

## INSTRUCTION COUNCIL

### MINUTES

**Thursday, August 7, 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, Chad Blew, Larry Burns, Aaron Christensen, Cynda Clary, Melinda Cro, Chris Francisco (Chair), Craig Freeman, Jami Fullerton, Ty Hawkins, Diane Jones, James Knecht, Marissa McIntyre, Rita Peaster, Carisa Ramming, Rebecca Sheehan, Candace Thrasher, Ronna Vanderslice, Ashley Varnell, Robin Wilson.

Meeting was called to order at 9:03 am.

Francisco began the meeting with general announcements:

- Noted that the current strategic plan will expire in 2027 and announced that the strategic planning process will begin later this year
- Dean Cro introduced Dr. Ty Hawkins, the Associate Dean of Academic Programs for the College of Arts and Sciences and the newest member of Instruction Council
- Expressed appreciation to Ormsbee for her leadership in organizing and facilitating multiple programs and trainings and acknowledged the recent renovation of 126 ITLE
- Reported positive engagement and productive discussions with newly appointed department heads during the New Department Heads Orientation and extended thanks to all who encouraged their attendance

#### **1. Foundational Courses for General Education Trails – Chris Francisco**

The group discussed a proposal previously circulated via email concerning the foundational courses for the GenEd trails. Francisco provided background from when the trails were first developed that included the following information:

- Originally set at 15 hours of content—an appropriate balance to provide sufficient thematic focus without consuming an excessive number of GenEd designations.
- To ensure students would not encounter financial aid issues if they completed an additional course not applicable to their degree plan, one more course was added, increasing the total to 18 credit hours.
- The additional course was initially defined as any Q-designated mathematics or statistics course. This choice aligned with existing student degree requirements, imposed no additional burden, and

was pedagogically defensible as it ensured students applied a quantitative perspective to the thematic content.

- It was later observed that some trails included Q-designated courses. In such cases, students were able to satisfy both the “extra” Q-designated course requirement and a core requirement with the same course, effectively reducing their completed hours to 15 instead of the required 18.

Francisco discussed that he has consulted with Instruction Council, Directors of Student Academic Services, and other stakeholders, and this proposal is to replace the “extra” Q-designated course requirement with a foundational course requirement. Students must complete either the standard or advanced Comp I (or the international Comp I for international students) or a Q-designated mathematics or statistics course. This structure would only create a potential overlap if both Comp I and a Q-designated course appear within the same trail. Discussions are underway with the Department of English regarding the potential inclusion of Comp II in certain trails, but inclusion of Comp I is unlikely. Since all students complete Comp I (through coursework, transfer credit, AP, or CLEP), and all students complete a Q-designated mathematics or statistics course, the proposal introduces no additional burden.

Francisco added that this change would also provide greater flexibility for awarding certificates to students who “stop out” before completing their degree but have met the GenEd requirements within a trail. Because students are more likely to have completed Comp I earlier in their studies, this adjustment increases the likelihood of recognizing their progress with a credential, which may also encourage future re-enrollment.

**Sheehan moved to approve, and Freeman seconded. Instruction Council members approved the change to have the foundational course in place of the Q-designated course for the GenEd Trails.**

## **2. Update on the New Repeat Policy Implementation – Rita Peaster**

Francisco expressed appreciation to Peaster and her team for their work on the new Repeat Policy implementation over the summer. Peaster reported that implementation proceeded more smoothly than anticipated. She recognized Enterprise IT, and specifically Kyle Sires, for developing a custom repeat process that significantly reduced manual workload for the Registrar’s Office. A manual review was conducted for 6,800 active undergraduate students, with advance and follow-up communications sent to affected students and advisors, directing them to the website for policy details.

Peaster provided an update on academic standing outcomes:

- Identified 49 students whose academic standing changed as a result of the policy implementation
- For 46 students, standing improved: 41 moved from probation to good standing; one from suspension to good standing
- Three students’ standing declined from good standing to probation due to GPA recalculations following grade exclusions or additional transfer work. One case involved a student repeating a course five times before earning an A; Peaster noted that advisors may contact the Registrar’s Office for potential manual adjustments in such cases.

Francisco reminded the group that the course designated for earned hours is a critical factor in these calculations.

Peaster also reported that the new custom process now excludes variable credit courses from repeat processing, ensuring there is no change to the enforcement of maximum hours for variable credit courses for undergraduates.

