# Academic Programs Subcommittee Meeting Minutes November 29th, 2022

**Voting members present:** Jennifer Donahue, Melissa Goldsmith, Dana Lema, Shujuan Li, Moe Momayez, Holly Nelson, Lisa Rezende, Paul Wagner, Pat Yango

**Non-voting members present:** David Boulton,Rebecca Field, Esther Henley, Sharon ONeal, Ryan Smith, Hal Tharp, Richard Vaillancourt, Henry Werchan, Lori Wiest, Michael Wu

**Voting members absent:**

1. Holly Nelson called the meeting to order at 3:31 PM with a quorum of 7 voting members at the

vote of members present.

1. Approval of October 25th, 2022, Minutes

Pat Yango moved to approve minutes. Paul Wagner seconded. Motion carried with 6 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstain.

1. New Action Items

**A. Modification: BS in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Public Health)**

Presented by Rebecca Field and Richard Vaillancourt.

The major is being modified with the goal of creating more flexibility for students. The Pharmaceutical Sciences program was launched in 2018 with a list of 10 very specific courses. Over the years there has been a growing need for flexibility, students who fail to pass a course or fall behind in their prerequisites will often experience a delay in their graduation. We have strategically added some new major electives options that we hope will enhance interest in the program as well as alleviate the bottleneck we have experienced with delayed graduations.

**Q:** Just to be clear, instead of completing 10 courses, students will now complete 7 core courses?

**A:** Correct, it will be 7 core classes, one of those is a new addition (PCOL 200) that will serve as an introductory course. The other 6 classes have been required since the start of the program in 2018, the electives are now being rotated in to improve student flexibility.

Paul Wagner moved to approve. Suzie Weisband seconded. Motion carried with 9 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstain.

**B. Modification: BA in Architecture (CAPLA)**

Committee members express concerns regarding diversity and inclusivity over the minimum GPA being raised to 3.5. Curricular Affairs notes that admissions requirements are typically regarded as beyond the purview of the Academic Programs Subcommittee. The GPA increase has been included along with the request to increase units.

Presented by Ryan Edward Smith.

18 months ago, there was a change in which a number of courses were combined within one of the five thematic areas we have within the curriculum. We combined 2 aspects of our Professional Practice curriculum those being Pre-Design and Site Analysis. There was a desire to increase this course from 2 credits to 3 credits. This change was voted on but never officially took effect. This purpose of this proposal is to bring our books consistent with that decision.

**Q:** There is a pretty significant jump in terms of GPA, what was the rationality for this change?

**A:** We have a process in our program where there is a professional milestone that distinguishes between pre-professional (1st year of the curriculum) and post-professional (2nd to 5th year of the curriculum). The 1st year of the curriculum includes 150 students however, due to capacity limitations, only 90 students can be accepted into post-professional program. The GPA has been increased in the hopes of limiting the amount of student disappointment at the fact that they are unable to move forward with the program. We are investigating in other ways we can alleviate this situation. There is still a group of students from 3.0 – 3.5 that will be let in, however we wanted to increase the GPA to 3.5 for students who would automatically be able to move forward.

**Q:** If this GPA increase for admissions is implemented, what are the plans to support students who are passionate about the program but may not meet the GPA requirements? These students tend to come from communities of color and other marginalized spaces.

**A:** There will still be a significant group of students within the 3.0-3.5 GPA range that will be accepted into the program. The purpose of the GPA increase is to attempt to alleviate and minimize the incredible amount of frustration and disappointment from students who are not accepted into the program.

**Q:** To clarify, you are trying to deter potential applicants who fall below the 3.0 range from applying to the program in the first place? If you do admit students with GPA’s starting at 3.0 then why not just increase the GPA admission cut off to 3.0?

