

Undergraduate Committee Meeting

Friday, October 10, 2014

12:00-2:00 PM

LeFrak 1124

Draft minutes

Present: Tatiana Loboda (Chair), Klaus Hubacek, Giovanni Baiocchi, Ron Luna (Ex-Officio), Ruibo Han, Kristen Bergery, Rachel Berndtson, Ana Sanchez-Rivera, Amanda Hall, Jack Ma

1. Comprehensive review of TA needs for the Department:

- a. Report from UG Director on changes to GEOG170 (Action 7 from the UG committee meeting minutes).

Action: TL will request the GIS teaching team to consider options for retaining the lab component without TA load. Alternatively, remove the lab component from the course and leave it as a lecture only (will be offered as that in the upcoming year).

- b. Report from UG Director on the overall class enrollment/TA allocations and contributions from the College of TA funding vs Departmental funding for TA support.

Solution points:

- a) Cap 400 level courses at 25 (except 473 and 475 until more GIS 400-level courses are on the books then give 0.5 TA to technical courses)
- b) If TA responsibilities do not cover anything but grading (e.g. 201), a full-time Grad TA should be responsible for 200 students (or consider hourly app for overload)
- c) Discuss fall plans for teaching at the last meeting of the UG committee – Rachel & Kristen & Ron

Action: UG chair & UG director will bring the proposed changes to discuss with the Chair and the Associate Chair and scope their feasibility prior to bringing those to the full faculty meeting.

- c. Report from Keith Yearwood (Ron Luna in Keith's place) on Action 12 from the UG committee meeting minutes. (Undergraduate TA assignment/mentoring policy):

Major issues: trend in miscommunication between the instructor and UG TAs, sub-standard quality of incoming TAs.

Resolution: a) reduce the total number of UG TAs to 4 – 6 as per original plan to maintain quality of the TA program; b) instructors with UG TAs in the course to be reminded by the advising office before the beginning of each semester about the importance of clear communication between the instructor and UG TAs.

2. Teaching University Honors courses:

Resolution: UG Chair will request all teaching teams to identify potential sequence and instructors to offer University Honors courses to put into the long-term teaching plan and rotation.

3. Growing UG Majors:

- a. Report from UG Director on Action 1 from the UG committee meeting minutes (current status of our UG majors and desired numbers indicated by the College).
Resolution: Numbers required by the college have been achieved. We now need to focus on the quality, caliber, and profile of students.

Issue raised: some students fail to complete calculus with the proper time frame which delays their graduation date and opens loopholes for them to avoid taking calculus all together.

Motion: Accept Calculus as a benchmark course that would be required to be taken in the first year of the program. – passed.

- b. Report from Kristen Bergery on Actions 2 – 4 from the UG committee meeting minutes (outreach activities targeting STEM middle and high schools).

Resolution: 1) GIS tutorial distribution to 5-schools (reach out to other schools on the previous list);

- c. Report from Rachel Berndtson on Action 5 from the UG committee meeting minutes (GIS day planning).

Resolution: 1) Schools (middle and high) are not invited due to difficulties in arranging and managing large groups of young students on campus; 2) request the support from the Chair to encourage the faculty to open the door to their labs, ensure attendance of the GIS day event activities – UG Chair to send the request to Chair, 3) request all instructors to advertise the GIS day in their classes – Rachel to send out the request; 4) GTU is in charge of marketing the GIS day event on campus.

4. Strategizing for the next level of demand in technical courses:

- a. Report from UG Director on Action 6 from the UG committee meeting minutes (course enrolment and wait list for Fall 2014).

Action: Revisit at the next meeting to review and ask BSOS to provide that information on the regular basis (UG Director to put the request to BSOS) to enable the assessment of the success of our course offerings strategy.

- b. Report from Evan Ellicott on Action 8 (availability and willingness of research faculty to teach and which courses they would be willing to teach).

Resolution: 1) Research faculty who are willing to teach should reach out to Rachel and submit their CVs (Rachel is to send out an announcement to the research faculty), 2) UG Chair will request the administration to consider offering better compensation for teaching for research faculty.

- c. Presentation from Jack Ma and Amanda Hall on online teaching experience.

Action: revive the discussion for offering on-line sections for regularly oversubscribed technical classes at the next UG committee meeting.

5. A.O.B.

- a. Approve the assessment for UG classes

Action: Ron Luna will include designation of Calculus as a benchmark course as a response to the assessment. Assessment is approved.

- b. Review the newly offered stats class ENSP(305) in relation to GEOG306.

Action: Postponed until the next UG committee meeting.