Ramming raised concerns about degree sheets where GenEd designations are duplicated across courses, leading to discrepancies when students complete them separately. Peaster stated that the Registrar's Office has issued guidance and is adding exceptions in Degree Works; she believed this information had been shared with the colleges. Leslie and Blake are addressing the matter.

Baker expressed concerns about students on the CPOS list being informed that it is not financial aid-eligible. Peaster will correct this in Degree Works and distribute updated information to advisors.

### 3. Curriculum

#### **Course Action Summaries:**

College of Veterinary Medicine

Clary moved to approve, and Freeman seconded. Instruction Council members approved the College of Veterinary Medicine course actions.

#### **Program Modifications:**

Ferguson College of Agriculture

Doctor of Philosophy in Natural Resource Ecology and Management (209)

Course requirement change

- Remove NREM 5020 (required within the 45 hours of 5000- or 6000-level coursework for students with Masters degrees and within the 66 hours of 5000- or 6000-level coursework for students with Bachelor's degrees)
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: The course is often waived for students who present their research in a professional setting. The course will remain an option that students can enroll in.

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

College of Arts and Sciences

Doctor of Philosophy in Microbiology, Cell and Molecular Biology (151)

Degree requirement change

- Remove GRE requirement
- Reason for requested action: To reduce barriers to admission

Course requirement change

- Remove designation of post-Bachelors and post-Masters tracks
- Add MICR 5002

- Total credit hours will decrease for students with a bachelor's degree from 90 to 65. Total credit hours will remain at 60 for students with a master's degree because five hours from a master's degree can be applied under "other hours."
- Reason for requested action: To make the program more competitive and reduce the time to degree for students.

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

#### **College of Education and Human Sciences**

##### **Doctor of Philosophy in Human Development and Family Science (305)**

###### **Course requirement change**

- Add HDFS 5293, HDFS 5543, HDFS 5153, HDFS 5563, HDFS 6523, HDFS 6100, REMS 6693, REMS 6683 or SCFD 6123
- Remove HDFS 5213 and HDFS 6113
- Remove HDFS 5110 as a required course. Add HDFS 5000 or HDFS 5110.
- Add six hours of guided coursework
- Remove 27 hours of specialization courses
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: To contemporize the curriculum to fit with industry needs and streamline the curriculum in the department to maximize enrollment in courses.

##### **Doctor of Philosophy in Human Sciences (123)**

###### **Option suspension**

- Suspend option in Human Development and Family Science
- The option will be reinstated or deleted within three years
- Reason for requested action: A stand-alone degree in Human Development and Family Science was approved and this option is no longer needed.

The Program Modifications were tabled due to the College of Education and Human Sciences not having a representative present at the Instruction Council meeting.

Clary inquired about the process for option suspension. Thrasher explained that programs have one to three years to either revise and reinstate the program/option or formally delete it. Fullerton asked if the same process applies to certificates, and Thrasher confirmed that it does.

#### **Spears School of Business**

##### **Undergraduate Certificate in Sales and Service Excellence (495)**

###### **Course requirement change**

- Remove MGMT 3013
- Add MKTG 4550 (Applied Sales I), and MKTG 4550 (Applied Sales II)
- Require MKTG 3873
- Allow students to choose between MKTG 4513 and MKTG 4773
- Total credit hours will decrease from 18 to 17 credit hours
- Reason for requested action: To allow for practical skills development.

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

#### **Center for Health Sciences**

##### **Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences (002)**

###### **Course requirement change**

- Add BIOM 5003 as a required course
- Add BIOM 5641 as an alternate to BIOM 6922
- Change hours for BIOM 6000 from 30 to 20-40 hours
- Change electives from 26 to 13-34 hours
- Total credit hours will not change
- Reason for requested action: Updating the curriculum to add a statistics course and addressing a commonly substituted course.
- *Tabled by Instruction Council on July 17, 2025*

##### **Master of Science in Health Care Administration (006)**

###### **Option deletion**

- Delete option in Leadership and Entrepreneurship
- Delete option in Administration
- Reason for requested action: The distinction of an option is no longer necessary.
- *Tabled by Instruction Council on July 17, 2025*

Ferguson moved to approve, and Sheehan seconded. Instruction Council members approved the Center for Health Sciences program modifications.

#### **Veterinary Medicine**

##### **Graduate Certificate in One Health (New)**

###### **New program proposal**

- Delivery method: Electronic
- Total credit hours: 12
- Reason for requested action: To equip students with a comprehensive understanding of One Health principles, enabling them to effectively address complex health challenges at the intersection of human, animal, and environmental health
- *Tabled by Instruction Council on July 17, 2025*

Clary inquired whether the program's delivery method could be modified from online to include in-person instruction. She expressed concern that an online-only format limits the inclusion of a lot of one health content and requested (1) the option for in-person delivery and (2) the future addition of courses to broaden the content scope.