**A:** We have run the numbers for this. During a year with a significant number of students with higher GPA’s, a 3.0 cut off would result in us needing to accept 190 students into the program which is beyond our capacity. This is due to a requirement from our professional accreditation body that state we must have 15 to 1 for student to faculty ratio. We have achieved parity between men and women taking the program, this is something that has not been the case historically. The Hispanic population within our student body has also increased dramatically. We struggle with representation of black students, however that seems to be a common issue across the University. We are looking into ways we can address this, whether that is through affirmative action or otherwise, while still being equitable to all students competing for spots in the program. Nationally, Architecture school declined during the pandemic, we did not. We went up 20-25% and expect a 5-10% increase each year going forward. I am open to ideas on how we can keep up with the inflation while also addressing the equity issues.

**Q:** In what ways do you that this potential new requirement for admission would impact the growth that you’ve seen among DI communities such as the Hispanic, black, or APIDA (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American) community?

**A:** I don’t have projected numbers about that.

Members of the Committee express concern and feel that the University, as a minority serving institution, can come off as unwelcoming and discouraging with such a high GPA cut off, even if it is the most practical way of gatekeeping the program. Members give examples such as Eller’s interview process and the College of Nursing’s holistic admissions approach as ways of possibly combating the issue and allowing the students to have a say in why they should be in the program. Ryan clarifies that there is pre-profession to post-professional milestone in which broad, cumulative, discipline or major specific GPAs as well as a portfolio that is a compilation of there work from the first year in the program. The 3.5 GPA is just to stage gate students into the first year followed by a second and more involved process.

**Q:** Are you saying the 3.5 is a high school GPA? Or is that to move from first year to second year?

**A:** Yes, first year student who do not meet this requirement are holistically reviewed.

Committee feels that it is not clear what the admissions process is. Member of the committee points out that while the admissions requirements are high, they are not out of the ordinary for other Schools of Architectures and vouches for the fact that the School of Architecture faculty has a heavy teaching load. However, the amount of stress that students must go through to find a new path after being excluded from the program is concerning.

Committee member notes that the proposal was stated to be procedural in nature as they were already teaching the combined course as a 3-credit course. Based on the website, they have already listed the 3.5 GPA as a requirement on their website, meaning the proposal is procedural on both fronts.

Motion was tabled. Committee decides to table the proposal and ask for further information regarding admissions vs applicants’ data, current diversity statistics as well as clarification on why GPA at the high school level is being evaluated and how that pertains to the program and statistics between the alternate degree program paths offered. Curricular Affairs will get further clarification on the committee’s purview as admissions requirements are usually self-determined by the department and not subject to governance.

**C. New Certificate: Information Management (CAST)**

Presented by Henry Werchan.

This will be adding a certificate for Information Management and will be focused on statistics and database management fundamentals. An elective is also offered ranging from web design, web program and cloud computing.

**Q:** The reason for these certificates is to encourage individuals outside of CAST to take these courses, is that correct?

**A:** Yes, one scenario would be somebody who is already working in a particular field and they want to further their skill set and become involved in a more technical area, they would be able to take this certificate to gain the technical skills they would need.

**Q:** So, do you have an idea of how many students you might get?

**A:** There are 6 undergraduate certificates in the college right now with over 250 students in just those programs. These certificates are also meant to improved accessibility for students wanting to get into these high-paying tech field jobs as well as acting a steppingstone for the full degree program.

Committee feels that the objective could be more specific, however it is not significant enough to prevent the proposal from moving forward. There was a slight error in units listed. Curricular Affairs will correct this.

Dana Lema moved to approve. Suzie Weisband seconded. Motion carried with 10 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstain.

**D. New Certificate: Network Operations (CAST)**

Presented by Henry Werchan. See previous items for QA.

This will be adding a certificate option to a currently existing degree program. None of the courses are new. This certificate provides the opportunity for individuals to obtain a relevant set of skills to work in Network Operations.

Dana Lema moved to approve. Suzie Weisband seconded. Motion carried with 10 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstain.

**E. New Major: BM in Music Therapy (Fine Arts)**

Presented by Lori Wiest and David Boulton.

