Call to Order and Vice-Dean’s Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 1:06 pm by the Vice-Dean, Undergraduate & International, Professor Pamela Klassen, who welcomed everyone, especially new members and students. She stated that the committee is meant to operate in a consultative manner so that departments get to share wisdom and offer opinion on policies and practices. Ideally, academic units looking to propose changes would have consulted with the relevant departments prior to these meetings so that different stakeholders could offer initial feedback on these changes and their impact.

Vice-Dean Klassen briefly compared the number of new courses proposed versus the number of courses proposed to be retired this governance cycle. She indicated that the Dean’s Office is looking to establish best practices surrounding the retention of courses not taught for a long time.

1. Report from the Vice-Dean, Undergraduate & International

First-Year Foundations Council:

Vice-Dean Klassen referred to the recent Council of Chairs, Principals and Academic Directors (CPAD) memo detailing the transition of existing First-Year Seminar 199 courses into the formal curricular governance process. The transition would see the course designator of First-Year Foundations seminars be changed to reflect the academic units actually offering these seminars. This transition is part of a bigger initiative that the Faculty of Arts & Science is undertaking to rethink and reframe the current first-year offerings. (Addendum: A second CPAD memo was circulated on December 3, 2018 to provide further information about the transition process.)

A member asked if these First-Year Foundations seminar courses would count towards students’ program requirements. Vice-Dean Klassen responded that this would be one of the items requiring more thought and exploration as it might generate a ripple effect. She suggested holding off this idea for now to allow academic units some time to think through the potential effects.
A member asked if extra-departmental units (EDUs) typically offer First-Year Seminar courses and if there would be a central location where the new First-Year Foundations seminar courses would be published. Vice-Dean Klassen replied that EDUs have not been required to offer 199 First-Year Seminar courses. As for the publication of First-Year Foundations seminar courses, the approved courses would appear alongside regular departmental offerings as well as in a section specifically dedicated to first-year offerings. The Dean’s Office will work in a coordinated way to ensure students are informed about first-year opportunities and options.

A member expressed concerns about the number of new First-Year Foundations seminar courses that would overlap with course offerings from other academic units. Vice-Dean Klassen recommended units whose new courses might seriously overlap with other departments’ offerings to start consulting now as opposed to waiting until the January 2019 proposal submission deadline. A special meeting will take place on February 4, 2019 to review these new First-Year Foundations seminar courses specifically. Vice-Klassen thanked members of the committee for their patience.

Vice-Dean Klassen also acknowledged the establishment of a First-Year Foundations Council consisting of different groups of stakeholders, and meets monthly to discuss matters relating to the Faculty’s first-year offerings.

**Departmental Curriculum Retreats:**

Vice-Dean Klassen announced that the Dean’s Office is creating specific resources to support academic units that are embarking on curriculum retreats. *(Addendum: A CPAD memo and an accompanying Guide to A&S Academic Retreats were circulated on December 18, 2018 to provide additional information.)*

**Spring Governance Deadlines & Late Course Approvals:**

As a result of the transitioning of 199 courses into First-Year Foundations seminars, there has been a slight update to the 2018-19 governance dates and course proposal submission deadlines. A special meeting will take place on February 4, 2019 to review all First-Year Foundations seminar proposals. The submission deadline for the new First-Year Foundations seminar proposals will be January 18, 2019.

2. **Approval of Minutes of the April 6, 2018 Meeting of Sciences Curriculum Committee**

The meeting minutes were approved.

3. **Course and Program Modifications for Abbreviated/Expedited Review**

No issues were raised.

4. **Course and Program Proposals for Full Review**

*Astronomy and Astrophysics, Department of:*

Professor Marten van Kerkwijk, Associate Chair, Undergraduate, and Professor Michael Reid, presented the new course proposal for Observational Astronomy (AST301H1). This course would be conceptual in nature and would involve hands-on lab and observational activities. It could be taken by non-Science students.

A question was raised about the listing of Chemistry courses as exclusions. Professor Kerkwijk responded that the proposed exclusion courses were the same as the ones currently listed for AST101H1 (The Sun and Its Neighbours).
and AST201H1 (Stars and Galaxies). He added that the department would like to exclude students with a mathematics or physics background from taking this course.