Francisco asked Thrasher to review State Regents' requirements for changing delivery modes. Thrasher stated that there is no process to request in-person delivery—only to add electronic delivery once a program is approved for traditional delivery. Sheehan asked Clary for enrollment estimates for students preferring traditional courses; Clary did not have specific figures but noted the involvement of multiple large graduate programs. Sheehan suggested the possibility of plan of study exceptions or substitutions, subject to committee approval. Peaster and Burns added that traditional delivery is typically assumed, with electronic delivery noted separately.

Francisco directed the group to proceed with consideration of the new program proposal, amended to include both electronic and traditional delivery with the current course list.

**Freeman moved to approve, and Fullerton seconded. Instruction Council members approved the College of Veterinary Medicine new program request as amended to include electronic and traditional delivery with the current list of courses.**

#### **4. Data Science Trail and Rural Communities Trail**

Francisco provided the following update on the GenEd trails initiative:

- Six trails have been approved by the State Regents
- Eight trails have been approved by the Council of Deans
- Two additional trails are currently on this agenda
- The hope is to present the two trails approved in Spring, along with these two new trails, to the OSU/A&M Board of Regents this fall with the goal of promoting a total of ten trails to students for Spring 2026 enrollment

Regarding the Data Science Trail, Francisco noted prior discussions about developing a specialized capstone course. He reported that this course is not yet ready due to ongoing internal college deliberations. In the interim, a statistics course and a cognitive science course will serve as the capstone experiences, complementing the other courses in the trail.

**Clary moved to approve and Freeman seconded. Instruction Council members approved the Data Science Trail and the Rural Communities Trail.**

Clary inquired whether the new GenEd website link is ready, as she wishes to begin course planning. Francisco noted that Brand Management has incorporated the six approved trails into the site, but it is not yet live. He will circulate the draft website to the group.

Baker reported that her team, including Nick Holmes, is developing a “heat map” of each trail to show the number of courses offered per semester, beginning with Fall 2025 and potentially expanding to Spring 2025. The analysis includes both the number of sections and available seats, and they want to determine how easy or difficult it is for students to navigate what is offered in a given semester.

Cro raised concerns about increased demand in certain courses and the need to manage enrollment capacity. Baker responded that her team can also provide data on Fall advising opt-in rates for the trails. Francisco emphasized the importance of completing at least one full cycle to gather data on student participation, trail selection, and enrollment patterns, noting that at Virginia Tech, 90% of students opted in within five years of implementation.

Burns reported that his team is preparing a Fall report tracking the percentage of students aligned with each trail, updated as additional trails are added. This information will be provided to advisors to encourage students to participate. Clary asked if this tracking would apply only to declared students; Burns clarified that it will apply to all students.

Francisco thanked Burns and his team for their work and noted that the two new trails will be presented to the Council of Deans. He stressed the importance of establishing processes, ensuring trails remain relevant to students, and making adjustments as needed.

## 5. Other — Chris Francisco

### **Curriculum Presentation Process Changes**

Francisco reported upcoming changes to how curriculum items will be presented to the Academic Affairs Committee and subsequently to the OSU/A&M Board of Regents. Key adjustments include:

- Separating new programs and certificates from program modifications
- Including, in parentheses next to each heading, common reasons for modifications, per Provost Mendez's request

Each college will be required to submit a one-two page written overview outlining its overall curriculum intent and anticipated actions for the academic year. While different from the Academic Plan previously submitted to the State Regents, these overviews will be used to inform the Board. These summaries, along with the APRs completed this summer, will be presented to the Academic Affairs Committee first and then to the OSU/A&M Board of Regents at the October 24 meeting. Colleges are to submit their summaries to Francisco by mid-September for the Pre-Board meeting. The intent is, in part, to demonstrate attention to the results of the five-year program evaluations and assessment activities and any resulting curricular changes.

Clary requested guidance on headings to organize the summaries; Francisco will provide these after further discussion at the upcoming staff meeting. Burns offered to create a centralized submission process similar to the strategic planning forms, pending receipt of the headings.

### **Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA)**

Francisco thanked members for participating in the VPSA interviews, noted an announcement is forthcoming, and expressed his intent to invite the new VPSA to the Instruction Council to discuss potential academic collaborations.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:52am.

Minutes were recorded by Ashley Varnell.