

INSTRUCTION COUNCIL

MINUTES

Thursday, December 4, 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, Danielle Bellmer, Chad Blew, Larry Burns, Aaron Christensen, Chris Francisco (Chair), Craig Freeman, Richard Frohock, Jami Fullerton, Jeff Hartman, Ty Hawkins, Kelva Hunger, James Knecht, Marlys Mason, Christine Ormsbee, Rita Peaster, Carisa Ramming, Adrienne Sanogo, Rebecca Sheehan, Candace Thrasher, Ronna Vanderslice, Ashley Varnell.

Meeting was called to order at 9:03am.

Francisco thanked members who attended the recent HLC Staff Liaison Presentation, noting strong participation from deans, associate deans, and several department heads. He reported that the turnout was excellent and expressed appreciation for the group's engagement. He stated that the presentation was of high quality and provided valuable perspective and detail. Francisco added that the content prompted follow-up review of several items after the session, underscoring its practical usefulness. He also noted that the presenter had a great conversation with the President and Provost and that their conversation was productive, concluding that the session was a worthwhile and beneficial exercise for the University. Francisco also offered praise and gratitude for Ryan Chung and his team (University Assessment and Testing/UAT) for their preparation.

1. **Sample syllabi – Chris Francisco**

Francisco reopened the discussion on collecting sample syllabi for the upcoming HLC reaffirmation, referencing guidance shared during Dr. Sweeney's recent presentation that accreditation teams frequently request representative syllabi. He explained that proactively assembling these materials and placing them in the HLC evidence site can reduce last-minute requests and questions during the visit. Francisco outlined the desired characteristics for the sample set, noting that syllabi should include clearly stated course learning outcomes, a schedule or timeline (not necessarily day-by-day but sufficient to orient students to major assignments and exams), a substantive academic integrity statement, and clear course policies and expectations. He added that OSU's syllabus attachment, automatically embedded in Canvas through Ormsbee's team, already supplies key university resource and support information but that additional representative syllabi are still needed for review. Francisco requested that the five colleges with the most undergraduate and graduate programs each submit approximately ten syllabi—preferably seven to eight undergraduate and two to three graduate examples—that meet these criteria. He also asked for a smaller number of samples from colleges or

units with fewer programs, including Honors College, OSU-Tulsa/College of Professional Studies, School of Global Studies, and OSU-CHS, with no strict target for those areas. Syllabi may be drawn from any recent term, not necessarily the current semester. Francisco asked members to send their selections to him by early January so he can forward the full collection to UAT for inclusion on the HLC website. He noted that UAT will be meeting with mock reviewers in the coming week to review current materials and prepare for the mock visit scheduled for late January; having the syllabi posted in advance will also support that process.

Francisco clarified that this request is routine and not confidential, emphasizing the intent to ensure OSU is over-prepared for likely accreditation inquiries. He affirmed that he would send a follow-up email summarizing expectations and timelines. Francisco further reported that Dr. Sweeney offered strong praise for Chung and the broader UAT team for their preparation efforts and noted her positive assessment of the President's substantive knowledge of university programs and operations. He concluded by previewing next steps in the accreditation timeline, including invitations for the late-January mock visit and anticipated open forum participation, stating that the mock review will help identify any remaining gaps before final materials are locked for the April HLC visit. Francisco thanked members for their continued support, acknowledging the significant workload associated with reaffirmation but underscoring that it occurs only once every ten years and that interim accreditation requirements will be more limited if OSU completes this cycle successfully.

2. Pre-med major – Chris Francisco

Francisco revisited the previously introduced concept of an undergraduate pre-med major. At the direction of and with support from Provost Mendez, a cross-college working group will be formed, and nominations will be requested from each college, along with representatives from key support areas (specifically mentioned were the Honors College and the Registrar's Office). Ty Hawkins has agreed to chair the working group. The group's charge will be to define a standard, university-wide pre-med core aligned with medical school expectations and MCAT competencies, including appropriate sequencing across the undergraduate timeline, while also designing a structure that allows participating disciplines to complete the remainder of the degree within their home programs. Structuring the degree this way will aid in planning, staffing and efficiency.