The Music Therapy degree is one that is in a very few numbers of programs across the country. It is a program that truly benefits a lifespan of the population. The degree is focused on recognizing the importance of the brain, the physical motion and memory and bringing back music to be apart of that therapy. We hope to provide a lifespan preparation through the degree. Curriculum is approved through the American Music Therapy Association. We are also approved by the National Association of Schools of Music which required a separate accreditation process. We want to provide careers in music that are truly meaningful. There are not currently enough people in these professions, and we hope to help fix that by providing this education.

**Q:** On your core required classes outside of the School of Fine Arts, one of the Anthropology classes does not have a letter of support attached and is only offered in the spring. Have you confirmed that this class will be able to host these students?

**A:** We have reached out and requested a letter many times but have yet to receive a response. We would be able to substitute an alternative in the case that we can not use this course.

Committee notes that there are a few places on the proposal where the course titles are not consistent with those in the catalogue and that they will help to correct these by sending a list.

Paul Wagner moved to approve. Suzie Weisband seconded. Motion carried with 9 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstain.

**F. New Major: BS in Computer Science Engineering (Science)**

Committee members notes that the program assessment contained objectives that could be improved. Additionally, the assessment was messy and needs cleanup. Finally there was a note about an elective and that the advisors would approve the 3 other electives without a list of courses. It seems like 9 units of electives being individually approved would be an advising nightmare.

Presented by Sharon ONeal, Hal Tharp, and Michael Wu

This is a proposal for a Computer Science Engineering bachelor’s degree program. We are also planning a master’s and PHD program for the subsequent year. We also hope to offer Computer Science and Engineering as a minor. This program will become ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) accredited. The existing Computer Science program out of the College of Science is not accredited. This program will be interdisciplinary and will include current courses from ECE, SIE, Software engineering and then additional new courses that are CSE focused. Our program comparison shows that there are other Universities that have both a Computer Science program and a Computer Science and Engineering program with the main differences being accreditation status. ABET accreditation requires that basic requirements are made up of 30 units, computer science specific requirements are made up of 40 units, math made up of 15 units, and natural science made up of 6 units. Both Arizona State University and Northern Arizona University have ABET CAC accredited programs. Demand and enrollment numbers are very high for these programs and are part of the reason why we were asked to create this.

**Q:** From an advising and student choice point of view, the accreditation requirements for the natural science with the lab, as written in the proposals doesn’t necessarily feed the students into the major classes. On another point in the document, it lists it as a 200 level when it should be at a 100 level.

**A:** This planning guide was prepared was prepared by our academic advisor, Juliana Lincoln. She recently joined as the software engineering undergraduate academic advisor, we worked very closely with her to make sure we were compliant with the new general education requirements as well as laying those out against the ABET CAC requirements. I feel very confident, if there was something that we missed we can go back and address that, but the goal was to be compliant with both

**Q:** With the 9 units of electives listed under advisor approval, is there a list students will get that are suggested electives?

**A:** There will be a list generated given to students as example computing electives. The hardest part will be the prerequisites that are required for each one of theses. General electives can be taken in anything.

**Q:** Can a student coming in as a freshman take this entire program online and graduate?

**A:** Yes! That is the plan.

**Q:** What are the advantages for students that graduate from an accredited program? What kind of collaborations do you see between this program and the computer science program?

**A:** Students who graduate from an accredited program are provided the opportunity to move forward and become a professional engineer. When graduating from this type of program with accreditation the word engineering is listed, its applied engineering and interdisciplinary. Students will be able to understand the engineering processes and methodologies that are used as well as be exposed to other engineering disciplines which will allow them to articulate to and collaborate with other engineers. There are many areas we can collaborate with the existing computer science program. We have identified the core courses as ones we would like to jointly manage and offer to the students in both programs. For example, a computer science student would be able to take an elective from the new computer science and engineering program if they have already completed the core courses. We are also looking into further collaboration on the research side of things.

Committee approves on the condition that the proposal includes a list of courses available to students trying to complete the 9 units of computer science and engineering electives.

Paul Wagner moved to approve. Dana Lema seconded. Motion carried with 9 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstain.

1. Holly Nelson adjourned the meeting at 5:13pm

*Respectfully prepared by Frederick Lewis*