Call to Order and Vice-Dean’s Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 1:08 pm by the Vice-Dean, Undergraduate & International, Professor Pamela Klassen, who welcomed everyone.

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

Vice-Dean Klassen addressed the committee on three items.

First-Year Foundations Council:

She made reference 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 courses. This change would allow students to locate these courses in addition to regular departmental course offerings in the Arts & Science Calendar. Vice-Dean Klassen also noted the establishment of a First-Year Foundations Council that meets monthly to discuss matters relating to first-year offerings. One of the items to be explored further would be the notion of what constitutes a First-Year Foundations seminar.

A question was raised to seek confirmation of the date of the next First-Year Foundations Council meeting, which was confirmed to be November 26.

Departmental Curriculum Retreats:

Vice-Dean Klassen announced that the Dean’s Office would be able to offer guidance and support to academic units as they embark on developing curriculum maps and thinking through their curricular structure. These types of departmental curriculum retreats are meant to be a collective undertaking for the academic unit. (Addendum: A CPAD memo and an accompanying Guide to A&S Academic Retreats were circulated on December 18, 2018 to provide further information about academic retreats.)
Spring Governance Deadlines & Late Course Approvals:

As a result of the transitioning of 199 courses into First-Year Foundations seminars, there has been an update to the 2018-19 governance dates and course proposal submission deadlines. An extra meeting will take place on February 4, 2019 to review all First-Year Foundations seminar proposals.

Vice-Dean Klassen also reiterated the purpose of having three rounds of Curriculum Committee meetings during the academic year. The fall round of meetings mainly focuses on courses, and the winter round of meetings mainly focuses on programs. The spring round of meetings is mean to resolve residual issues (for example, a new hire requiring a course to teach, or error corrections as a result of the February 2019 Calendar review). The Dean’s Office strongly discourages off-cycle reviews and approvals.

2. Approval of Minutes of the April 5, 2018 Meeting of Social 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

Psychology, Department of:

Professor Nicholas Rule, Associate Chair of Undergraduate Studies, presented the proposal to create a new course in Moral Thought and Behaviour. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the subject matter, this course may entice Humanities and Social Sciences students who have not completed the traditional prerequisites to enrol. This course proposal was presented at the Humanities Curriculum Committee earlier in the week. (Addendum: This course proposal was officially approved after it was presented at the Sciences Curriculum Committee on November 15, 2018.)

Anthropology, Department of:

Professor Shawn Lehman, Undergraduate Coordinator, presented the proposals to create one new course, modify one existing course, and retire two courses.

With respect to the ANT459H1 (Multispecies Ethnography) course proposal, the Department of Anthropology was recommended to consult with the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology in case if the latter department would like to learn more about this offering. In addition, a suggestion was made to the Department to update the course description to inform students of the fieldwork and field site visits to be encountered in this course. All of the course proposals were approved.

Political Science, Department of:

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Professor Dickson Eyoh, Associate Chair and Undergraduate Director (St. George) was unable to attend this meeting to speak to the course proposals. Since one of the new courses being proposed would be jointly offered with the Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies, Professor Dai Kojima, Undergraduate
Director for the Centre stepped in to provide additional details about JPS378H1 (Sex and the State). In Professor Eyoh’s absence, Vice-Dean Klassen presented the remaining proposals to create one other new course, modify one existing course and retire six courses.

In response to the POL453H1 (Authoritarianism in Comparative Perspective) course proposal, a member asked if graduate students would also be eligible to enrol in this course. Vice-Dean Klassen responded that on occasion there would be undergraduate and graduate students enrolling in the same course, with the distinction that graduate students would have a different course code and be subject to a different set of course deliverables.

Another member commented that it might be beneficial for the Department of Political Science to consult with the Department of History as the latter department will also be launching a course on the topic of fascism. Dr. Martha Harris, Manager of Governance & Curriculum Services at the Faculty of Arts & Science offered to facilitate the consultation between the two departments. All of the course proposals were approved.

*Geography and Planning, Department of:*

Ms. Susan Calanza, Acting Undergraduate Counsellor, presented the proposals to modify two existing courses and retire one course. In response to the GGR270H1 (Introductory Analytical Methods) course proposal, Dr. Harris solicited feedback from the committee on additional courses touching on statistical concepts that should be added as exclusions. There were no suggestions from the committee. All of the course proposals were approved.

*University College:*

Professor John Marshall, Vice-Principal, presented the proposals to create one new course and modify two existing courses.

In response to the new HST405H1 (Global Migration and Health) course proposal, a member inquired about past enrolment numbers when it was initially offered as a 300-level special topics course. The member also expressed concerns that the level of difficulty would increase should the course be offered at the 400-level. Professor Marshall responded that the combined enrolment between undergraduate and graduate students would be about 25, and this course would help fulfill student demand for 400-level courses.

In response to the HST373H1 (Epidemiology) course modification proposal, Vice-Dean Klassen commented on the proposed phrasing of the required prerequisites. She noted that different departments have varying approaches to statistics courses that are sometimes interchangeable or sometimes not interchangeable. She solicited feedback from a member of the Office of the Faculty Registrar who indicated that listing specific courses in prerequisites would help in coding prerequisite requirements in Degree Explorer. *(Addendum: No further changes to the proposed prerequisites were put forth after further consultation internally.)* All of the course proposals were approved.

*New College:*

Professor June Larkin, Vice-Principal, presented the proposals to create two new courses, modify one existing program and 17 existing courses, as well as retire one course. The re-weighting of NEW232Y1 (Buddhist Psychology) to NEW232H1, the new half-credit version of the existing course, triggered the majority of the College’s course modifications and the modification to the existing Buddhism, Psychology and Mental Health Minor.

With respect to the new NEW422H1 (Caribbean Regionalism) course proposal, it was confirmed that this course would require the completion of 1.0 full-course equivalent at the 300-level. All of the course proposals were approved.
Rotman Commerce:

Ms. Jeannine Woodall, Director of Academic Services and Student Life, presented the new course proposal for RSM329H1 (Accounting for Finance Professionals). This course was previously offered as a second-year special topic. However, the academic unit felt that a 300-level classification would be more appropriate as this course would build on topics covered in RSM219H1 (Introduction to Financial Accounting). This course proposal was approved.

5. Other Business

A member inquired about the role of and best practices surrounding the use of special topics courses. Vice-Dean Klassen replied that many academic units would use special topics courses as testing grounds for emerging topics, ideas or areas of research. She recalled a comment that was raised at the Humanities Curriculum Committee earlier in the week addressing students’ difficulty in locating these courses in the Arts & Science Calendar.

A follow-up question was raised about the development of policy regarding communicating information about special topic offerings to students. Vice-Dean Klassen responded that the Dean’s Office will create documentation aimed at answering these questions about special topics courses and the retention of courses not taught for a long time.

6. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 1:48 pm.

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