Francisco reiterated that the model would likely mirror the interdisciplinary AI master's structure: a shared pre-med core accepted by all participating units, followed by discipline-specific completion pathways, resulting in degrees labeled "Pre-Med: [Discipline]" (e.g., Pre-Med: Biology, Pre-Med: History). Students who enter as pre-med can then explore and select a disciplinary focus after completing core requirements. Francisco also raised the possibility of a "pre-med undeclared" track advised through Student Success or Pre-Professional Support Services, to support students who are not yet ready to choose a discipline.

Members discussed implications and initial concerns. One member confirmed that the intent is to standardize pre-med core expectations across participating areas, thereby addressing prior inconsistencies in pre-professional options that have not always been vetted against medical school requirements. Another member cautioned that many students who start pre-med do not ultimately pursue medical school and may not want a degree label implying unsuccessful pre-med completion. Francisco responded that the core would be broadly applicable to multiple majors and that students would complete their degree in a disciplinary area, minimizing risk of stranded coursework. Members also noted that some pathways—particularly engineering—require early, specialized sequencing; Francisco stated that advising would continue to ensure that students with clear alternative or parallel

interests maintain needed math and major prerequisites. Members offered supportive reflections on the value of maintaining robust liberal arts exposure within pre-med preparation, emphasizing that professional schools increasingly value well-rounded applicants. Philosophy was mentioned specifically for offering curriculum that is applicable across multiple disciplines.

Operational and resource considerations were raised, including how cross-college programs affect budgeting, staffing, and scholarship eligibility. Members suggested the working group include expertise in curricular logistics and student data systems to support planning, tagging of pre-med undecided students with college “leanings,” and ensuring students receive appropriate communications and funding opportunities. Francisco agreed and indicated that participation from units such as the Registrar’s Office, Pre-Professional, and Honors should be included. A question was also raised about whether the pre-med model might eventually extend to other pre-professional areas (e.g., pre-PT, pre-OT, pre-law). Francisco confirmed that the initial focus will be pre-med only, with any expansion considered after evaluating the effectiveness of the first implementation.

Francisco closed by noting that nominations for the working group will be solicited shortly, and he will alert Instruction Council members when requests are distributed. He estimated a development timeline that targets curricular submission in fall 2026 for a fall 2027 launch, allowing sufficient time for campus consultation and State Regents approval. No additional decisions are required at this stage beyond convening the working group.

3. Curriculum

Course Action Summaries:

None; CS 5733 remains tabled until further discussion

Francisco provided an update on the Horizon Scholars curriculum, indicating that it will be modeled after the Honors College seminar structure (social sciences, STEM, and arts/humanities). These seminars will likely carry 2000-level UNIV prefixes to avoid overlapping with 1000-level course inventories. He explained that listing the seminars under UNIV is preferable for administrative and financial reasons: fee revenue from Horizon Scholars courses will flow to the Provost’s Office and then be redistributed to the academic units providing instruction, with supplemental funding added as needed to offset instructional costs. Francisco said he will prepare new course action forms to establish Horizon Scholars course numbers. He also noted a forthcoming catalog revision to ensure Horizon Scholars seminars appear seamlessly in Degree Works, while preserving their distinct identity and enrollment restriction to Horizon Scholars. He agreed to coordinate directly with Honors leadership to align processes and minimize confusion.

Francisco then summarized the initial Horizon Scholars course offerings for fall. Four seminars have been approved and will be announced formally and posted to the program webpage. The social sciences course, led by Howard Sanborn (Political Science), examines student protest movements against authoritarianism in China, including historical and contemporary case studies and an applied activity in which students analyze censorship dynamics and strategies for circumventing them. The STEM course, proposed by Henry Segerman (Mathematics), introduces students to mathematical thinking through accessible exploration of major problems in the field, emphasizing reasoning and visualization over new technical content. Two arts and humanities seminars were also approved: Jessica Doyle (Religious Studies) will teach a course on religion, food, and farming, exploring mutual influences between religious traditions and agricultural/culinary practices; and Eric Turcat (Languages and Literatures) will offer a course on “underground

populations,” using interdisciplinary texts and media to examine communities constructed or sustained in subterranean settings across history and culture. Francisco, who expressed strong enthusiasm for the quality and intellectual appeal of the inaugural seminars, noted that four additional courses will be developed for spring, and stated that the program plans to double offerings next fall as cohort size increases.

Program Modifications:

Ferguson College of Agriculture

Minor in Agronomy

Change to existing minor

- Remove PLNT 4013, SOIL 2124, and SOIL 4234 as required courses
- Add PLNT 3012 and SOIL 4213 as required courses
- Increase guided coursework from 3 to 6 credit hours
- Total hours will decrease from 20 to 17
- Reason for requested action: Removing courses that are no longer offered and providing students with coursework that is more fitting for the purpose of the minor.

