

Undergraduate Studies Committee

Standard Operating Procedures

AY25-26 26-27

According to the Faculty Handbook (Appendix B.V.D):

There shall be an Undergraduate Studies Committee (UGSC) that shall review and recommend to the UFC and the university faculty new programs and the financial support needed to implement them. The UGSC shall formulate policy and recommend to the UFC and the university faculty general education and graduation requirements as well as admission standards. The UGSC shall 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. The UGSC shall review, as needed, existing degree programs, particularly those not subjected to external accreditation review, and report its findings to the UFC.

1. Each spring, the UFC will appoint a chair of the UGSC for the coming academic year. The person appointed need not be a member of the UFC but must be a member of the IIT faculty with voting rights.
2. Each Academic Unit (AU) offering one or more continuing undergraduate degree programs shall annually elect a voting member to the UGSC. AU representatives to the UGSC may succeed themselves without limit.

The ROTC Group shall annually elect one voting member of the UGSC. There shall be one student voting member of the UGSC, chosen annually by the UFC based on criteria established by the UFC, and a recommendation made to the UFC by the Undergraduate Student Government. Each AU that offers undergraduate programs or courses, but does not offer an undergraduate degree program shall annually elect a non-voting member to the UGSC. Elected members may succeed themselves without limit.-officio, non-voting members of the UGSC are: the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, the Dean of Students, the Dean of Libraries, the Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, the Director of Undergraduate Admissions, the Director of the Academic Resource Center, the Director of the Office of Technology Services, the Registrar, the Vice Provost for Admissions and Financial Aid, and the Vice Provost for Student Access, Success and Diversity Initiatives.

[Note: At the 11/26/24 meeting of UGSC a motion was passed to replace the list of ex-officio members given above in #5 with a much less prescriptive description of ex-officio members of UGSC (using the same language that was passed earlier that semester by GSC).]

The Standard Operating Procedures and Policies of UGSC are described below.

I. Meeting Policies:

1. Voting members of UGSC are expected to attend all scheduled meetings. If a voting member is unable to attend a meeting, a substitute from their academic unit can attend and vote in their place provided the UGSC chair and secretary are given notification of this substitution no later than 8am **of** on the day of the meeting. This notification can be made by the voting member or chair of the academic unit.
2. All faculty and staff are encouraged to attend UGSC meetings in order to remain informed about undergraduate program changes as well as to provide input where relevant. However, there may be circumstances when only voting, non-voting, and Ex-officio members of the UGSC members would be permitted to attend an *in camera*, i.e. closed-door, meeting.
3. UGSC meetings may be held either on-line, in-person, or in hybrid format at the discretion of the chair. The agenda as well as related documents will be made available on the ugsc web site: iit.ugsc.edu as they become available.
4. Quorum for a meeting of UGSC shall be 50% of the voting members.
5. For the 26-27 AY, regular UGSC meetings are scheduled from 12:45 pm to 1:45 pm on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month during the Fall and Spring semesters. There are no meetings scheduled during the summers.
6. Depending on the amount and urgency of agenda items, the chair of UGSC may request to hold special (i.e., extra) meetings during the Fall and Spring semesters, or to schedule meetings that last past the regular 1:45pm ending time.
7. If there is no objection, the chair may extend a regular meeting beyond the scheduled 1:45pm ending time for a few minutes to finish an item currently under discussion. If a vote on an item is taken after 1:45pm, prior to the vote it must be verified that quorum is still present. Meetings should not be extended significantly beyond 1:45pm unless the extension has been announced prior to the date of the meeting and UGSC members have been given the opportunity to arrange for a substitute for themselves by an eligible voting faculty member within their academic unit (if they themselves cannot stay beyond 1:45pm).
8. The meeting minutes will record the attendance of the voting members and, separately, the attendance of others.
9. Meetings may be recorded by UGSC for the sole purpose of use by the secretary in producing the meeting minutes. Meetings are not to be recorded by others.

