

Undergraduate Studies Committee

Tuesday, September 10, 2024

12:45 p.m.

Online via Zoom and In-person in PS-152

Meeting Minutes

Attending Voting Members: Fred Weening (AMAT), Eva Kultermann (ARCH), Yuting Lin (Bio), Keigo Kawaji (BME), Stephen Kleps (CAEE), Victor Perez-Luna (CHBE), Ben Zion (CHEM), Matthew Bauer (CS), Erdal Oruklu (ECE), Erin Hazard (HUM), Ray Trygstad (ITM), Murat Vural (MMAE), David Gidalevitz (PHYS), Nicole Legate (PSYC), John Twombly (SSB), Jacob Thomas (SGA)

Chairing Meeting: Kathiravan Krishnamurthy (FDSN)

Also Attending: Jamshid Mohammadi (GSC), Norma Scagnoli (CLI), Diane Fifles (Univ Accred), Abby McGrath (Enrollment Services), Kindon Mills (ARCH), Jeff Wereszczynski (UFC), Ishaan Goel, Gabrielle Smith (UGAA), Melanie Jones (Armour Academy), Katherine Stetz (Student Affairs), Nichole Novak (Libraries), Melisa Lopez (Student Success & Retention), Joe Gorzkowski (UGAA), Mary Haynes (UGAA), Gabriel Martinez (Armour Academy), Kyle Hawkins (AMP), Georgia Papavasiliou (Armour), Zipporah Robinson (Academic Success), Jesse Mosqueda (UGAA), Jennifer DeWinter (LCSL), Mary Jorgenson Sullivan (ELS), Todd Springer (PHYS)

Quorum was reached and the meeting was started at 12:48pm

The new chair of UGSC, Kathir Krishnamurthy, indicated that this year we will be recording the UGSC meetings on zoom, but that these recordings will only be used to help with the taking of meeting minutes. The recordings will not be shared with anyone other than the secretary of UGSC, Fred Weening.

The Chair displayed the proposed **agenda** for today's meeting and briefly discussed the agenda. There was a motion to approve the agenda from Eva Kultermann which was seconded. The motion to approve the agenda passed unanimously (15-0).

1. A motion to approve of the **minutes from the 4/23/2024 meeting** was made by Ben Zion and seconded by Eva Kultermann. The motion passed unanimously (15-0).
2. The next item on the agenda was a welcome address by current UFC chair Jeff Wereszczynski. Jeff: Welcome everyone. UGSC, as everyone knows, is a subcommittee of the University Faculty Council. Many of you I've seen here before. Some are new. This is really a very important committee that makes the university function. This is a spot where there's lots of discussion about different curricular activities. The discussion can be about new programs, but also about things that affect the university as a whole. For example, this year, we're going to be talking, some, about core curriculum things. These are things that impact all of our students here at the university, all the undergraduate students. There's a couple of things on the agenda today that I want to highlight as being important. The first is to generate some sort of standard operating procedures for UGSC. There are many things in many different committees on campus, not just UGSC, where there's ways that things have been done for years, but they're just never written down anywhere. And so, what I'd like to see is this committee take on the task of just writing down what are in general the standard operating procedures that you all will follow just to help level set some expectations, but also to help with transitions in the future. I'd also encourage people to help take on leadership roles in this committee, and there's a vice chair or secretary position that is open. These are great ways to develop some sort of leadership experience on campus here. It's also being part of the leadership of a critically important group for the way the university functions. If there's any questions or concerns throughout the year you can talk to me, my door is always open. If there's anything that I can do to help, please certainly let me know.

3. The next agenda item was discussing the role of UGSC as indicated in the faculty handbook. Kathir Krishnamurthy made a power point presentation and discussed the four stated roles of the UGSC:
 - i. Review and recommend to the UFC and the university faculty programs and the financial support needed to implement them.
 - ii. Formula policy and recommend to the UFC and the university faculty general education and graduation requirements as well as admission standards.
 - iii. Review, approve, and inform the UFC of course and program modifications, including ancillary university-wide academic policies related to undergraduate programs such as testing, placement, proficiency, and grading.
 - iv. Review, as needed, existing degree programs, particularly those not subjected to external accreditation review, and report its findings to the UFC.

Kathir Krisnamuthy also made several announcements:

- Operational informal for UGSC. This year meetings will be held in hybrid form, with the in-person meeting taking place in PS-152 and the online meeting via zoom. The chair also reviewed what information can be found on the [UGSC website](#) including meeting minutes and documents pertaining to past meetings and current meetings. He requested that new agenda items be shared with him at least a week in advance — share it by Monday of the week prior to the meeting — so that members have time to review the relevant documents and then have meaningful discussions at the meeting. Time sensitive items will be moved to the top of the agenda, but otherwise agenda items will be scheduled in the order received. Ray Trygstad added that when submitting documents for an agenda item the date, name and department/office of the person submitting the documents should be stated on the document.
- Continuing members / New members of UGSC: If you have not already done so, please respond to the email the chair has sent to confirm that you will be a continuing UGSC member or indicate who the new representative is from your department.

4. Kathir Krishnamurthy welcomed the new members to UGSC:
 - i. Keigo Kawaji from BME
 - ii. Matthew Bauer from CS
 - iii. James Mann from INTM
5. Kathir Krishnamurthy indicated that a subcommittee was being formed to develop a document outlining the standard operating procedures of the UGSC. The subcommittee will consist of past UGSC chairs, or other experienced UGSC members. This document will be helpful both for transparency and when UGSC transitions to new chairs.
6. Kathir Krishnamurthy indicated that the vice-chair position of UGSC is open and needs to be filled. The current secretary has agreed to fill this position if someone would rather volunteer to be secretary. Volunteers, from the voting members of UGSC, to fill either position were solicited, but none were forthcoming. Kathir further explained the role of secretary and vice-chair indicating that the time commitment should not be too great. Jeff Wereszczynski noted that the job of secretary is not as time-consuming now as in the past since along with recording the meetings, zoom produces a written transcript which the secretary would just need to edit.
7. Election of N-subcommittee chair: Nick Menhart indicated that HLC will be on campus next semester and that we need to have someone to step up and be the chair of the N-subcommittee chair. He reminded everyone that when the N learning objectives were assessed (one of the first assessments made in the new assessment process) it was found that one of the learning objectives was not being delivered or achieved — the 3rd learning objective: on communicating the relevance of science. As a consequence there were discussions and town hall meetings and ultimately the 3rd learning objective was revised to essentially having students learn the relevance of science (and leave the communicating aspect to the communication part of the core curriculum). He indicated that the fact that we made a change to address a deficiency is a good thing, but now we must follow up and make sure that students are achieving the revised learning objective. It is highly likely that when HLC visits they will want to see what progress has been made; so it is essential that the N-subcommittee elect a chair. Historically the N

subcommittee has been composed of the UGSC representatives from science focussed departments: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Food Science and the representatives from these departments need to elect a chair for the subcommittee. One of the roles of the subcommittee will be to review the N-designated courses and potentially remove the N-designation from some. When new courses are proposed and wish to get the N-designation, the subcommittee reviews the courses and decides whether to recommend the designation or not. This is what happened to several new courses that got the S-designation last year. It should be a fairly simple job. Kathir Krishnamurthy asked if there are volunteers to be the chair of the subcommittee, but no one stepped forward. He indicated that this position will need to be filled soon.

8. The last agenda item was “other business”. No other business was put forward and the meeting adjourned at 1:38pm