

INSTRUCTION COUNCIL

MINUTES

Thursday, December 18, 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, Richard Frohock, Jami Fullerton, Jeff Hartman, Ty Hawkins, Diane Jones, James Knecht, Matt Lovern, Marlys Mason, Christine Ormsbee, Rita Peaster, Darius Prier, Carisa Ramming, Jennifer Rudd, Adrienne Sanogo, Candace Thrasher, Ronna Vanderslice, Ashley Varnell.

Meeting was called to order at 9:03am.

Francisco expressed appreciation to those who participated in commencement activities. He specifically commended Peaster and her team for their work, noting that commencement ceremonies ran extremely smoothly and efficiently, as they consistently do despite the extensive behind-the-scenes coordination required. Francisco shared that Justice Taylor remarked positively on the efficiency of the ceremony and was impressed with its execution. He extended thanks to all members who attended commencement, emphasizing the value of celebrating students' achievements and noting that the events were successful and well received overall.

Francisco invited Sanogo to introduce Dr. Darius Prier. Sanogo shared that, as she prepares to leave OSU, the college has identified Prier to serve as interim. Prier thanked Sanogo and the group for the warm introduction. He shared his enthusiasm for the opportunity, noted that he has already worked with several members of the group, and emphasized his commitment to fully engaging in the role and contributing positively moving forward. Francisco thanked Sanogo for her collegiality and contributions during her time at OSU, and he welcomed Prier and thanked him for his willingness to step into the interim position.

1. Sub-120 hour bachelor's degree updates – Chris Francisco

Francisco provided an update on the proposed sub-120 hour bachelor's degrees under consideration at the state level. He explained that the State Regents have not yet voted on the proposal and that significant uncertainty remains regarding its final structure and implementation. He noted that discussions at the State Regents' Council on Instruction revealed a clear divide between two-year and four-year institutions. Two-year institutions are strongly advocating for the ability to offer multiple sub-120 hour bachelor's degrees, while four-year institutions oppose this expansion. By a narrow vote of 12–10, the Council on Instruction reaffirmed the existing policy allowing two-year institutions only one

function exception to offer a bachelor's degree. Francisco emphasized that this outcome may change at the Council of Presidents level, where two-year institutions hold a numerical advantage, and that the Regents' staff appear inclined to proceed cautiously and revisit the issue later.

Francisco further explained that the proposal is moving forward, with remaining questions focused on implementation details, which include revisions to state rules governing general education hours, upper-division coursework, and residency requirements, and which must be recalibrated for sub-120 hour degrees. He indicated that he would distribute the Regents' proposed framework after the meeting, noting that it has not yet been approved and that some two-year institutions have expressed concern about potential credit-hour losses. He also acknowledged that delays are likely, with a vote unlikely before March and possibly in April or later, depending on discussions at the Council of Presidents.

Turning to local considerations, Francisco reviewed communication sent to deans earlier in the week summarizing the Council of Deans discussion. He emphasized that the Provost wishes to move quickly in developing proposals so the University is positioned to submit letters of intent as soon as the State Regents open that process. This urgency is partly driven by legislative interest in compact degrees and the desire to demonstrate that OSU is proactively addressing workforce needs without requiring statutory mandates.

Francisco outlined expectations for campus proposals, stressing that any sub-120 bachelor's degrees must be tightly aligned with workforce demand and clearly differentiated from traditional four-year degrees. He cautioned against adopting models that simply compress existing majors into fewer credit hours, noting concerns about academic rigor, breadth of education, and long-term implications for higher education. He encouraged colleges to focus on new or re-envisioned programs that respond directly to industry needs, particularly in areas aligned with the state's list of critical occupations, adult learners, and working professionals. Online delivery and accessibility for rural and non-traditional students were highlighted as important considerations.

Discussion followed regarding the potential naming of these degrees. Francisco explained that the State Regents are considering alternative titles—such as “Bachelor of Applied Learning” or “Bachelor of Applied Studies” or similar—to distinguish these degrees from traditional bachelor's programs. He expressed support for distinct naming to aid graduate schools, employers, and policymakers in understanding the nature of the credential, while also noting the challenges of changing statewide policy language and maintaining consistency with existing degree titles.

Instruction Council members raised questions about scope, enrollment sustainability, and the risk of proliferating small programs. Francisco acknowledged these concerns and reiterated that the goal is not to fragment enrollment but to address a specific population of learners who might not otherwise complete a bachelor's degree. He framed the initiative as an opportunity to “upgrade” applied associate-level programs into leadership-oriented bachelor's pathways, rather than as a reduction of traditional undergraduate education. Workforce partnerships, employer support, and stackable credentials were identified as important elements for success. Burns asked about tuition models for these bachelor's degrees, and Francisco answered that it has been discussed but no concrete plan has been formed at this point.