~~II. Procedures and Policies related to approval of changes to curriculum: Officers of the UGSC and their roles and responsibilities.~~

- ~~1. The officers of the UGSC are chair, vice-chair, and secretary.~~
- ~~2. The chair of UGSC is not officially elected by UGSC, instead the chair is appointed by UFC (in practice UGSC submits a recommendation to UFC for who to appoint as chair, and historically this recommendation has always been followed). The faculty handbook indicates that the chair of UGSC need not be a member of UFC, although they must be a faculty member with voting rights.~~
- ~~3. Technically the chair of UGSC need not be a member of UGSC either (but in practice they are typically listed as a member ---and chair-- of UGSC). The chair sets the agenda for the UGSC meetings and runs the meetings. The chair is to be impartial with regard to the agenda items; the chair does not vote on proposals. The academic unit to which the chair belongs may have an additional UGSC representative who is a voting member of UGSC.~~
- ~~4. The chair of UGSC also composes and presents reports of UGSC activities to the UFC. These reports are presented during Friday morning meetings of UFC.~~
- ~~5. The chair of UGSC also has the responsibility to approve items in the UGSC Chair's CIM queue once these items have been approved by the UGSC membership. A separate CIM queue which is (unfortunately mis-)titled as "Core Curriculum Assessment Sub-committee" also falls under the chair's oversight. This CIM queue contains the proposals of courses which are asking to get a core letter designation. Once the letter designation sub-committee of UGSC gives a recommendation for approval of a course for a letter designation, the UGSC chair makes the approval within this CIM queue.~~
- ~~6. The role of the vice-chair of the UGSC is very simple, they are to substitute for the chair if the chair is unable to attend a UGSC meeting or otherwise unable to perform the duties of the chair. The vice-chair is elected by the UGSC and typically is a member of UGSC.~~
- ~~7. The role of the secretary of the UGSC is to construct the meeting minutes and to maintain the UGSC website's repository of information. The secretary of UGSC is also typically a member of UGSC, but this not a requirement. Currently the secretary of GSC is not GSC member (they are a staff member of Graduate Academic Affairs)~~

III. Procedures and Policies related to approval of changes to curriculum:

The UFC, UGSC, and GSC have different approval processes for program changes that are deemed to be *significant major* vs. *insignificant minor*. Each body will judge whether a proposed change is *significant major* based on a set of criteria. For example, if one or more of the following are true, then the program change is deemed to be *significant major* by the UGSC:

- Formation of a new program or elimination of an existing program
- Change in the name of a program

- An aggregate change of 25% or more over three years to the content of a program (as per HLC reporting requirements).
- A change in the administrative support framework for an existing program, for example, for interdisciplinary programs or changes in delivery modalities, etc.
- Changes to admissions criteria to a program that differ substantively from institutional requirements.

Notes:

1. Derivative programs, such as Coursera, Beacon, or other global partnerships, do not constitute a new degree; therefore, they are classified as **insignificant** minor changes. Keep in mind the following guidelines:
 - Derivative programs must satisfy the degree requirements for the parent program, but they typically require a more curated set of courses than the parent.
 - Derivative programs will be listed as separate “Tracks” of the parent programs, and this is how they are to be submitted in CIM.
 - Such derivative programs will be aggregated in a separate section of the Undergraduate Catalog that is called “Illinois Tech Global”.
2. Changes which do not meet any of the above criteria can still be deemed to be **significant** major by UGSC if a vote is taken to this effect. However, ordinarily, the following sorts of changes would be categorized as **insignificant** minor changes (and no vote for such categorization need be taken).
 - Changes to a list of allowed electives a student can choose from (in a program or minor).
 - Changes to the number of credits awarded for a particular course.
 - Changes of either adding or removing a small number of courses to the requirements of a program.
 - Changes to CIP codes (note: GSC does consider such changes as **significant** major).
 - Revision of an existing minor or creation of a new minor
 - Revision of an existing certificate program or creation of a new certificate program.
3. The [incubator proposal policy](#) was passed by the UGSC on February 28, 2023. The purpose of this policy was to allow for rapid development of new degree programs. New programs proposed under the incubator policy are viewed as minor changes within CIM, and as such only require one reading at UGSC prior to having a vote (i.e., they can be voted on at the meeting in which they proposal is presented). New programs created under the incubator program policy only exist for 2-years. At the end of the 2-year period, these programs can be converted into a regular degree program by following the procedure for proposal of a new degree program. The conversion of the program from an incubator program to a regular program is considered to be a major change and must have two readings at UGSC. Such a proposal must be presented at one UGSC meeting and voted on at a subsequent UGSC meeting (or an electronic vote may be held after one week’s time from the initial presentation of the proposal).

While UGSC will make its own determination as to whether a proposed change is **significant** major or **not** minor, the UFC has final authority on such a classification.