Master of Science in Natural Resource Ecology and Management (208)

Course requirement change

- Remove NREM 5020
- Increase approved graduate-level coursework by 1 credit hour
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: NREM 5020 is often waived by students' advisory committees. Students are able to add the course to their plan of study if needed.

Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources in Plant and Soil Sciences (014)

Course requirement change

- Crop Production and Management and Agronomic Business options
 - Remove ANSI 4203 as an alternative to NREM 4603
 - Add PLNT 4613 as an alternative to NREM 4603
- Soil and Water Resources option
 - Add AST 4203
 - Remove SOIL 3033 as a required course
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To provide coursework that is more applicable to specific options.

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

College of Arts and Sciences

Bachelor of Science in Economics (063)

Course requirement change

- Options in Pre-Dental and Pre-Medical
 - Remove BIOL 1604
 - Add BIOL 3203 and BIOL 3201 as an alternative to BIOL 3204
 - Require BIOL 3214
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: BIOL 3204 is being replaced with BIOL 3023 and BIOL 3201. BIOL 1604 is no longer needed.

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

College of Education and Human Sciences

Doctor of Education in Applied Educational Studies (069)

Course requirement change

- Add AVED 5053 and AVED 5893 to required courses
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To ensure all required courses are listed on the degree sheet.

Graduate Certificate in Developmental Disabilities (518)

Program deletion

- Delete the program immediately
- No students are currently enrolled
- Reason for requested action: Program was suspended in 2023.

Master of Science in Family and Community Services (304)

Course requirement change

- Remove HDFS 5543 and HDFS 5923
- Total credit hours will decrease from 36 to 30 credit hours
- Reason for requested action: To align degree requirements with IDEA institutions.

Master of Science in Family and Consumer Sciences Education (544)

Course requirement change

- Add HDFS 5803 and HDFS 5943 as required courses
- Remove HDFS 5833, HDFS 5843, and HDFS 5993 from required courses
- Reduce electives from 9 to 6 credit hours
- Total credit hours will decrease from 36 to 30 credit hours
- Reason for requested action: To align degree requirements with IDEA institutions.

Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Science (094)

Course requirement change

- Option in Child and Family Services

- Remove ENGL 3323, HDFS 1112, HDFS 4423, HDFS 4533, HDFS 4521, HDFS 4572
- Add HDFS 1113, HDFS 2453, HDFS 3133, HDFS 4543, and HDFS 4813
- Total credit hours will decrease from 122 to 120 credit hours
- Reason for requested action: To align the degree requirements with NDFR accreditation recommendations.

Master of Science in Human Development and Family Science (095)

Course requirement change

- Option in Applied Human Services
 - Remove HDFS 5213
 - Add HDFS 5293, HDFS 5543, and HDFS 5503
 - Require HDFS 5153 and HDFS 5563
 - Remove 6 hours of guided electives
 - Remove 9-12 hours of specialized electives
 - Require 9 hours of individual research for thesis or non-thesis track
 - Total credit hours will decrease from 33 to 30 credit hours
 - Reason for requested action: To update the curriculum to meet industry needs and streamline the curriculum to maximize course enrollment.

Graduate Certificate in Infant Mental Health (516)

Program deletion

- Delete program beginning in the 2026-2027 academic year
- One student is currently enrolled and is expected to graduate in 2025
- Reason for requested action: Courses for the graduate certificate are no longer being offered, and there is a lack of faculty to continue supporting the program.

Bachelor of Science in Nursing: RN to BSN (515)

Course requirement change

- Remove EDHS 1111 as an alternative to EDHS 3111
- Add BIOL 3203 and BIOL 3201 as an alternative to BIOL 3204
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: Updating requirements to reflect new course numbers.

Doctor of Education in School Administration (067)

Course requirement change

- Add EDLE 6003
- Remove EDLE 6423
- Remove 6 hours of cognate
- Require 12 hours of EDLE 6000
- Total credit hours will decrease from 64 to 60 credit hours
- Reason for requested action: To meet emerging students' needs and make the degree more attractive to a broad and diverse prospective student population.

