

INSTRUCTION COUNCIL

MINUTES

Thursday, November 6, 2025
126 ITLE or Zoom

<https://okstate-edu.zoom.us/j/93408932681?pwd=k7XfZJyUQZIDaBosY89x45j3PHDFfs.1>

Meeting ID: 934 0893 2681

Passcode: 097849

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

In attendance: Shannon Baker, Laurie Beets, Larry Burns, Aaron Christensen, Cynda Clary, Chris Francisco (Chair), Craig Freeman, Jami Fullerton, Ty Hawkins, Diane Jones, James Knecht, Marlys Mason, Christine Ormsbee, Rita Peaster, Carisa Ramming, Jennifer Rudd, Adrienne Sanogo, Rebecca Sheehan, Candace Thrasher, Ronna Vanderslice, Ashley Varnell. Other guests included Kellie Ebert and Taylor Harbuck.

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 am.

Francisco opened the meeting asking the group of known power outages in the buildings in which they work, as there have been power outages as well as an issue tracking the power outages. Nothing significant was reported.

1. Internship Markers – Kellie Ebert, Taylor Harbuck and Larry Burns

Ebert and Harbuck with Career Services presented a proposed “marker” framework for defining and tracking internships across the University. They explained that OSU currently lacks a consistent definition of an internship, which limits data quality, Banner designations, assessment of experiential learning, and future reporting on high-impact practices (HIPs). Rather than adopt a single rigid definition, Career Services recommends a flexible set of approximately ten common “markers” typically present in quality internships (e.g., defined start/end dates; an interview or selection process; learning goals; application of curricular knowledge; structured feedback/supervision; evidence the experience advances career goals; project completion with feedback; using tools/systems related to the profession; and working on a team). Colleges and departments would retain disciplinary standards while OSU establishes a campus-wide threshold (e.g., 5–7 markers met) for designating an experience as an internship. This approach would also support aligning standards for other HIPs over time.

The presenters outlined an implementation path that begins as a student-focused data-gathering phase. Students in courses with internship components would complete a brief form indicating which markers apply, with verification in collaboration with faculty or departmental internship coordinators. Initial collection would use Slate, then flow into Banner for institutional tracking. After an initial pilot and data review, Career Services would convene stakeholders (IC, DSAS, faculty and student representatives) to finalize the process.

Members discussed practical considerations. Several programs require internships for credit; others support non-credit internships arranged directly with employers (including short, event-based roles). Because not all experiences include every element, flexibility in the marker threshold is essential. Paid/unpaid status may function as an additional, optional marker. The group noted workload implications if faculty verification is required for large numbers of non-credit internships, as well as the need for consistent advising practices. Cost and fee concerns for for-credit internships were raised, underscoring the importance of clear communication with students and families. Related compliance items included NC-SARA reporting (which applies to any required internship/practicum, even if zero credit) and potential expectations for a consistent hours-to-credit standard institution-wide; the University will seek to justify calibrated, discipline-appropriate standards where possible. Instruction Council expressed support for exploring the marker framework and agreed to form a small pilot working group with representatives from multiple colleges to test the process and provide feedback (send names to Burns). Career Services and Burns will refine the marker list, draft the student form and verification process, and coordinate with other units prior to launch. The goal is to improve data accuracy for internships, enable future HIPs reporting, and preserve departmental autonomy while establishing a clear, institution-level designation.

2. November 20th meeting – Chris Francisco

Francisco addressed scheduling for the next Instruction Council meeting on November 20, which conflicts with Dr. Sweeney's HLC presentation beginning at 9:00 a.m. Because attendance at the HLC presentation is important and unavoidable, Francisco proposed not meeting in person on November 20. Instead, he will send an email on Monday, November 17, reminding members of the plan and providing the list of course action items for the week. Members will be asked to respond by Thursday of that week—the normal IC meeting time—to indicate any courses they wish to discuss in person. Any items identified for discussion will be tabled for the following in-person meeting, while items that raise no concerns will be approved via email and forwarded to the Registrar's Office for processing. Francisco emphasized that he is willing to table any course item that a member wants to discuss, noting that most course actions are routine (e.g., minor description or prerequisite changes) and can move forward without meeting time.

Members agreed with the plan, and Francisco acknowledged that this is not an ideal arrangement but is necessary due to the once-per-decade accreditation obligations and the constraints of executive scheduling.

