

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE
ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held on March 26, 2013, at 3:00 p.m. in Arts 230, Arts Building.

PRESENT: Director Nicole Allard and Associate Dean Laurie Hendren (Co-Chairs), Professors Barbara Hales, Galen Halverson, Axel Hundemer, Bettina Kemme, Greg Marczynski, Ana Nyzhnyk, Gillian O'Driscoll, Kenneth Ragan, Linda Reven, Kathy Roulet, Julie St-Pierre, Jaclyn Vogel (in place of Frédéric Guichard); Chandra Curry, Eugene Kang, Kendra Levasseur, Kelsi Lix, Kate Zhang; Malek Yalaoui and Josie D'Amico.

REGRETS: Dean Martin Grant; Professors Lea Berrang Ford, Justin Kollman, Daniel Kirshbaum; Louis Houle; Esther Bogorov, Melissa Xie.

DOCUMENTS: AC-12-55 to AC-12-71

Director Allard called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

(1) ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Two Additional Items to be Considered Under:

- Item 10, Applied (M.Sc.A.); Chemistry (Non-Thesis) Program Retirement AC-12-71.
- Item 16, Other Business, Update on the Final Examinations at the Scotia Bank Cinema.

Minutes 410.1 to 410.4, ENVR 204 (Academic Committee meeting, December 11, 2012), to be considered under Item 3, Business Arising from the Minutes.

Item 11, Low Enrolment Courses, and Item 15, Teaching Evaluations, were postponed to a future Academic Committee meeting.

Prof. Halverson **moved**, seconded by Ms. Curry, that the amended Agenda be adopted.

The motion carried.

(2) MINUTES OF DECEMBER 11, 2012

Prof. Ragan **moved**, seconded by Prof. Halverson, that the Minutes be approved.

The motion carried.

(3) BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minutes 410.1 to 410.4, ENVR 204 (AC-12-53) – For Information Only

703.1 Director Allard said that at the December 11 Academic Committee meeting, concerns were raised about the depth of coverage of topics in the proposed new course, ENVR 204, and that there had not been consultation with the Department of Mathematics & Statistics or the School of Computer Science. These concerns were transmitted to the Faculty of Arts. ENVR 204 had not yet been resubmitted to the Faculty of Arts for review.

703.2 Ms. Roulet said that the McGill School of Environment would be re-examining ENVR 204.

(4) **REPORT ON MINOR COURSE CHANGES – For Information Only**

704.1 Director Allard said that COGS 402 was a course in the B.A. & Sc. Interfaculty and Honours Programs in Cognitive Science. Since COGS 401, an identical course, is available, COGS 401 will now be offered in fall, winter and summer terms, and COGS 402 will be retired. The only difference between COGS 401 and COGS 402 was the term in which they were offered.

(5) **B.A. & Sc.**

Program Revisions:

- B.A. & Sc. Freshman Program

AC-12-57

705.1 Director Allard said that the changes to the B.A. & Sc. Freshman Program had been brought about by B.A. & Sc. students, and had been approved by the Program Administration Committee (PAC). The proposed changes added COMP 202, ESYS 104, and PSYC 100 to the list of non-Math, non-Physics Science courses, to broaden the freshman program and offer more options to fulfill prerequisites required in relevant programs in future years.

705.2 A lengthy discussion concerned students possibly fulfilling the freshman program without taking a Physics course or any of the current Required Science courses (BIOL 111, BIOL 112, CHEM 110 or CHEM 115, CHEM 120); the risks of streaming students too early in their program; and the desirability of training students broadly in preparation for any area. It was pointed out that Science has evolved and become more interdisciplinary.

705.3 Director Allard **moved**, seconded by Prof. Fabry, that the above program revisions be approved.

705.4 Prof. Ragan, seconded by Prof. St-Pierre, proposed the amendment that the list of the three additional courses (COMP 202, ESYS 104, PSYC 100) be prefaced by the statement "At most **two** of the following courses."

The amendment carried.

705.5 A vote was held on the amended motion.

The amended motion passed.