Graduate Certificate in Substance Abuse Counseling (285)

Course requirement change

- Remove HDFS 5683
- Add HDFS 5773
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: Addressing an incorrect course number listed in the degree requirements.

Hawkins moved to approve, and Fullerton seconded. Instruction Council members approved the College of Education and Human Sciences program modifications.

College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology

Bachelor of Science in Engineering Technology in Mechatronics and Robotics (New)

New program request

- Delivery method: Traditional
- Total credit hours: 121
- Reason for requested action: The degree was transitioned to a Bachelor of Science in 2025. This proposal is designed to restore the Bachelor of Science in Engineering Technology.

Ramming clarified that this item appeared as a “new” program only because an existing program had been inadvertently overwritten in the system. She explained that once a program is overwritten, it cannot simply be restored administratively, so a formal action is required to reinstate it. The college’s intent has consistently been to maintain two distinct degree options within Engineering Technology, which share many courses and therefore remain an efficient curricular structure. Ramming noted that reinstating the Engineering Technology program is also important for accreditation continuity, as the college is pursuing accreditation for a program that had been mistakenly deleted. Freeman added that the restored program provides a clearer and more attainable four-year pathway for transfer students coming from partner institutions such as OSU-IT and TCC. During discussion, a question was raised about why the program requires 121 credit hours when many majors are listed at 120. Thrasher answered that engineering degrees are often above 120 credit hours due to lab requirements, including four-credit lab courses that drive totals slightly higher, and this is quite standard for engineering degrees. Francisco reiterated his need to describe the reinstatement clearly for the Board, emphasizing that the action corrects an administrative error and restores the intended dual-degree structure, and Ramming responded affirmatively.

Freeman moved to approve, and Sheehan seconded. Instruction Council members approved the College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology new program request.

Spears School of Business

Doctor of Business Administration in Business Administration (336)

Course requirement change

- Remove MGMT 6343, BADM 6523, FIN 6660, and BADM 6713

- Add MGMT 6383, MGMT 6453, MGMT 6333, BADM 6200, and BADM 6100
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To better align with competencies required for the degree.

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Finance (446)

Course requirement change

- General option, Commercial Bank Management option, and Financial Analyst option
 - Remove ACCT 4901
 - Increase electives from 5 to 6 credit hours
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: ACCT 4901 does not apply to Finance majors.
- Financial Planning option
 - Remove FIN 4053
 - Add FIND 4033
 - Total credit hours will not change
 - Reason for requested action: Addressing an incorrect course number listed on the degree requirements.

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Hospitality and Tourism Management (130)

Course requirement change

- Remove HTM 2021, HTM 3543, and HTM 3623
- Add Select 3 hours of upper-division HTM courses
- Increase electives from 12 to 16 credit hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To streamline major requirements for the degree.

Option suspension

- Suspend option in Event Management
- Option will be reinstated or deleted in three years
- Reason for requested action: The department is streamlining the major requirements to allow students to pursue a certificate while they earn their degree.

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in International Business (448)

Course requirement change

- Remove 3 hours of guided electives
- Increase upper-division business courses from 15 to 18 credit hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To increase flexibility for students in meeting the degree requirements.

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.

Hawkins asked whether the management-related course changes had been formally discussed with the Departments of English and Speech, given potential implications for student credit hours, scheduling, and enrollments. Mason explained that the affected requirement is part of a broader elective menu in which most students already take the current course, but the intent of the change is to steer students toward more targeted business communication coursework tied to AI use and professional technology. She noted that students would still complete their General Education English and speech requirements, and any detailed cross-department coordination on elective menus is typically handled at the department-head level. Hawkins expressed concern about confirming scholarship, workload, and student credit hour impacts and asked that the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Management (449) program modification be tabled pending a more complete analysis and discussion of academic rationale. Francisco stated that when a clear, substantive curricular justification exists for preferring one course over another, that rationale should guide decisions ahead of credit-hour considerations; if the distinction is not well-supported, additional review is warranted. Mason agreed to schedule a follow-up meeting with the relevant departments and indicated a preference to finalize the change during the current fall cycle so it can proceed to the Board of Regents.

Additional clarification was provided on two items. First, a Study Abroad requirement listed in the finance doctoral program was confirmed to be a catalog error; the correct requirement pertains to estate planning rather than Study Abroad. Second, a question was raised about the future of the International Business “Global Competitive Environment” course following Dr. Voss’s retirement. Mason indicated she would consult with the Marketing department head to confirm whether the course will continue to be offered and to verify its status within the degree plan, with follow-up to occur separately.