A member asked if the proposed course code would lead people to perceive this as a third-year course. Professor Reid responded that the department does not have any intention to exclude non-third-year students from taking this course but would appreciate a bit of maturity from students to handle the hands-on and laboratory work.

Dr. Martha Harris, Manager of Governance & Curriculum Services at the Faculty of Arts & Science offered to work with Professor Kerkwijk to revise the proposed course exclusions. (Addendum: After further consultation, it was determined that exclusion courses would not be necessary.) This course proposal was subsequently approved.

**Anthropology, Department of:**

Ms. Josie Alaimo, Undergraduate Administrator, presented the proposals to create one new course and retire one existing course. Both course proposals were approved.

**University College:**

Professor John Marshall, Vice-Principal, presented the proposals to modify six existing courses offered by University College.

In response to the HST373H1 (Epidemiology) proposal to modify its prerequisites, STA288H1 (Statistics and Scientific Inquiry in the Life Sciences) and EEB225H1 (Biostatistics for Biological Sciences) were recommended as courses that could be listed alongside STA220H1 (The Practice of Statistics I) to better advise students regarding equivalent statistics course choices. (Addendum: No further changes to the proposed prerequisites were put forth after further consultation internally).

With respect to the COG498H1 course modification proposal, Vice-Dean Klassen stated that the Dean’s Office is currently engaging in deliberations on the existing Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR) policy to determine if an update would be required. At the moment, independent study or individual research courses are not eligible to be taken by students using the CR/NCR option. All of the course proposals were approved.

**Cell and Systems Biology, Department of:**

Professor Tony Harris, Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies, presented the proposals to create two new courses, modify two existing courses and seven existing programs.

In response to the new course proposal for CSB471H1 (Foundational Discoveries in Genome Biology and Bioinformatics), a member inquired about the time of year when this course would be offered. The member also expressed concerns that some fourth-year courses had been proposed as prerequisite choices. Professor Harris replied that the new course would be offered in the fall term and that a number of students would opt to take these fourth-year prerequisite courses in their third year instead. All of the course and program proposals were approved.

**Computer Science, Department of:**

Professor François Pitt, Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies, presented the proposals to create three new courses, modify four existing courses, retire three courses, as well as modify five existing programs.
The proposed creation of CSC311H1 (Introduction to Machine Learning) and retirement of CSC411H1 (Machine Learning and Data Mining) would allow third-year students to get an earlier exposure to the study of machine learning.

With respect to the CSC311H1 course proposal, a member asked about the difference between this course and STA314H1 (Statistical Methods for Machine Learning I), offered by the Department of Statistical Sciences. Professor Pitt replied that STA314H1 focuses on computational techniques, and students who are adequately prepared can take either CSC311H1 or STA314H1.

Vice-Dean Klassen stated that the Faculty is currently examining how the Academic Calendar functions as a tool of communication to students. She solicited feedback from the committee on the presentation of course prerequisites, including the ones being proposed for CSC311H1. A member suggested adding a toggle function that would enable users to expand or collapse long lists of prerequisite courses. The same member also felt that the phrase “or permission of the instructor,” commonly stated in course prerequisites, could be open to interpretation depending on the intent of the academic units offering the respective courses. Vice-Dean Klassen sought the opinions of student committee members on the use of this phrase. A member felt that a clarification of the phrase would be beneficial as some students might view “or permission of the instructor” as having to defend why they should be able to take a course. Vice-Dean Klassen indicated that the Faculty will continue to look at this as a bigger project pertaining to Calendar style and conventions.

In response to the new CSC419H1 (Geometry Processing) course proposal, a question was raised about the prerequisite requirement of having “demonstrated proficiency in C or C++.” Professor Pitt responded that this might be applicable to Mathematics Specialist students who have not completed enough course material in Computer Science to take this course. A member also inquired about the inclusion of CSC418H1 as a recommended preparation course. Professor Pitt replied that while CSC418H1 is not a prerequisite for this new course, chances are that Computer Science students who are interested in enrolling in CSC419H1 would have completed CSC418H1.

A member inquired about the existence of enrolment restrictions for Computer Science courses for students belonging to certain programs. Current restrictions are such that students not enrolled in the Computer Science Major or the Computer Science Specialist may enrol in up to 1.5 FCE of CSC courses at the 300- or 400-level but they would not have priority access to these courses.

