

**Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**November 12, 2019, 3:30 p.m.**  
**CNS 8**

Attendees: Sergio Adrada-Rafael (Chair), Rachele Brunn-Bevel, Carol Ann Davis, Ronald Davidson, Anita Fernandez, Laura Gasca-Jimenez, Martha LoMonaco, Martin Nguyen, Margaret Wills

1. **Approval of minutes from October 8, 2019**

**Motion: Wills moves to approve; Davidson seconds**

**Vote: 8 in favor, 1 abstention; motion passes**

Adrada Rafael informs the Committee the agenda item “Proposal to change the Film, Television, and Media Curriculum (Nash)” will be postponed. Nash noted they are revising the proposal.

2. **Proposal to modify the Behavioral Neuroscience Major, Minor, and Concentration (Shannon Harding and Margaret McClure)**

**Harding** – We have a new major in Neuroscience that launched this year. Our numbers are strong, we have between 9 and 10 majors, 5 students who are currently earning the minor, and 31 students enrolled in the concentration. The concentration has the same requirements as the minor. Students are earning it while they are earning their degree in Psychology. We expect that number to grow. We have two proposed changes:

- Change the number of the introductory course. Currently, it is called Behavioral Neuroscience; the number is 261. We would like to change that number to 161 because it is an introductory level course. Students may take this course for the Natural Science core. Non-majors can take this; it would be in line for best practices in the university.
- The current major requires students complete a one-year sequence in Psychology in addition to a one-year sequence in Biology and a two-year sequence in Chemistry. The one-year sequence that we had initially proposed included this Intro to Behavioral Neuroscience course and a new course - Essentials of Neuroscience or Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience. This is being developed by our Visiting Assistant Professor and will run next semester. A number of the things he is teaching are already imbedded in other courses. A recent publication, by the Journal of Undergraduate Neuroscience, suggested that the one-year sequence could include Intro to Psychology and Intro to Behavioral Neuroscience (almost an introduction into the field of Psychology, looking through the lens of a biologist). Pre-med students already have to take the course; they need Intro to Psychology. This would alleviate the stress of the

current 18 course major. We would like to make the one-year sequence that clustering of courses. To improve the experience for our students, we are hoping to go to a curricular conference, hosted by undergraduate neuroscience, this summer. Improving curriculum, adding lab sections and things of that nature are discussed. There may be other modifications as we start to grow this major, possibly adding additional Biology courses.

- The last change would be to the minor or concentration. Currently, for a minor in Psychology students would take General Psychology and four additional psychology courses. We would like to mimic that structure with the minor in Behavioral Neuroscience. It would include an Intro to Behavioral Neuroscience, and four additional courses. The rationale: as the department grows, we are obtaining expertise in many areas in neuroscience. We would like the students to take advantage of this knowledge. In the past, we required Intro to Behavioral Neuroscience and Human Neuro Psychology. We wanted to make sure that students were exposed to different areas of neuroscience. We believe they can obtain that from the ample selection of courses that are growing in our department.
- **McClure** – Our department and the advisory board have approved these changes.
- **Davis** – It seems normal to make these modifications once you finally get it on the ground. It is a good use of your expertise and much easier for students when it tracks to the way things are advised.
- **Fernandez** – I like the course number change from 261 to 161. It makes it easier.
- **Wills** – What percentage of students in 261 are taking it for the core natural science requirement?
- **Harding** – Two to five students in a class of 25.
- **McClure** – Because we have such a robust major, we have not had room to offer it largely. It is a natural science course, but only for non- neuroscience and non-psychology majors. It is popular among our majors and it fills. If we could offer more sections as the major grows, it would be ideal because it is interdisciplinary. Additionally, it is a good rationale for our freshman who were nervous about taking a 200 level course as their Intro course.
- **Harding** – When we start to add existing courses (as electives) to the major, they will be vetted by the advisory board and then go to ASCC. Do we need to meet with the ASCC again?
- **Adrada-Rafael**- If they are existing courses in the catalog, the chair of the department will send it to the chair of the ASCC for approval.

**Motion: Fernandez moves to approve; LoMonaco seconds**

- **LoMonaco** – It makes perfect sense.

- **Davis** – It is a model of what should happen the year after a program launches (these kind of refinements).
- **Miecznikowski** – comment sent via email “I support the changes to the Behavioral Neuroscience major, minor, and concentration”

**Vote: All in favor; motion passes unanimously**

### 3. Proposal for a new Course Numbering system (Flatto)

**Flatto** – There are two main reasons we are proposing new course numbering:

- A couple of departments are running out of course numbers. Mostly English and History. English has renumbered a couple of times and we can no longer reuse course numbers for programmatic reasons. Moving from a three digit to a four digit number increases the available numbers tenfold.
- Numbers less than 100 are considered remedial at most institutions. We have had instances where students transfer to another institution or apply to graduate schools and 11 or 12 are prerequisites to the program. In some instances, we (Office of the Registrar) have had to write a letter confirming these courses *are* college credit and should be accepted as transfer credit.