Program Retirement:

- **Major Concentration in Earth, Atmosphere and Ocean Sciences** **AC-12-5**

705.6 Prof. Fabry said that with the introduction of Earth System Programs, the above Major Concentration was being retired due to low enrolment.

Prof. Fabry **moved**, seconded by Prof. Halverson, that the above program be retired.

The motion carried.

(6) **MATHEMATICS & STATISTICS**

MATH 370

Honours Algebra 3
Change in prerequisites

AC-12-59

3 credits

706.1 Prof. Hundemer explained that the change in prerequisites was prompted by the decision to allow students in the Honours in Applied Mathematics Program to take either MATH 247 or MATH 251. Hence, either MATH 247 or MATH 251 was now a prerequisite for MATH 370.

Prof. Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Fabry, that the changes be approved.

The motion carried.

B.Sc. Program Changes:

- Honours in Applied Mathematics

AC-12-60

Prof. Hundemer **moved**, seconded by Prof. Fabry, that the changes be approved.

The motion carried.

B.A. Program Changes (For Information Only):

- Honours in Applied Mathematics

(7) COMPUTER SCIENCE

COMP 546	Computational Perception	AC-12-61
	Number change [from 646]; changes in description, restriction, administering faculty	
	4 credits	

707.1 Prof. Kemme said that renumbering COMP 646 to COMP 546 would allow undergraduate as well as graduate students to take the course. The format of the course has changed.

Prof. Kemme **moved**, seconded by Ms. Roulet, that the changes be approved.

The motion carried.

(8) PHYSICS

New Course:

PHYS 519	Advanced Biophysics	AC-12-62
	3 credits	

708.1 Prof. Ragan said PHYS 519 was created due to recent hires, and the increase in collaboration with the Department of Biology in the area of quantitative biology. The course would be made available to senior undergraduate students and graduate students.

708.2 Members agreed to include **PHYS 519 in the Honours in Biology, Quantitative Biology Option.**

708.3 Prof. Ragan **moved**, seconded by Ms. Curry, that the course be adopted.

708.4 A long discussion ensued regarding specific prerequisite course numbers for PHYS 519 and the importance of informing students, especially those in non-Physics programs, about the requirements for taking the course. It was pointed out that other 500-level

courses in Physics did not have specific prerequisite course numbers because there would be too many to list and that students could talk to the instructor. This was covered under "permission of instructor."

708.5 After further discussion, Prof. Ragan mentioned the following courses as possible prerequisites:

Thermal Physics
Quantum Physics
Statistical Mechanics
Electricity & Magnetism
or perhaps an Advanced Lab Course

708.6 Director Allard proposed an amendment, seconded by Ms. Zhang, that PHYS 519 be adopted pending the inclusion of a list of prerequisite course numbers as well as "or permission of instructor."

The amendment carried.

708.7 A vote was held on the amended motion.

The amended motion passed.

(9) BIOLOGY

Program Revisions:

- Honours (First Class) in Biology

AC-12-63

709.1 Prof. Vogel said that the CGPA cutoff for First Class Honours in Biology would be 3.75.

709.2 Director Allard pointed out that for most other Science Honours programs, the CGPA cut-off was 3.00.

709.3 It was agreed that the program description would be reworded to clarify the CGPA cut-offs.

709.4 Prof. Vogel **moved**, seconded by Prof. Ragan, that the changes be approved, with the rewording of the CGPA cut-offs.

The motion carried.

BIOL 319/PHYS 319 Introduction to Biophysics
Changes in description and prerequisites
3 credits

AC-12-64

After Prof. Ragan described the changes to the above double-prefix course, Prof. Ragan **moved**, seconded by Prof. Vogel, that the changes be approved.

The motion carried.

New Option:

- Honours in Biology: Quantitative Biology

AC-12-65

709.5 Prof. Vogel introduced and highlighted the above new Option. She said the Honours in Biology with a Quantitative Biology Option had been a student initiative.

709.6 Prof. Hundemer said that in the Department of Mathematics & Statistics, all 500-level courses are considered Honours courses, and students in the Quantitative Biology program could be made aware of this. A note to this effect will be added to the program.

