits from Rush in order for students to earn their undergraduate degree at Illinois Tech. This program would need an exception to the residency requirement: namely that the last 45 credits for an undergraduate degree program at Illinois Tech be earned at Illinois Tech. This is not unprecedented; there is a similar exception for a back transfer agreement with the Illinois College of Optometry. This proposed agreement was discussed and approved at a recent meeting of the Biology department.

There was some discussion including the facts that Rush has similar agreements with other colleges in the Chicago area, and that Rush has a stellar record in placing their graduates in good paying jobs. Also Katie indicated that other departments, such as chemistry, might want to consider getting involved in a similar agreement with Rush.

Katie noted that there still needs to be some work done on the logistic and legal side of the agreement, so it may be several meetings from now until UGSC votes on the proposal. Eva Kultermann asked a procedural question since her department is working on something similar: is it necessary that UGSC take a vote on this agreement since it is just one of accepting transfer credits? Nick Menhart responded that the issue that concerns UGSC is the waiving of the residency requirement.

9. The next agenda item, concerning a [proposal](#) to remove the requirement of MMAE 321 (Applied Thermodynamics) from the BS in Mechanical Engineering program requirements. was presented by Murat Vural. He explained that currently the BS-ME program at Illinois Tech requires more courses in the thermal sciences track than its peer institutions. The MMAE department discussed this at their last faculty retreat and decided that it would be better to replace the requirement of MMAE 321 with a technical elective so that students would have more flexibility to pursue their interests. This item was viewed as an informational item and a minor change and as such no vote was required by UGSC.
10. The next item was a follow-up to the discussion at the last UGSC meeting on the designation of ex-officio officers. Jeff Wereszczynsk reviewed the previous discussion and asked if UGSC would like to adopt the same language that is in the GSC proposal on this matter. Braja Mandal moved that UGSC take this course of action and this was seconded by Matt Bauer. The motion passed without objection.
11. The final agenda item is a proposal to eliminate the pre-defined coterminal program: BS in Computer Science / MAS in Intellectual Property Management Markets. Matt Bauer presented this item. He indicated that there has never been a student in this coterminal program and that the Law School would like to eliminate it. The CS department does not have any objection to eliminating the program. He noted that students can still make an ad hoc program proposal to obtain this coterminal degree, it just won't be a pre-approved coterminal program. A motion to accept this proposal was put forward and was seconded. The motion was passed with no objections.

The meeting adjourned at 1:48 pm.