3. Follow-up information on low-productivity reports – Chris Francisco

Francisco provided an update on recent communication with State Regents staff regarding the University's low-productivity program reports. He explained that the Regents staff contacted him approximately two weeks prior with questions about roughly half of OSU's submitted reports. The primary concern centered on understanding the University's use of the "low cost" and "justifiable cost" exceptions. Francisco noted that the State Regents had modified their online reporting form after OSU had already distributed the earlier version to colleges, resulting in substantive discrepancies between what units completed and the criteria they were later evaluated against.

One significant change involved the definition of "restructure." The revised form indicated that a restructured program must have been formally suspended and taken offline, undergone a re-design of the curriculum, and then been relaunched. Many OSU programs had reported curricular restructuring

aimed at simplifying pathways or reducing bottlenecks, but these did not meet the Regents' narrow definition because the programs had never been taken offline. As a result, nearly all of OSU's submissions were categorized under low cost or justifiable cost rather than restructure.

During the call, Regents staff acknowledged that several programs clearly involved curricular restructuring, even if they did not fit the formal definition on the form. They asked whether it would be acceptable for OSU to retain the "low cost" or "justifiable cost" designation while also noting the curricular restructuring efforts. Francisco agreed, clarifying that this accurately reflected institutional intentions and did not require rewriting any unit submissions. He emphasized that no substantive changes were made—only classification adjustments for clarity at the Regents' level.

The staff also indicated that some OSU programs demonstrated credible growth plans, allowing them to be categorized simultaneously as "low cost" and "growth oriented." A few programs—particularly BA degrees serving as complements to BS degrees—were clearly no-cost programs and were treated as such. Francisco reported that he does not anticipate significant issues with OSU's submissions, and the Regents' staff expressed appreciation for the thoroughness and seriousness with which OSU completed the reports.

In response to questions, Francisco confirmed that he will receive and share a finalized list from the Regents indicating how each program was categorized. The reports will be presented to the Regents in grouped "buckets" (e.g., low cost, no cost, justifiable cost, suspend, grow) during the Academic Affairs Committee review. Although the reports were originally slated for the October agenda, they have likely been moved to December. Francisco reiterated that he anticipates no significant concerns and praised the substantial work completed by colleges in preparing the reports.

4. Assessing the BUS degree – Chris Francisco

Francisco introduced a discussion on the assessment of the Bachelor of University Studies (BUS) degree, noting that the ongoing HLC reaffirmation process has highlighted areas where institutional practices need greater clarity and coherence. One such area is the assessment of the BUS degree, which has historically been difficult to evaluate because of its individualized and flexible structure. He explained that while the degree successfully provides a pathway to completion for returning students or those nearing a degree finish line and also serves students whose academic and career goals span multiple disciplines, the University lacks a consistent and meaningful way to articulate or measure learning outcomes for the program.

Francisco observed that the University has not previously had a coordinated institutional strategy for assessing the BUS degree, despite past generous efforts by individuals such as Chris Ormsbee, who undertook assessments despite this not really falling in their areas. He invited feedback from Instruction Council members on how best to evaluate the degree moving forward, including whether assessment should occur uniformly across the institution or within each college hosting BUS students. Several members noted that BUS students generally fall into two categories: those returning to complete a degree and those intentionally designing an interdisciplinary program that does not fit existing majors. This distinction may shape assessment priorities.

Members discussed potential approaches. One suggestion was developing a small set of assessment "buckets" or categories tied to the different motivations and pathways of BUS students. Others noted that because each college provides the disciplinary focus for its BUS students, a decentralized model may be appropriate, with colleges assessing students based on shared college learning goals or focus-area expectations. At the same time, members acknowledged a need for some institutional

consistency—particularly given HLC expectations and the need to demonstrate that BUS students meet coherent academic outcomes. Another perspective supported the idea of establishing overarching university-level assessment goals while allowing colleges to define supplemental learning outcomes for their respective BUS focus areas.

Francisco emphasized that this conversation is preliminary and will also need to involve the Assessment and Academic Improvement Council (AAIC), particularly because some AAIC members may be less familiar with the day-to-day academic structures of the BUS program. He reiterated that Instruction Council's insights are critical to shaping a thoughtful assessment model before bringing the discussion to AAIC.

Instruction Council members also discussed the demographic realities of BUS students—many are transfer students, students changing majors late in their academic career, students accepting job opportunities who need a flexible path to graduation, or student athletes. Members noted that these career-driven transitions could themselves be meaningful data points for assessment, such as tracking job placement or successful degree completion in relation to BUS pathways.