In response to questions about expectations for colleges, Francisco clarified that, given the accelerated timeline (wants the proposals by the week of January 26th so they can be voted on at Instruction

Council on February 5th), one well-developed proposal per college would be sufficient, with additional proposals welcomed if feasible. He emphasized that colleges should prioritize quality and feasibility over volume and that collaboration with OSU-OKC or OSU-IT could be explored later, once those campuses have had time to assess their own options. He acknowledged that associate in applied science programs present unique challenges for transition and may require longer development timelines.

Francisco concluded by thanking members for their engagement and recognizing the difficulty of the compressed schedule. He reiterated his willingness to discuss ideas individually with colleges and emphasized the importance of thoughtful, workforce-driven proposals that align with OSU's mission while responding to evolving state and national expectations for undergraduate education.

2. Possible removal of outdated policies [5-0201 On-Campus Credit Courses Offered Through Extension](#) and [5-0202 Supplemental Credit Courses Offered Through Extension](#) – Chris Francisco and Rita Peaster

Francisco introduced the possible removal of outdated institutional policies identified during the University's federal compliance review for the upcoming HLC accreditation. He acknowledged Peaster's extensive work on federal compliance, with support from Burns, and explained that this review process has surfaced policies that no longer reflect current institutional practices. The intent is to ensure that publicly available policies accurately represent how the University operates, thereby avoiding the need to justify discrepancies between written policy and actual practice during accreditation review.

Peaster provided an overview of the specific policies under consideration. One policy, 5-0201, last updated in 1993, addresses on-campus credit courses offered through Extension and no longer aligns with the modern structure of OSU's outreach and instructional delivery. A second policy, 5-0202, last updated in 2002, governs supplemental credit courses, a category that the University no longer offers. Francisco explained that both policies are obsolete and have not been meaningfully updated to reflect changes in instructional models over the past several decades. He noted that State Regents' Academic Affairs Policy 3.17 currently governs these areas and provides sufficient structure and oversight, making the outdated OSU-specific policies unnecessary.

Following discussion, Francisco clarified that the proposal is to formally remove the two outdated policies and explicitly rely on State Regents' Academic Affairs Policy 3.17 in their place. Francisco thanked Peaster for identifying the outdated policies and for her continued work on federal compliance, and he expressed appreciation to Instruction Council members for their review and discussion of the matter.

Frohock moved to approve, and Freeman seconded. Instruction Council members approved recommending removal of outdated policies 5-0201 and 5-0202 and documenting reliance on the applicable State Regents' Academic Affairs policy 3.17 in their place.

3. Curriculum

Course Action Summaries:

College of Arts and Sciences

CS 5733 "Intelligent Robotics" was tabled on 11/20 for discussion

Freeman moved to approve, and Mason seconded. Instruction Council members approved the College of Arts and Sciences CS 5733 “Intelligent Robotics” course action.

Hawkins explained that these requests are part of a broader, ongoing curricular redesign within the Department of Languages and Literatures. He described the larger initiative as a move toward a single, unified language major with concentrations in individual languages, rather than maintaining multiple separate language majors. This shift is intended to address enrollment and sustainability challenges while also improving the student experience. A key goal of the redesign is to allow students to engage earlier with cultural studies, diversity, literature, and the enjoyment of language learning, rather than delaying these experiences until advanced language proficiency is achieved. To support this approach, the department plans to reduce the extent to which language competency requirements are front-loaded. This would enable students to take more courses taught in English earlier in the curriculum, particularly in areas such as culture and literature, recognizing that students cannot meaningfully engage in advanced content taught in the target language before developing sufficient proficiency. Hawkins noted that the German course changes reflect this philosophy and that similar proposals for other languages are expected to follow.

Mason moved to approve, and Sanogo seconded. Instruction Council members approved the remaining College of Arts and Sciences course action summary.

Program Modifications:

Spears School of Business – was tabled on 12/4 for discussion

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Management (449)

Course requirement change

- Remove MGMT 3011
- Remove ENGL 3323 as an alternative to BCOM 3113 or BCOM 3323
- Remove SPCH 3723 as an alternative to BCOM 3223
- Increase electives from 13 to 14 credit hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To remove redundancy in the curriculum.

Sanogo moved to approve, and Fullerton seconded. Instruction Council members approved the Spears School of Business program modification.

4. Other

Pre-Med Working Group

Francisco provided an update on plans to form a Pre-Med Working Group and outlined the next steps in the nomination and organizational process. He explained that an email will be sent to the deans requesting nominations for the working group. For the five colleges with undergraduate programs, deans will be asked to submit two nominees each, excluding the Instruction Council and DSAS representatives. This approach is intended to broaden participation and ensure representation from faculty and staff who are not already serving in standing governance roles. The goal is to secure at least one representative from each college.