With respect to the CSC165H1 course modification proposal, there was a brief discussion took place on how best to rephrase the prerequisite or co-requisite requirements to better inform students that they would need to have prior programming experience in order to take this course. (Addendum: After further consultation with the Office of the Faculty Registrar, the proposed prerequisite requirements were removed, and the co-requisites were modified to “CSC108H1/CSC120H1/(equivalent programming experience).”) All of the course and program proposals were approved.

Psychology, Department of:

Professor Nicholas Rule, Associate Chair of Undergraduate Studies, presented the new course proposal for Moral Thought and Behaviour (PSY324H1). As he would like to signal to students with a non-psychology background that they might be able to enrol in this course, he solicited feedback from the committee on a possible phrase that could replace “or permission of the instructor” to be stated as the course’s prerequisites. A member suggested the phrase “please consult with undergraduate advisor.” No action was carried out based on the suggestion. This course proposal was approved. Vice-Dean Klassen acknowledged and thanked Professor Rule for attending all three curriculum committee meetings to speak to this course proposal.
Pharmacology and Toxicology, Department of:

Professor Michelle Arnot, Associate Chair, Undergraduate Education, presented the proposals to create six new courses, modify eight existing courses, retire two courses, and modify five existing programs.

JPM300H1 (Research Readiness and Advancing Biomedical Discoveries) and JPM400Y1 (Biomedical Incubator Capstone Project) are two new courses to be jointly offered by the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, and the Department of Physiology. JPM300H1 strives to develop students for experiential learning should they decide to embark on a project course or the Professional Experience Year program the following year. The JPM300H1 modules will enable students to gain exposure to research teams, bioethics, commercialization, drug development, as well as proposal writing and pitching. JPM400Y1 will see students being matched with mentors from the Faculty of Medicine or the University’s Health Innovation Hub (H2i) and conducting a research and development project in a start-up/incubator atmosphere.

A member expressed concerns that students might not be able to find mentors. Professor Arnot replied that students would likely develop some ideas organically by the time they finish the 300-level research readiness course. A committee member asked about the possibility of adding project courses as exclusions to the two JPM courses. Professor Arnot felt that it’s important to be mindful of the pressure when finding faculty members for these courses.

In response to the new course proposals for PCL367H1 (Drug Development Pipeline I: In vitro) and PCL368H1 (Drug Development Pipeline II: In vivo), a member sought clarification on how these two courses would count towards the program requirements for the different Specialist programs in Pharmacology and Toxicology. Professor Arnot replied that students would need to take at least of one of these two courses in order to fulfill the completion requirements of the department’s Specialist programs.

A question was raised regarding the proposed removal of second-year organic chemistry as a co-requisite for PCL201H1 (Introduction to Pharmacology and Pharmacokinetic Principles). Professor Arnot replied that while organic chemistry is required for all of the Pharmacology and Toxicology programs, the completion of organic chemistry is not required to ensure successful completion of PCL201H1.

Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology, Department of:

Professor Doug Templeton, Program Coordinator, presented the proposals to create two new courses, modify three existing courses, retire one course, and modify the department’s existing Specialist program. The proposed split of the full-credit Introduction to Pathobiology (LMP300Y1) course into two half-credit courses (LMP340H1 and LMP350H1) would offer students flexibility in terms of planning and scheduling. This move would also set up the possibility of transitioning one of the new half-credit courses into a second-year course in the future.

A couple of questions and comments were raised regarding the proposed phrasing of prerequisite requirements for LMP340H1 (Introduction to Pathobiology I). Professor Templeton explained that since only students enrolled in the Pathobiology Specialist would be eligible to enrol in this course, the department would prefer not to specify a particular prerequisite or recommended preparation course. He also added that practical sessions taught at the University Health Network could only accommodate a certain number of students. Vice-Dean Klassen recommended Professor Templeton to consider connecting with Dr. Martha Harris, Manager of Governance & Curriculum Services at the Faculty of Arts & Science to further discuss the phrasing of prerequisite requirements.

5. Other Business

Vice-Dean Klassen thanked the committee for their ideas and for providing written rationale in the course and program proposals. She encouraged members with questions about the new First-Year Foundations seminars to contact her.
6. **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Minutes prepared by Kevin Mak, Curriculum and Governance Assistant, Faculty of Arts & Science