For consistency across the entire university, the special course designations (independent studies, internships) will be the same for whatever department you are in. Currently, we have internships numbered 301, 310, 395, 347. The idea is - no matter what department you are looking at, you will know what it is by the number. For example, 391 is an internship. This will help to run reports. If you wanted to know what internships were running in a certain semester, we would be able to pull by that course number.

The numbers will not reflect, first, second, third or fourth year. Most college departments do not operate that way. The levels do build on each other, but for example, it does not necessarily mean that a first year cannot take a 3000 level course.

- **Davis** – The levels will be Introductory, Intermediate, Upper level and Advanced?
- **Flatto** – Yes. What are now the 00 classes and the 100 level classes, will become the 1000 level classes. For the most part in the college, what are now 200 levels will become 2000 levels. What are now 300 levels will be differentiated between 3000 and 4000. 4000 are advanced upper level classes restricted to only seniors (senior capstones, practicums, etc). If these equivalencies do not work, I will work with the departments, chairs and faculty to figure out the best way for their department. The idea is to bring our institution in line with common practices across higher education.

- **LoMonaco** – So, within the departments we have a lot of leeway (as long as we are working within your available numbers and based on the status of those numbers, how difficult the course is)?
- **Flatto** – Yes, it is up to you to define what introductory is, etc.
- **Nguyen** – Does this mean the department now has the opportunity to reevaluate? A course that was once a 300 level, can now become a 1000 or 2000 level?
- **Flatto** – Yes, there has been at least one department who has taken the opportunity to somewhat renumber their entire curriculum based on sub topics within their subject.
- **Brunn-Bevel** – What do reserve numbers mean?
- **Flatto** – Special course designations such as capstones, independent studies internships, practicum, projects, thesis or special topics. That will be 2000 level beginning with 29.
- **Fernandez**- In the Biology department, students can work in professors' labs. The first semester we call it one number and the second semester we have a second number. Can we continue having different numbers for different semesters?
- **Flatto** – Yes, you can continue doing that or you can make it into a repeatable single number.
- **Gasca-Jimenez** – Are we going to discuss this with our departments and send this back to you?
- **Flatto**- In the summer (via Elizabeth Petrino) I sent proposed course numbers. I am going to modify those. If the ASCC approves, I will rework what was originally sent and send it to the chairs again. Departments can modify whatever they want. In the sciences, you have the core courses which are currently less than 100 and the major introductory courses which are now 100 level. Those will all be 1000 level, but you can still differentiate them. For example, you can say 1200 classes are for the core and 1800 classes are for the major.
- **Brunn-Bevel** – Asks about online and hybrid courses.
- **Flatto** – The section number for online courses will still be OL1 or OL2. The hybrid issue is being discussed. Different schools and departments have a different definition of what hybrid means. That will be addressed in the near future. In the proposed numbers I am sending out, you should recognize the courses that exist. We are changing the zero in front to another digit.
- **Adrada-Rafael**- Are other universities moving toward the same system?
- **Flatto** – Usually, 1000-4000 are undergraduate. Graduate are 5000 +. We surveyed a number of local institutions and Jesuit institutions. All (except maybe one) of them were using this system.

- **Davis**- Will there be additional discussion regarding whether or not prefixes will have to be regularized during this process?
- **Flatto** – Yes, All the subject codes would move from 2 and 3 digit to 4 digit codes.
- **Davidson** – This proposal will have to go through UCC and Academic Council.
- **Adrada-Rafael** – If this is approved here, will this go to UCC, Academic Council and back to the departments or back the departments after ASCC?
- **Flatto** – Back to the departments after ASCC. Each of the curriculum committees and various other departments are approving the system. Separately, departments are going over their precise numbering schemes.
- **Nguyen** – Each department will have some autonomy in determining their 4-digit number. What about the 4-letter abbreviation?
- **Flatto** – We have set them. If there is an issue, we can talk about it. Ideally, the plan is to get this in place by the summer, but that is looking less likely. By fall 2020 we are hoping to get this in place. Lynn Kohn spoke with Dean Greenwald and they agreed to have responses from departments by the end of this semester.

**The Committee does not think the responses will be ready by December.**

- **Davidson** –In order for this to be in place by February or March, I suggest concurrently bringing this to UCC and Academic Council, moving it along, and allowing the departments to clean up what they need to clean up. In principal, he can move this right away.
- **Flatto** – The Registrar spoke with the Provost about the whole concept. The Registrar’s understanding was that the Provost’s approval was fine because it was not a significant change to how things are structured; it is just a different way of labeling of what already exists. Once we approached faculty, we discovered that was not the opinion shared by many of our colleagues. This is why we are going through this approval process now.