Ramming moved to approve, and Sheehan seconded. Instruction Council members approved the Spears School of Business program modifications with the exception of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Management (449) course requirement change, which was tabled for further discussion.

4. Other

Low Enrollment Exception Request Update

Francisco provided two procedural updates related to low-enrollment exception requests. First, he confirmed that he has responded to all submitted low-enrollment exception cases, with most feedback returned by Tuesday of Thanksgiving week. He noted that several colleges were asked to re-evaluate specific courses; he has already corresponded with some colleges on their re-evaluations, Ferguson College of Agriculture submitted its follow-up overnight, and he will respond to that and one remaining college later today to close out the process.

Francisco thanked the colleges for the volume and quality of work involved, emphasizing that the exception justifications were stronger and more specific than in the previous cycle, making them easier to review and explain to the Provost. He also appreciated the advance screening work by colleges,

particularly where deans canceled low-enrollment courses internally before forwarding exception requests, thereby reducing unnecessary workload at the central level. Francisco stressed that when faculty express concern about courses canceled prior to reaching Academic Affairs, he has been clear that such cancellations reflect deans acting in good faith to comply with university guidance—not personal or punitive decisions toward faculty or programs.

Francisco observed a noticeable reduction in faculty complaints compared to the first implementation. Informal discussions with department heads suggest growing understanding of the rationale for enrollment minimums, even among those who still believe a small number of low-enrolled courses should continue. He noted that repeating the process has helped units recognize patterns of persistently low enrollment and has supported more productive internal conversations about streamlining course rotations in the context of a constrained budget environment. He linked these efforts to broader institutional priorities, including the President's stated goal of enabling salary and compression adjustments toward Big 12 median benchmarks. Francisco concluded by reiterating appreciation for the difficult, time-sensitive nature of this work—particularly given accelerated timelines driven by freshman scheduling.

First Year Graduate Teaching Assistant Training

Francisco reminded Instruction Council that first-year graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) are required to complete ITLE-led professional development prior to entering the classroom. He noted that the training dates were included in GTA offer letters and that the University expects participation as a standard pre-teaching requirement. Francisco reported receiving recurring complaints from GTAs who stated they were unaware of the obligation or unable to attend but emphasized that the requirement remains in place and that alternate sessions or recordings will not be created. He asked colleges and departments to support enforcement and ensure compliance, recognizing that truly unavoidable conflicts may occur in rare cases.

Ormsbee affirmed Francisco's comments and clarified that the GTA training schedule has been consistent for approximately ten years and is explicitly stated in GTA contracts. She explained that neither her office nor the Graduate College will serve as the enforcers; rather, departments are responsible for holding GTAs to their contractual commitments. Ormsbee also declined requests for alternative or make-up sessions, indicating that departments may require additional training if desired. She added that unregistered or absent attendees have created logistical problems in the past (e.g., food orders and breakout session planning) and described prior pushback when her team denied entry to individuals who failed to register. She urged colleges to communicate expectations clearly and apply departmental consequences where appropriate.

Assessment Compliance

Francisco then raised a housekeeping item related to assessment compliance. He noted that assessment staff (UAT) have already contacted associate deans in four colleges regarding specific programs that did not submit required assessments. He stressed that, given the upcoming HLC reaffirmation year, it is important that OSU be able to demonstrate completion and follow-up across all academic programs. In response to questions, Francisco confirmed that departments with missing or incomplete assessments may still submit late materials, and that doing so is preferable to leaving gaps. The group noted a concern about "check-the-box" submissions with minimal content; Francisco acknowledged the issue and supported efforts to improve quality, not just compliance. Francisco

reiterated that assessment is intended as a faculty-driven improvement tool (programs define their own outcomes/metrics) and reiterated that assessments should reflect meaningful program evaluation. He also noted that accreditation and compliance processes often surface operational improvements that benefit the institution beyond meeting external requirements.

Francisco concluded by asking colleges to follow through with GTAs on training attendance and with departments on outstanding assessments.

Sanogo Announcement

The next Instruction Council meeting will be Sanogo's last meeting, as she has taken a position as a dean at another institution and will be leaving OSU. The group congratulated Sanogo on her new role, and Francisco thanked her for her work with CEHS and for student success across the University.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:08am.

Minutes were recorded by Ashley Varnell.