709.7 Director Allard said that given that the Program was new, the CGPA cut-off seemed high, and the Department should perhaps consider lowering it. Also, Associate Dean Hendren said that the cut-off for the First Class Honours seemed high, given the courses in the program. Prof. Vogel said she was comfortable with the cut-offs.

Prof. Vogel **moved**, seconded by Prof. Hundemer, that the above new Option be adopted.

The motion carried.

(10) COURSE RETIREMENTS (For Information Only) AC-12-66

710.1 Associate Dean Hendren explained that the University wanted to retire low-enrolment courses. She said that at an APC meeting, members had voted to ask departments which courses could be retired and which could not, and to provide reasons for not retiring. Associate Dean Hendren said that Document AC-12-66 had been submitted to SCTP for approval. She said she was unsure whether all the un-retirements would be approved, but she would argue for their approval. The positive side of this exercise would be that course retirements will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

**Program Retirement:
- M.Sc. Applied (M.Sc.A.) in Chemistry (Non-Thesis)**

710.2 CHEM 699, a Required course in the M.Sc. Applied (M.Sc.A.) Program in Chemistry (Non-Thesis) was being retired (Document AC-12-66, above), hence the retirement of the M.Sc. program; there had been no enrolment in many years.

Prof. Reven **moved**, seconded by Ms. Lix, that the above program be retired.

The motion carried.

(11) Low Enrolment Courses

The above item was postponed to a future Academic Committee meeting.

(12) DMURL FOR B.A. & Sc. AC-12-67

712.1 Director Allard described the Dean's Multidisciplinary Research List (DMURL) and said that currently the DMURL was made available only for students in the B.Sc. degree. She said that students in the B.A. & Sc. degree have asked to make it available for their degree as well. Director Allard said that Dean Grant agreed to this, with the same criteria as for the B.Sc.

712.2 It was agreed that the wording in the official DMURL Calendar description "or are approved on a case-by-case basis by the Faculty of Science" be modified to "**or another undergraduate Science research course as pre-approved by the Faculty of Science.**"

Director Allard **moved**, seconded by Prof. Kemme, that the DMURL for the B.A. & Sc. degree be adopted.

The motion carried.

(13) Director (Advising Services) Nicole Allard

(i) Senate Amendment to Assessment Policy (*For Information Only*) AC-12-68

713.1 Director Allard said that at the Senate Meeting of January 23, 2013, it was approved that final examinations could be worth more than 75% for students who had been given permission to write deferred midterm examinations, but could not write them for documented reasons.

(ii) Faculty of Science Guidelines: Assignment Due Dates AC-12-69

713.2 Director Allard said regarding internal Faculty of Science guidelines, that the current policy for courses without final examinations, was that the due date to submit written assignments was the last day of classes. The proposed guidelines for courses with no final examinations, was that the due date for written assignments would be the last day of the final examination period, provided that the grades could be submitted by the appropriate deadline.

Director Allard **moved**, seconded by Prof. O'Driscoll, that the revised Assignment Due Dates (AC-12-69) be approved.

The motion carried.

(14) SUS ACTIVITIES AC-12-70

714.1 V.-P. (Academic) Kate Zhang highlighted the Report on the SUS Activities. She said the SUS had conducted a brief and limited survey on advising. While the survey was very limited, the results did give a flavour of how students perceived advising.

714.2 Director Allard said that she was very impressed with the Report, and that it was well done.

(15) TEACHING EVALUATIONS

The above item was postponed to a future Academic Committee meeting.

(16) OTHER BUSINESS

- Update on Final Examinations

716.1 Director Allard said that the final examinations in April 2013 would be held at the Scotia Bank Cinema. She said there were 872 seats, as opposed to over 1000 at the Currie Gymnasium, and that some big courses would be more spread out. If big courses had to be split, these would be accommodated in the Bronfman Building. There would be more evening exams. An e-mail would be sent to all students and instructors informing of the exam details.

716.2 She mentioned that Ryerson University in Toronto has a contract with Cineplex to use the cinemas for lectures.

716.3 Director Allard said that Associate Dean Hendren suggested that if the final examinations in the Scotia Bank Cinema work out well, mid-term examinations could be held there in the future.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.