Francisco concluded by thanking the group for the thoughtful discussion and noted that additional input will be gathered as they continue developing an assessment framework that is meaningful, flexible, and aligned with both institutional goals and accreditation expectations.

5. Collecting examples of syllabi – Chris Francisco

Francisco introduced a discussion regarding syllabi collection practices in preparation for the upcoming HLC accreditation visit. He noted that Ryan Chung had identified potential requests that HLC reviewers sometimes make, including asking institutions to provide sample syllabi—particularly those illustrating policies on academic integrity, generative AI, or other course expectations. While OSU previously maintained a centralized syllabi repository, it was discontinued for practical and pedagogical reasons, including low usage and concerns about appropriateness.

Francisco emphasized that the purpose is *not* to recreate a central repository, but rather to compile a small set of strong, representative syllabi that could be provided quickly if requested by HLC reviewers during the federal compliance phase or site visit. He suggested the possibility of obtaining roughly ten syllabi per college that contain clear learning objectives, required components, and transparent academic integrity and generative AI policies—even though such policies vary across instructors. Instruction Council members shared how syllabi are currently collected within their units. Some colleges reported that they already require instructors to submit syllabi each semester, often by department. Francisco acknowledged that practices vary across campus but confirmed that any collected examples would be shared only with the HLC reviewers, not publicly distributed.

He noted that no immediate action was required but that he would meet again with Chung to clarify exactly what types of syllabi would be most useful. After that discussion, Francisco will follow up with more specific instructions, including any desired breakdown by level or discipline.

Members agreed that they would be willing to assist once the request is formalized, and several members recommended that the follow-up specify whether graduate syllabi should be included in the sample. Francisco thanked the group for their input and said he would return with a more detailed request after coordinating with Chung.

6. Curriculum

Course Action Summaries:

College of Education and Human Sciences

Sanogo noted the unusually large number of items included, explaining that several significant curriculum updates are underway. A couple of programs are working to modernize and refresh curriculum to better meet student needs. Sanogo also explained that the series of one-credit courses appearing across pages two and onward were tied to the new Behavioral Health Aide (BHA) micro-credential, previously approved over the summer. These courses are now being proposed for official for-credit status. Additional proposals included new and updated study abroad and domestic travel courses. Sanogo also highlighted revisions connected to the recent introduction of a special education option in Elementary Education, which prompted changes to several SPED-designated courses. Lastly, she noted a course title change on the final page of the summary to better reflect the current climate.

Clary moved to approve, and Mason seconded. Instruction Council members approved the College of Education and Human Sciences course action summary.

Program Modifications:

Ferguson College of Agriculture

Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources in Agricultural Education (007)

Course requirement change

- Move SPCH 2713 or AGCM 3203 from the general education block to the college/departmental requirements
- Add a list of courses students can select from to satisfy the (G) requirement in the general education block
- Add 4 hours of "Additional General Education"
- Add PLNT 1213 as an alternative to HORT 1013
- Remove BIOL 1113 and BIOL 1111 or BIOL 1114
- Increase electives from 1 to 2 credit hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To increase enrichment and elective requirements for the degree.

Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources in Agricultural Leadership (458)

Course requirement change

- Remove AGLE 1511, AGLE 4101, and AGLE 4203
- Add AGLE 4201 and AGLE 4301
- Increase guided courses from 6 to 9 credit hours
- Remove 3 hours of NREM
- Add 6 hours of emphasis courses
- Decrease electives from 5 to 4 credit hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To provide more flexibility in incorporating students' academic and professional interests and encourage the declaration of a minor.

Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (216)

Course requirement change

- Option in Pre-Medical or Pre-Veterinary Science
 - Add BIOC 1990
 - Reduce electives from 4 to 3 credit hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To align the core course requirements with the other degree options.

Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources in Environmental Science (401)

Course requirement change

- Add ENVR 1011
- Reduce related courses to account for the addition of ENVR 1011
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: The steering committee recommended adding ENVR 1011 to increase faculty mentoring and career development.

Sanogo moved to approve, and Fullerton seconded. Instruction Council members approved the Ferguson College of Agriculture program modifications.

College of Arts and Sciences

Minor in Graphic Art

New minor

- Delivery method: Traditional
- Total credit hours: 15
- Reason for requested action: To help meet the demand for visual communication and creativity across a range of majors.