- Procedure for approval of proposals that are classified as **significant** major:
 1. Academic units initiate program changes, additions, and eliminations by entering them in CIM.
 - a. As an alternative to program elimination, a program can be put on “hiatus” so that it no longer accepts new students and is removed from the Catalog and admissions applications.
 - b. Requests for hiatus status must come with a clear explanation for the reason to request such status. For example, it could be done as a prelude to program elimination or to provide for a dormant period while a program undergoes major revisions, awaits additional faculty, etc.
 - c. By default, hiatus status lasts for two years, after which the program’s home academic unit is notified for further action.
 2. **Once** entered into CIM, proposals are brought to a regularly scheduled UGSC meeting for presentation and discussion. The proposal is received by UGSC as a motion from the home academic unit representative and requires a second prior to discussion. The motion is then automatically tabled until the next scheduled meeting of the UGSC.
 3. UGSC academic unit representatives are to bring relevant proposals to their home units for discussion and a vote, where appropriate, which is to inform the representative’s vote on the UGSC. The proposer’s academic unit may also be asked to provide additional clarifying information.
 4. Such input will be presented at the next scheduled UGSC meeting by academic unit representatives along with any further discussion. Discussion is followed by a vote of the UGSC voting members, and a simple majority results in approval of the proposal by UGSC.
 5. Proposals receiving approval by the UGSC are then brought to the UFC for approval according to their procedures.
- Procedure for approval of proposals that are classified as **insignificant** minor:
 1. Academic units initiate program changes by entering them in CIM.
 2. Once entered into CIM, proposals are brought to a regularly scheduled UGSC meeting for presentation, discussion, and vote. The proposal is received by UGSC as a motion from the home academic unit representative and requires a second prior to discussion.

3. Discussion is followed by a vote of the UGSC voting members, and a simple majority results in approval of the proposal by UGSC.
4. Proposals receiving approval by the UGSC are then brought to the UFC for approval according to their procedures.

Note that submission of a proposal in CIM by an academic unit implies that the proposal has been presented to, and approved by, the faculty of the submitting academic unit(s) according to their established procedures. The UGSC can request submission of the minutes that reflect such approval processes and results at their discretion.

~~IV. Procedures and Policies related to Core Curriculum courses~~ Electronic voting

When deemed necessary due to time-sensitivity of certain proposals, votes on items can be held by an electronic vote (currently the meaning of “an electronic vote” is that the vote will be held by email.). In this situation, the proposal must have had an initial presentation at a regular UGSC meeting. The chair of UGSC will inform members at this regular meeting of the reason for requesting an electronic vote. Typically, these electronic votes will be on proposals that are categorized as major changes and the purpose of having the electronic vote is to shorten the time period that the normal procedures would require prior to an in-person vote. After the initial presentation and discussion has occurred, the chair will inform the UGSC of his intention to hold an electronic vote. There needs to be a motion and second to call for such a vote on the proposal. Having obtained the motion and second, the UGSC chair will send an email which clearly indicates the proposal under consideration and requests votes to be cast through email. The time period for when the votes must be submitted should not be less than one week from the date that the proposal was first presented at UGSC. This time period is to allow UGSC members to inform their academic units of the proposal and to get feedback from their academic units before casting their vote. In order for the proposal to be approved by UGSC, a majority of eligible voters must approve the proposal by the deadline of the electronic vote. If the proposal is not passed by electronic vote, the proposal can still be moved to a regular vote at a subsequent in-person UGSC meeting. The criteria for the proposal to pass at the regular meeting is a simple majority of votes cast (assuming that the meeting has a quorum).

V. Procedures and Policies related to Core Curriculum courses.

There will be a standing sub-committee of UGSC for each of the subject areas of the Core Curriculum:

- Communications (C),
- Humanities (H),
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (S),
- Natural Science or Engineering (N),
- Mathematics (MATH),
- Computer Science (COMP),
- Introduction to the Professions (ITP), and
- Interprofessional Projects (IPRO).

The chair of UGSC will appoint the chairs of these subcommittees; these chairs need not be UGSC members.

The main purpose of these sub-committees is to determine whether a course should be given a desired core-course designation. Additionally, the sub-committees should take a leading role when Learning Outcomes for their subject areas in the Core Curriculum are in revision.

