

5-15-25 Instruction Council Highlights

1. “Additional General Education” Category Hours on Prior Degree Sheets – Chris Francisco

Francisco reminded the group that the (G) and (D) designations are now three credit hours versus one course, which could have been a one-credit hour. We are also introducing the (F) designation in the fall. CAS brought up the question about whether students could utilize the (D), (G), or (F) general education course designations in the “additional general education” category on prior year degree sheets. Peaster and Evans did not see any issues. Instruction Council did not have any objections about allowing students to use courses with (D), (G), or (F) designations for the additional general education courses on prior year degree sheets. Francisco will ask Amy Martindale to discuss with DSAS.

2. Fall Trail Plans – Chris Francisco

The A&M Board of Regents has approved the first six trails. Two additional trails are on today’s IC agenda. We cannot publish until we have received approval from the State Regents. The website is not complete, and the trails are not part of our degree inventory yet. We also want to ensure advisors have time to review the trails, and we have had time to address advisors’ questions and concerns. In consultation with Baker, Nick Holmes, and Lindsey Brownlow, it has been determined that we will not advise new students about the trails this summer. We plan to roll out the trails in fall 2025, similar to how Ideal Graduate was launched. Nick Holmes is willing to send targeted emails to students through Slate in the fall. Advising for trails will begin as students enroll for spring 2026.

Francisco stated that he and Thrasher are working to get the six initial trails submitted to the State Regents for final approval. Once the trails are fully approved, we will send out updated information to Instruction Council (trail names and the list of courses).

Doust asked how the trails will be managed. Francisco stated that the managing department will be responsible for maintenance as of now. Francisco can be available to facilitate discussions across departments, if needed, when determining if a course is a good fit for a specific trail. Francisco is working with Faculty Council AS&P committee to develop a process for updating and managing the trails. Francisco said he envisions a parallel group, similar to GEAC, that reviews assessment data and determines if the trails are functioning as expected.

3. Curriculum

All course actions were approved.

All program modifications, with the exception of the Graduate Certificate in One Health, were approved. The Graduate Certificate in One Health was tabled for more information from Veterinary Medicine.

4. Other

Academic Reboot – Shannon Baker

If a first-year student ends their first academic year not in good standing, they will remain with the Office of Student Success for an additional semester. Students will transition to their major advisors after fall 2025, regardless of academic standing. Students on academic notice and probation will automatically be accepted into the Academic Reboot program. Students facing academic suspension

can apply for reinstatement through the Academic Reboot program. Academic Reboot students will transition to a core group of five or six advisors in the Office of Student Success during the summer, probably in July. The core group of advisors will receive extra training for working with students not in good academic standing and who are participating in the Academic Reboot program. Academic Reboot students will be encouraged to enroll in UNIV 2001. The Academic Reboot program will include peer mentors, and students will complete a basic needs assessment.

Fall Course Enrollment Minimums – Chris Francisco

Francisco discussed minimum course enrollment with Faculty Council this week. College Deans have been part of prior discussions regarding minimum enrollment numbers. Francisco opened up the discussion related to low enrollment for Instruction Council.

Doust asked about the difference between courses and sections when looking at the minimum number of enrollments. Francisco stated that justifying lower enrollment within a particular section, especially for labs, is understandable for safety reasons or the availability of equipment. Fullerton discussed the concern related to international student enrollment. International students often arrive close to the start of the term and have to work through the Office of International Students and Scholars before they can enroll, resulting in delays. Francisco stated that colleges should include projections if that situation arises. Sheehan asked about the minimum enrollment for graduate seminar courses. Francisco verified that University Academic Regulations state that the minimum enrollment is eight graduate students. Departments may need to examine how the seminars are offered (offering two seminars instead of three or broadening a topic to capture more students). There may be instances where a department needs to offer a seminar course that doesn't meet minimum enrollment, but they would need to provide a good explanation for the reason. Doust asked about courses that are cross-listed with an undergraduate and graduate section. Francisco indicated that for the initial review, he would like to consider undergraduate/graduate cross-listed courses as one graduate course in terms of the minimum enrollment number.

Francisco told the Associate Deans that if faculty or department heads contact him regarding minimum enrollment numbers, he will refer them back to the colleges because he wants to ensure that colleges support any exception requests that are made.