Bachelor of Music in Music (153)

- Option in Jazz Performance
 - Remove 26 hours of JAZZ 3010
 - Add 12 hours of JAZZ 2010 and 14 hours of JAZZ 3010
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To satisfy accreditation standards.

Bachelor of Science in Physics (161)

Course requirement change

- Option in Applied Physics
 - Remove CHEM 1515
 - Add 5 hours of Math and/or Science
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To make the degree more attractive to students.

Undergraduate Certificate in Pre-Health Care Administration (555)

Program deletion

- Effective immediately
- Two students are currently enrolled and will be allowed to complete the program
- Reason for requested action: Demand for the certificate has decreased.

Minor in Religious Studies

Change to existing minor

- Remove “Select 3 hours of upper-division non-Western religion courses” and “Select 9 hours upper-division hours with at least 6 hours of REL coursework and up to 3 hours from the following”
- Add “Select 12 hours from the following course options; at least 9 hours of REL coursework and up to 3 hours from the following course options with ART, ENGL, HIST, PHIL, or SOC course prefixes”
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: Simplifying the requirements for the minor and removing non-REL course options.

Bachelor of Arts in Sociology (258)

Course requirement change

- Option in Environment and Society
 - Remove PSYC 1113 and HDF5 2113 as designated (S) courses in the general education block
 - Add 3 hours designated (S)
 - Increase “Additional General Education” hours from 1 to 4 credit hours
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: To allow greater flexibility for students.
- Option in Social Services
 - Add HDF5 2113 as a required course for the (S) designated hours in the general education block
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: HDF5 2113 is a prerequisite for some of the recommended electives. Adding it as a required course will help facilitate timely degree completion.

Bachelor of Science in Sociology (184)

Course requirement change

- Option in Environment and Society
 - Remove PSYC 1113 and HDF5 2113 as designated (S) courses in the general education block
 - Add 3 hours designated (S)
 - Increase “Additional General Education” hours from 1 to 4 credit hours
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: To allow greater flexibility for students.
- Option in Pre-Medical Science
 - Remove BIOL 1604

- Add MICR 2123 and MICR 2132
- Reduce electives from 14 to 13 credit hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: MICR 2123 and MICR 2132 are prerequisites for other courses. The proposed change will allow students to complete courses earlier in the course sequence.
- Option in Pre-Law
 - Add PSYC 1113 as a designated (S) course
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: PSYC 1113 is a prerequisite for some of the recommended electives. Adding it as a required course will help facilitate timely degree completion.
- Option in Social Services
 - Add HDFS 2113 as a required course for the (S) designated hours in the general education block
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: HDFS 2113 is a prerequisite for some of the recommended electives. Adding it as a required course will help facilitate timely degree completion.

Francisco asked whether the Graphic Design program had considered offering a certificate either instead of, or in addition to, the proposed minor. He noted that across the university, few new minors are being created, while certificates have become increasingly common due to their ability to serve as formal, stand-alone credentials. Hawkins responded that, to his knowledge, the option of a certificate had not yet been discussed within the program. However, there was no apparent opposition to the idea, and he indicated a willingness to raise the question with both the program faculty and the department. It was further noted that Graphic Design maintains a rigorous portfolio review in the second year of the program, and some students—despite strong academic performance—do not pass the review. Creating a certificate could provide these students with a meaningful credential rather than leaving them without an academic off-ramp. While this consideration does not preclude pursuing a minor, it provides additional context for exploring credentialing options.

Mason moved to approve, and Freeman seconded. Instruction Council members approved the College of Arts and Sciences program modifications and new program request.

College of Education and Human Sciences

Bachelor of Science in Applied Exercise Science (514)

Course requirement change

- Option in Strength and Conditioning
 - Remove 8 hours of unspecified (N) designated courses
 - Add BIOL 1113 and BIOL 1111 and CHEM 1314 or CHEM 1215 as required (N) designated courses in the general education block
 - Remove PSYC 1113 as specified (S) designated course
 - Add 3 hours designated (S) in the general education block
 - Add BIOL 3203 and BIOL 3201 as an alternative to BIOL 3204
 - Remove HHP 3663 and HHP 4480

- Add HHP 3664 and HHP 4980
- Reduce electives from 32 to 28 hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: Providing students with specific (N) designated courses will better prepare students for certification requirements. Curriculum updates resulted in new course numbers.

Bachelor of Science in Interior Design (342)

- Add ART 1303, DM 3824, DM 4533
- Remove DM 3991
- Remove Professional Area selection and General Electives
- Add 3 hours from a list of controlled electives
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To accurately reflect CIDA accreditation requirements and the more industry-focused curriculum.