- Procedure for a course to be granted a core-course designation
 1. The request that a fully approved course be given a core-course designation is initiated by using CIM to revise the course and add designation:
 - Within CIM go to “Course Inventory Management”
 - Select the course and the option to “Revise Course”
 - Under “Change Type” select the option “Adding or Changing Gen Ed”
 - Select which designation(s) you wish the course to be given and hit submit.
 2. Contact the Chair of UGSC to make them aware of the request and to supply them with
 - i. the course syllabus, and
 - ii. a document which gives specific explanations of how the course will meet the Core area learning objectives and a detailed plan as to how student achievement of the learning objectives could be assessed (i.e., what artifacts could be collected and analyzed)
 3. The Chair of UGSC contacts the chair of the designation sub-committee and requests that an ad-hoc committee be formed (typically consisting of 2 or 3 faculty in the discipline) to review the request.
 4. The sub-committee reviews the course information provided ((i) and (ii) of #2 above) to make a determination of whether they believe the course meets the ~~L~~learning **Outcomes** objectives of the core designation and whether the plan provided for assessment is reasonable. The sub-committee may interact with the faculty who initiated the request, and the course syllabus and the document concerning meeting and assessing the learning objectives may be revised to satisfy the sub-committee's requirements.
 5. Upon making a final determination, the sub-committee makes a written recommendation to the UGSC chair. If the recommendation is to approve the designation for the course, a member of the sub-committee, or the chair of UGSC, presents their recommendation at a future UGSC meeting. Unless objections to the recommendation are voiced, there is no requirement for UGSC to vote on approval of the designation for the course.
 6. The UGSC chair approves the designation request within CIM, this completes the process. It does not go to UFC for approval.

~~In the past, UGSC has considered construction or revision of minors to be informational items (i.e., not requiring votes of approval). However, accreditation bodies are now requiring that there is a formal approval process for minors. So, going forward from this time, UGSC will require votes of approval for new minors or revisions to existing minors. The same will be true for the construction or revision of certificate programs. (this is now mentioned in bullet points in section II. 2.)~~

Policies affecting undergraduate education.

1. Any member of the university: student, staff, faculty, or administrator can request that a proposal or discussion item be placed on a UGSC meeting agenda concerning a policy affecting undergraduate education. Items proposed by voting or ex-officio members of UGSC must be put on a meeting agenda in a timely fashion (normally at the next one or two regularly scheduled UGSC meetings) . Examples of such policies include
 - a. Grades that are available for faculty to assign (A, B+, etc...)
 - b. GPA requirements for graduating with honors
 - c. Policies on how many minors a student can earn
 - d. The academic calendar
2. The UGSC chair may form subcommittees for further discussions of such policies with the intent of the subcommittee to formulate a policy that can be voted on by the full UGSC membership.
3. Policy changes which do not intrinsically change academic standards or curricula can be presented as informational items, and as such do not require a vote of approval at the UGSC.
4. Passage of new policies or changes to existing policies that are voted on and passed by the UGSC shall be presented as recommendations to the UFC.
5. Any policy change that requires the UGSC chair's approval within CIM must be voted on at a UGSC meeting (or through an electronic vote).

VI. Procedures and Policies Related to Review of Existing Degree Programs

1. UGSC will review undergraduate academic programs on a rotating periodic basis. At the start of each academic semester, the UGSC chair shall inform the UGSC as to which programs are to be reviewed during that semester.
2. For academic units that undergo external review or accreditation, a summary of that process as it relates to the curriculum of the AU degree programs can be utilized.

3. For all other units, a report that includes how the curriculum meets the academic program objectives and how the program has changed, along with the rationale for these changes or lack of thereof, since the last review by the UGSC will be presented to the UGSC. A form for such a report has been constructed by UGSC:

<https://ugsc.iit.edu/documents/2021-2022/UGSC-Periodic-Curricular-Review-Form.pdf>

4. Failure of an academic department to submit a report in a timely fashion can result in the chair of UGSC refusing to place future action items from that department on the UGSC meeting agendas.

VII. Changes to Standard Operating Procedures of the UGSC

At any time, a voting member of the UGSC, the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, or the UFC may propose changes to UGSC's Standard Operating Procedures:

1. Such proposals are initiated via formal notification of the UGSC Chair.
2. The UGSC Chair must bring such proposals to the UGSC in a timely fashion for consideration and approval.
3. Approval of such proposals follows steps (2)-(4) given previously for approval of significant program changes.
4. Once approved by UGSC, proposals are brought to UFC as informational items.

VIII. Ad hoc Committees

At the discretion of the UGSC and its Chair, ad hoc committees may be appointed to research, deliberate, and/or make recommendations to the UGSC on focused items when a specific need arises:

- The specific charge and timeline for such ad hoc committees will be clearly communicated to the committee.
- The membership of an ad hoc committee may include representation from any faculty, staff, and/or administrative groups as necessary.

IX. Distribution and Archiving of UGSC Minutes and Documents

UGSC has a website: <https://ugsc.iit.edu/>

The secretary of UGSC will upload all UGSC minutes and documents to this website.