**Motion to approve: LoMonaco; Davis seconds**

- **Miecznikowski** – Comment sent via email “The course numbering proposal makes sense to me.”
- **Brunn-Bevel** – This makes sense, is really useful and clear for advising.
- **Davidson** – It helps it does not come with the timetable stratigraphy - first year, second year, etc. It will allow us to take the 101 courses and break them up into sections.
- **Wills** – The four letters will be helpful in identifying the courses.
- **Davis** – The principal of governance is in place.

**Vote: All in favor; motion passes unanimously**

4. Proposal to change the Film, Television, and Media Curriculum (Nash)  
Postponed for revisions

5. Course Proposals

a. PS 145 General Physics for Life Sciences (Biselli)

**Motion: Davis moves to approve; Fernandez seconds**

- **Fernandez** – I think that this is a great idea. I was not aware what they are currently teaching in Physics does not include some of the topics needed for the MCAT. Students had to learn that on their own. It is great that this is going to address that. One concern I have - currently, biologists take the same physics courses as engineers. There are multiple sections they can choose from and there are problems scheduling. Now, they will be taking this course and I foresee it may be problematic for scheduling. To try and alleviate this, maybe a recommendation to the Biology Chair to make certain the scheduling of these biology specific courses are at times when biology majors are likely to be able to attend.
- **Gasca-Jimenez** –Typically learning outcomes are actions not just nouns (“By the end of the semester students will be able to X”, so I believe that the learning outcomes of PS 145, specifically that one (“fluids”), need to be revised. I find that the exams and the final exam are too heavy. Homework is only worth 5 percent.
- **Davidson** – This is within the guidelines of the College and the University. 30% is a standard final exam percentage.
- **Gasca-Jimenez** – My concern is not just the final, but the addition of the final (30%) and the 3 exams worth (18% each). Quizzes and homework are only worth 6% and 5%. I think homework could merit more of a percentage.
- **Davis**- A summative assessment at 84% is high stakes.
- **LoMonaco** – Notes the syllabus states - “Class attendance is not a formal requirement, however, it is STRONGLY recommended that you attend all classes”.
- **Davis** – Also from the syllabus - “students are expected to actively participate to lectures with questions and discussions”. If it *is* an expectation, it needs to have a percentage. It needs a reflection in the grade.
- **Davidson** – I would request the professor reconsider the various values and allow that to work out organically.
- **Davis** – Questions how the scaffolding works. Is there opportunity to intervene early so the student will know how they are doing within the first two weeks?
- **Fernandez** – It says that fluency with calculus and algebra is invaluable for this course. I thought the point of this course was not to need calculus. Is that a

mistake? It says this course is calculus based. I thought it was not supposed to be.

- **Nguyen** – It says Physics tutoring for Engineering underneath that. This course is for Life Sciences. That should be brought to the instructor’s attention.
- **Davis** – Participation is spelled incorrectly.
- **Miecznikowski** – comment sent via email “ I think that the new general physics course for life science majors will be valuable additions as the life science majors do not have enough calculus to fully understand all of the magnetism that is presented in the second semester.”

**Adrada-Rafael will relay the following:**

- Concerns regarding the grading percentages.
- Whether calculus is required for the class. This is stated under “Math Center”.
- There is holdover language from the engineering version of this course. It needs to be corrected.
- In the tutoring section, tutoring for engineers is listed.

**Vote: Conditional Approval with the changes noted above. All in favor; motion passes unanimously**

**b. PS 146 General Physics for Life Sciences II (Biselli)**

**Motion: Davidson moves to approve; LoMonaco seconds**

**Vote: Conditional Approval with the same changes noted for PS 145; All in favor; motion passes unanimously**

**c. PS 265 Geophysical Fluid Dynamics (Nazarian)**

**Motion: Gasca-Jimenez moves to approve; Fernandez seconds**

- **Davis** - I really like the assessment. There is a nice range, a variety of ways of learning that are valued and a good amount of assessment before the midterm.
- **Wills**- Spread all across the semester as well.
- **Gasca- Jimenez** - Appreciates the definition of each component ,very clear and complete.

**Vote: All in favor; motion passes unanimously**

**d. AH 296 Museum Exhibition Seminar (DiMarzo)**

**Motion: Davidson moves to approve; Nguyen seconds**

- **Davis** – This could be a contender for the writing in the discipline designation. These are the things that curators have to do. DiMarzo is reaching out to departments and problem solving on how to use the museum.
- **Adrada –Rafael** – It is very clearly written and well explained. The schedule is very well distributed.
- **Brunn-Bevel**- I like that it is open to all students who have taken Art History, but they do not have to be majors or minors.

**Vote: All in favor; motion passes unanimously**

**Miecznikowski** – Comments sent via email “I support the three physics course proposals and the art history course proposal.”

## **6. Adjournment**

**Motion: Nguyen moves to adjourn; LoMonaco seconds**

**Vote: All in favor; motion passes unanimously**

**Meeting was adjourned at 4:39 p.m.**

**Minutes submitted by Jean Siconolfi**