Bachelor of Science in Recreational Therapy (317)

Course requirement change

- Remove EDHS 1111 as an alternative to EDHS 3111
- Add BIOL 3203 and BIOL 3201 as an alternative to BIOL 3204
- Add RT 4442
- Reduce guided electives from 6 to 3 credit hours
- Total credit hours will decrease from 121 to 120
- Reason for requested action: To better prepare students for state and national certification licensure.

Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education (182)

Option name change

- Change option name from Social Studies – Alternative Certification to Social Studies – Non-Certification
- Reason for requested action: To alleviate confusion with students' expected assistance from the unit in obtaining teacher certification through the state's alternative pathway.

Course requirement change

- Option in Secondary Education: Social Studies – Alternative Certification
 - Add CIED 3753
 - Decrease required hours in Government section from 6 to 3 credit hours
- Option in Secondary Education
 - Add CIED 3753
 - Decrease required hours in Government section from 6 to 3 credit hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To better prepare students to understand and apply the Inquiry Design Model in their future classrooms.

This was tabled for further discussion including Sanogo, Hawkins and Francisco.

Freeman moved to approve, and Mason seconded. Instruction Council members approved the College of Education and Human Sciences program modifications with the exception of the Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education (182), which was tabled for further discussion.

College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology

Minor in Construction

Change to existing minor

- Remove CET 3273 as a required course
- Change “Choose 1 of the following” to “Choose 2 of the following”
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To align minor requirements with updated degree requirements.

Clary moved to approve, and Sanogo seconded. Instruction Council members approved the College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology program modification.

Spears School of Business

Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration (036)

Course requirement change

- Option in Executive Research
 - Consolidating how BADM 6100 and BADM 6000 are listed on the degree requirements
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: Simplification of course listings will make it less confusing for prospective and current students.
- Option in Hospitality and Tourism Management
 - Remove HTM 6111
 - Increase electives from 17 to 18 credit hours
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: Content from HTM 6111 was incorporated into the graduate student orientation, and the course is no longer needed as part of the curriculum.
- Option in Management
 - Add MGMT 6383 and MGMT 6453
 - Remove REMS 6003, REMS 6013, and REMS 6320 as required courses
 - Increase guided electives from 15 to 18 credit hours
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: Adjusting required courses to fit the evolving curriculum better.

Master of Science in Business Analytics and Data Science (505)

Course requirement change

- Option in Advanced Data Science
 - Remove MSIS 5223 as a required course

- Increase electives from 6 to 9 credit hours
- Option in Health Analytics
 - Add MSIS 5633
 - Decrease electives from 6 to 3 credit hours
- Option in Marketing Analytics
 - Remove MKTG 5253
 - Add BAN 5563
- Adding a footnote to indicate the implementation of advanced standing credit, based on employment experience, for working professionals enrolled in online courses
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: Updating curriculum to remove courses that are no longer offered or considered industry relevant.

Undergraduate Certificate in Business Essentials (295)

Course requirement change

- Remove BADM 2111 or BADM 3111
- Add any 1-hour Spears School of Business course with ACCT, ECON, BADM, BCOM, EEE, FIN, HTM, LSB, MGMT, MKTG, or MSIS prefix.
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: Addressing a prerequisite issue. Allows students to select an applicable course related to their interests.

Graduate Certificate in Casino and Gaming Management (345)

Program suspension

- Effective beginning next academic year
- Program will be reinstated or deleted within three years
- Reason for requested action: The program has lost its viability due to course streamlining within the Spears School of Business.

Graduate Certificate in Energy Business (372)

Program suspension

- Effective immediately
- Program will be reinstated or deleted within three years
- Reason for requested action: Student demand has decreased, making it difficult to sustain.

Minor in Event Management

Suspend minor

- Effective beginning next academic year
- Minor will be reinstated or deleted within three years
- Reason for requested action: Spears School of Business has an Undergraduate Certificate in Event Management that students are encouraged to pursue.

Graduate Certificate in Innovative Leadership (371)

Program suspension

- Effective immediately
- Program will be reinstated or deleted within three years
- Reason for requested action: Low student interest and small course enrollment sizes created an inefficient and unsustainable trajectory for this graduate certificate.

Master of Science in Management Information Systems (412)

Course requirement change

- Add MSIS 5273
- Decrease elective hours by 3 credit hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: The program now expects all students to take MSIS 5273 Legal and Ethical Issues in Information Technology in their program experience.