Additional representation will be sought from key administrative and academic units. Francisco indicated he will request a representative from the Registrar’s Office, Honors College, and CHS. The College of Veterinary Medicine will be invited to participate if interested, and Burns will be asked to suggest a consultant who could assist the group as needed. Ormsbee was also invited to consider

whether representation from her unit would be appropriate. Francisco noted that Hawkins has agreed to chair the working group, and he expressed appreciation for that commitment. Francisco emphasized that the group will not begin substantive work until after the holiday period, recognizing the challenges of engaging faculty during that time. Once convened, the working group will be formally charged, with Francisco presenting several potential structural models for a pre-med program. One model mirrors the structure of the interdisciplinary master's degree in Artificial Intelligence, while other options may address administrative complexity or mitigate concerns such as the proliferation of multiple discipline-specific pre-med degrees and potential low-productivity issues. The working group will not be limited to these options and may propose alternative structures. The anticipated timeline is for the working group to complete its recommendations by the end of the spring semester. This would allow curricular proposals to be developed over the summer, with the objective of implementing any approved changes for Fall 2027. Francisco noted that Instruction Council members will be kept informed throughout the process as the work progresses.

Artificial Intelligence Integration Initiative

Ormsbee announced that the University has received a State Regents grant to support an expanded Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration initiative. This grant will fund a two-year expansion of the AI integration work that has been underway for the past two semesters. Under the grant, the University will support AI integration teams across all five campuses in the OSU system, with a goal of having 25 teams per semester focused on embedding AI skills into existing degree plans. While the largest number of teams will be based on the main campus, all campuses will participate.

As part of this initiative, a new layer of AI Integration Fellows will be identified. These fellows will receive training over the two-year grant period and will serve as coaches for the AI integration teams. The intent is to build long-term faculty capacity so that AI integration and training can continue beyond the life of the grant. Announcements and calls for volunteers have already begun, including notices in Teaching Tips, with additional communications forthcoming. By the end of the two-year period, the goal is to have AI skills integrated into more than 100 degree programs and to have trained approximately 300–500 faculty members who are actively incorporating AI skills into their teaching. The focus is not on creating new standalone AI courses but rather on integrating AI competencies within existing degree plans so that students graduate with practical AI skills aligned with disciplinary contexts.

Transition from Oasis to CourseDog

Ormsbee reminded members that the University is no longer using the Oasis system for courses or academic program exceptions. All such submissions—academic program exceptions, Executive PhD offerings, Cowboys Teach and Cowboy Concurrent courses—must now be submitted through CourseDog. She noted that training was held recently with the Registrar's Office and expressed appreciation for the transition away from Oasis. Ormsbee indicated that a follow-up email will be sent to ensure that all relevant faculty and staff are aware of the change and are using the correct system going forward.

Final Grade Submissions

Francisco thanked the group for their collective efforts in ensuring timely grade submission, noting that 99.96% of grades were posted on time—just short of a record and an excellent outcome overall. He emphasized that this level of compliance significantly reduces downstream issues and administrative burden. Francisco reported that he personally contacted faculty associated with remaining “forbidden incomplete” grades and that, as of the most recent review, only five such cases remained. Francisco described several issues identified through this process that may warrant follow-up. In particular, he highlighted ambiguity in the academic integrity policy regarding the use of incompletes when an academic integrity case is pending. He noted that if the outcome of such a case would not change the final course grade, assigning an incomplete may be unnecessary. He cited examples where assigning an incomplete did not align with policy intent, including a case in which a student could receive a zero on a final exam and still earn an A in the course, which raised questions about grading practices and assessment weighting. Other cases, such as penalties affecting only a single question or component, were described as more understandable. Francisco indicated that these issues may need to be addressed through policy clarification or revision. He further noted that many problematic incompletes involved default grades of A or Satisfactory, which undermines the purpose of assigning an incomplete when no meaningful grade consequence exists. He also referenced situations involving honors contracts, emphasizing that there are appropriate mechanisms to address those cases without violating grading policy. Francisco expressed appreciation for faculty cooperation in resolving these issues. Finally, Francisco shared a broader perspective from a national Vice Provosts listserv, where peers at other research universities reported significantly lower compliance rates for midterm and early-term grade submissions, often struggling to reach even 70%. By contrast, OSU’s consistently high submission rates—approximately 95% for six-week grades—were highlighted as evidence of a strong institutional culture around student progress reporting. Francisco noted that he shared OSU’s practices and Burns’ group’s research on academic alerts with the national audience, underscoring the role of early grade reporting in identifying and supporting at-risk students. He concluded by thanking the group for sustaining a culture that supports timely feedback and student success.

Farewell, Dr. Sanogo

Francisco thanked Sanogo again and wished her well.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:52am.

Minutes were recorded by Ashley Varnell.