



University of Massachusetts
Boston
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125-3393

University Governance
Faculty Council

https://www.umb.edu/faculty_staff/faculty_council

Monday, May 9, 2022

1:00-3:00

Zoom Webinar

- I. Discussion on Mt. Ida (Marlene Kim)
- II. Resolution from Marlene Kim and Joel Fish

RESOLUTION ON TEACHING EVALUATION MODALITY AND SUPPORT AND AFFIRMATION THAT DEPARTMENTS CHOOSE TEACHING MODALITY

Whereas many students do not complete online teaching evaluations since the change to online evaluations only approximately two years ago, and

Whereas the sample size from these evaluations can be very low and the results skewed on teaching, and

Whereas fewer comments and thus qualitative information are obtained from these results, and

Whereas these evaluations are used not only to help instructors teach better but also in our promotions review, and

Whereas, everyone has an interest in having high response rates and better evaluations, and

Whereas, departments are the units who decide on how to evaluate teaching, and

Whereas, some departments are unhappy with the low response rates and low qualitative outcomes and want to go back to paper or in-class evaluations or otherwise increase response rates, and

Whereas the Academic Technology Committee (ATC) recommended that “ALL course evaluations be completed using either Evaluation Kit or Qualtrics—hence no paper evaluations” (ATC power point presentation to faculty council on December 6, 2021), but that these software fail to meet the needs of all faculty and all departments as discussed above, and

Whereas the Academic Technology Committee (ATC) met in May 2022 but still are encouraging departments to use electronic course evaluations (EK or Qualtrics) despite problems with low response rates and (for some) the inability to increase these rates with the suggestions made by IT, and

Whereas Provost Berger affirmed in Faculty Council on February 7, 2022 that departments choose how to evaluate teaching, including the modality of teaching, so that departments decide whether to use paper or online evaluations and not the administration, but

Whereas the Provost's office worked with IT to put into place a paper evaluation through Gradescope for spring 2022 so departments can use paper evaluations again if desired for Spring 2022, but

Whereas the email that went out to department chairs instruct them on how to increase response rates for online evaluations and provide a timetable for these evaluations, and only after two pages, in a small paragraph, is a statement saying that paper-based evaluations are also being made available but that department units must administer these (much as in the online courses), so that this option seems burdensome and some department chairs may not have read this part of the email, so

Whereas, some faculty are unaware of the availability of paper evaluations and almost none know that departments can use multiple methods, so that some faculty can use paper evaluations through Gradescope and others the online evaluations, and departments can calculate analytics such as averages and frequencies for all faculty even if some use online and others use paper evaluation methods, and

Whereas, IT is providing very little information about paper-based evaluations to departments and faculty by simply stating that a manual paper-based teaching evaluation option is available but that this will be handled by individual academic units overseeing course evaluations and IT will provide the necessary training, but

Whereas it is unclear what the implications are if ATC is stating it will continue to offer, support and encourage departments to use the electronic course evaluations (EK or Qualtrics) when departments must administer and oversee online evaluations; stated this way on email messages to faculty may sound burdensome to departments for paper evaluations when departments must do similar overseeing and administrative work for electronic evaluations and seems to prejudice departments in favor of online evaluations to an unnecessary extent,

Be it resolved that the Faculty Council affirms departments' ability to decide on how to conduct teaching evaluations, including the modality (such as using paper evaluations, online evaluations, or both), and

Be it further resolved that the ATC communicate its decision from its April meeting to Faculty Council at the May Faculty Council meeting and respond to inquiries concerning the implications of that decision; and

Be it finally resolved that the university administration clearly inform all faculty and department chairs without prejudice that

1. Paper evaluations through Gradescope are a viable alternative to electronic evaluations;
2. Paper evaluations have significantly increased response rates compared to electronic; and
3. Faculty can use both paper and electronic evaluations in a department, and analytics (means, frequencies) across paper and online evaluations can be calculated.

III. **Motions from the General Education Committee**

from the Distribution and Subcommittees Motions:

1. Moved: That Education [Undergraduate] 212, Coding for Non-Coders, be approved as satisfying the Technology Distribution.

WISER Course Description: This course is designed for students who have no previous coding experience to learn the basics of coding by using iterative design to solve a series of problems embedded within a

gamestory. In doing so, students will learn how to use decomposition to break tasks into sub-problems, debug software to troubleshoot code, and design algorithms to solve problems. By the end of the course, students will be able to code an interactive game using block-based programming.

General Education Capabilities: Using Technology to Further Learning and Quantitative Reasoning

2. Moved: That Environmental Science/Environmental Studies 116L, Quantitative Reasoning and the Environment, be approved as satisfying the Quantitative Reasoning requirement.

WISER Course Description: The dynamic and continually changing environment can be understood through examining measurements that quantify change. This course introduces methods of quantitative reasoning used to understand our environment. Through a wide variety of examples, the course builds connections between quantitative concepts and environmental applications. Physical and social scientists measure properties of the environment to gain an understanding of the past and present, then they use these measurements to compare changes in the environment both spatially and throughout time. This course will examine topics such as population dynamics, changes in weather and climate, toxicity in water and air and the occurrence and intensity of natural disasters. Using real world data, the course will develop quantitative and technical skills for critical analysis of environmental challenges. Some of the quantitative topics presented include estimation, number sense, graphing data, linear and exponential growth and descriptive statistics, including central value analysis. This course meets the core theme of better understanding environmental science by addressing quantitative studies applied to climate change, sustainability, environmental justice and pollution.