Graduate Certificate in Non-Profit Management (491)

Program suspension

- Effective immediately
- Program will be reinstated or deleted within three years
- Reason for requested action: This graduate certificate is no longer needed due to the recent approval of the Graduate Certificate in Business Sustainability and Non-Profit Management.

Freeman moved to approve, and Sheehan seconded. Instruction Council members approved the Spears School of Business program modifications.

Center for Health Sciences

Graduate Certificate in Nursing Leadership (New)

New program request

- Delivery method: Electronic
- Total credit hours: 12
- Reason for requested action: To provide students with coursework to bridge the clinician-to-executive gap. The proposed graduate certificate can be taken by an individual for career advancement or stacked with an OSU Healthcare Administration degree.

Sanogo asked if CHS had worked with CEHS nursing faculty on this new program request, and Christensen answered that they have partnered with several people in the nursing program plus Spears School of Business (Center for Health Systems Innovation), as well as the Oklahoma Nursing Association. Francisco recalled previously discussing related matters with Stephen Clarke and Melanie Morgan, particularly regarding legal considerations associated with an external organization involved in the partnership. He explained that the legal concerns primarily related to the structure of the required memorandum of understanding (MOU), and that these had been addressed.

The group decided to table the proposal to allow Sanogo and Mason to verify that their faculty and administrative leadership are comfortable with the certificate before final approval. Francisco noted that if

confirmation is received quickly, the proposal can be voted on via email and still be advanced to Council of Deans in time for the December Board cycle.

Follow-up as of November 10, 2025, the Center for Health Sciences Graduate Certificate in Nursing Leadership new program request was approved via an email vote by Instruction Council members.

7. Other

Francisco explained that he, Provost Mendez, and others have been exploring a potential new curricular model to clarify academic pathways for students—particularly for those pursuing competitive professional programs such as medicine—who often struggle to determine which major best aligns with their goals. He explained that this model helps students decide career paths or career areas of interest first and then the degree pathway versus choosing a major first and then a career pathway.

Francisco described a recent model implemented for the new master's degree in Artificial Intelligence, which features a shared institutional core designed collaboratively by participating colleges (CAS, CHS and CEAT). Students complete the agreed-upon core and then finish the degree through coursework housed within the college of their chosen discipline. This “core first, specialization second” model was supported by external funding through Google and has enabled interdisciplinary participation without relocating programs from their home colleges. Francisco invited other colleges to participate, as long as they agree to accept the core requirements.

Francisco suggested that a similar structure could be explored for undergraduate pre-med preparation. Under such a model, a university-wide working group—including faculty with expertise in medical school preparation—would identify a coherent set of pre-med core courses aligned with professional school expectations, including MCAT competencies. Any academic program wishing to participate could then build a pre-med track in which students would complete the shared core before finishing remaining requirements in the chosen major. Diplomas would still be awarded by the college of the major, but the framework could help students enter OSU as “pre-med” while exploring majors more intentionally and shifting seamlessly among participating disciplines. The degree awarded would be a pre-med degree with an option in the student's chosen discipline, and the idea is to distinguish OSU from what other colleges are doing in these areas. Additional thematic pathways—such as pre-law or data science—could be considered in the future if the model proves viable.

Instruction Council members offered initial reactions. Clary asked if the programs who offer these options are making sure that students are taking the courses that are required for medical school or veterinary school, and Francisco noted that OSU has previously received feedback indicating inconsistency in how well some pre-professional pathways match the needs of competitive medical programs. He cited the College of Osteopathic Medicine's observation that OSU's applicant numbers have declined while OU continues to send many successful applicants. Ensuring that OSU students are clearly and consistently prepared could strengthen outcomes.

Members also highlighted considerations such as scholarship eligibility and the need to avoid unintended disadvantages for students who prefer a disciplinary identity while pursuing pre-med goals. Francisco agreed that these issues must be addressed carefully and are precisely why a working group is needed. He explained that this discussion represents an exploratory stage rather than a formal proposal. Over the coming weeks, he and Provost Mendez will assemble a working group and bring the topic back to Instruction Council for further discussion.

The meeting concluded with acknowledgment that many logistical and academic challenges exist, but that the idea may offer a distinctive approach to helping students understand their career pathways while strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration and professional preparation across the University.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:16 am.

Minutes were recorded by Ashley Varnell.