IV. Motions from the Graduate Studies Committee

Motion #1 (Forms in Docusign – 3 APCAs; all supporting documents in this Motions folder)

From: CM

Request to restructure the remaining 4 MBA specializations (International Management, Accounting, Marketing, Digital Marketing): CM previously requested to change the number of course options for 7 MBA specializations to make them all consistent with 3 courses each. CM now requests to do the same for the 4 remaining MBA specializations. Required courses and electives for each option will be revamped.

Rationale: This proposal will make the number of courses consistent between specializations and make the specializations more attractive to students and relevant.

Motion #2 (All materials available for review in Curriculog)

From: CLA (HIST)

Request for a new course: HIST 686 Topics in Gender History

Rationale: This course sits at the intersection of graduate student need and faculty expertise in gender history. Many graduate students have expressed interest in courses on gender history, and proposing this course allows for faculty with the background in gender history to offer it in several iterations. This topics course provides a useful option for cross-national and multi-national courses built around the study of gender, something our older topics courses (American history, European history, and Atlantic history) do not provide.

Motion #3 (All materials available for review in Curriculog)

From: MGS

Request for a new course: CONRES 695 Master's Project in Conflict Resolution

Rationale: This course is for advising of the Master's Project capstone. It is analogous to 699 Thesis advising, but for the Master's Project. Students will enroll in 3 credits of CONRES 693 (Final Project & Workshop), rather than the 6 credits they currently enroll for, plus 3 Master's Project credits under the supervision of their advisor (proposed course CONRES 695) providing them with a record of the guidance they receive from their Master's Project advisor. This brings the structures of the 3 capstone options for the MA in Conflict Resolution into alignment.

Motion #4 (All materials available for review in Curriculog)

From: SFE

Request for a new course: ENVSCI 668 Social Ecological Systems Dynamics

Rationale: Understanding the complexity behind social-ecological systems is critical for making decisions to sustain human and ecological wellbeing over time. In this context, it is critical for students to develop qualitative and quantitative skills to understand the interactions among the various components of social and ecological systems, understand the causes of problematic behavior in systems, and identify pathways towards sustainability. The system dynamics methodology is a skill that is important for students' research and future career pathways (e.g., consulting, industry, government). Even though systems thinking is a concept discussed in other SFE classes, the proposed class explicitly focuses on socio-ecological system dynamics modeling, which is unique.

Motion #5 (All materials available for review in Curriculog)

From: CNHS

Request for a program change in the Nursing Practice BS to DNP program: The BS to DNP program will be decreased from a 78-credit program with 1,065 practicum hours completed over 6 years to a 70-credit program, with 1,065 practicum hours completed over 5 years. The BS-DNP program prepares BSN nurses to excel as leaders in health care as advanced practice nurses. The student will first obtain an MS degree after 48 credits and 665 clinical hours in their program of study. Students take the national certification exam as an advanced practice nurse (APRN) at the completion of the MS portion of the program. The DNP portion of study is an additional 22 credits

Rationale: In keeping with the current standards of post graduate DNP education and the AACN DNP White Paper, the MS to DNP program revised the curriculum in 2019 and the BS to DNP curriculum now needs to be aligned to the revised DNP courses that are being offered. Reducing the number of credits (from 78 to 70), time to graduate (6 years to 5 years) and summer coursework is consistent with DNP programs across the country. The fewer number of credits most likely will also make the program more attractive to the many registered nurses with BS degrees who are interested in developing their knowledge of, and skills around, quality improvement in healthcare.

Motion #6 (All materials available for review in Curriculog)

From: CNHS (EHS)

Requests to remove the GRE requirement for applicants to the EHS MS and PhD programs

Rationale: The requirement has been waived for 2 years due to the COVID pandemic without a significant impact on the quality of new graduate student cohorts. In addition, this requirement has been removed by other similar graduate programs (e.g.. UMass Amherst MS and PhD in Kinesiology programs).

V. **Motions from the Curriculog Working Group (Sarah Hamblin and Hannah Sevia)**

Motion #1

Moved: that an abbreviated process for “superficial” changes to courses and programs be created in Curriculog that has fewer approval steps. Superficial changes are:

- Line edits and spelling changes to course titles or WISER descriptions that do not impact meaning
- Changes to course numbers that do not alter the level of the course (from 201 to 210, for example)
- Small changes to programs, for example adding already existing courses to already existing degree requirements or changing what counts for an elective option, provided these changes do not impact fundamental program structure or requirements (formerly done through Degree Audit Update).
- For more details, please see page four in the attached Curriculog Proposal Guidelines document.

Rationale: This recommendation builds on the abbreviated process for graduate courses that the Faculty Council already approved in spring 2021, extending this process to undergraduate proposals as well. The process for making small changes that do not impact the shape of the course or student experience is now

more nimble, while still upholding the intent of NECHE accreditation and faculty purview over the curriculum.

Motion #2

Moved: Review by the Faculty Council’s Budget and Long-Range Planning (BLRP) Committee should be added as a step for undergraduate proposals for new programs. (For more details, please see page six in the attached Curriculog Proposal Guidelines document for an updated workflow that reflects this change).

Rationale: The BLRP Committee already reviews proposals for new graduate programs; this recommendation creates parity between undergraduate and graduate programs and ensures faculty input into budgetary issues related to all new program development.

- VI. Update from the Community-Engaged Scholarship (CES) Subcommittee of the Research Committee (Betsy Sweet and Sommer Forrester)**
- VII. Report from the Task Force on Holistic Evaluation of Teaching (Brian White and Rajini Srikanth)**
- VIII. Motion from Sociology Faculty – Kevin Wozniak and Andrea Leverentz**

Moved: That the two “criminal and disciplinary history disclosures” questions be removed from all UMB graduate application forms.
- IX. Seating of New FC Members**
- X. Election for FC Chair**
- XI. Elections for 3 Seats on the Executive Committee**
- XII. New Business**