

10-26-1995

Curricular Report No. 1995-96 from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
Kingston, Rhode Island
FACULTY SENATE
BILL
Adopted by the Faculty Senate

TO: President Robert L. Carothers
FROM: Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

1. The attached BILL, titled Curricular Report No. 1995-96-1 from the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate, is forwarded for your consideration.
2. The original and two copies for your use are included.
3. This BILL was adopted by vote of the Faculty Senate on October 26, 1995.
4. After considering this bill, will you please indicate your approval or disapproval. Return the original or forward it to the Board of Governors, completing the appropriate endorsement below.
5. In accordance with Section 10, paragraph 4 of the Senate's By-Laws, this bill will become effective November 16, 1995, three weeks after Senate approval, unless: (1) specific dates for implementation are written into the bill; (2) you return it disapproved; (3) you forward it to the Board of Governors for their approval; or (4) the University Faculty petitions for a referendum. If the bill is forwarded to the Board of Governors, it will not become effective until approved by the Board.

October 27, 1995
(date)

James G. Kowalski
James G. Kowalski
Chairperson of the Faculty Senate

ENDORSEMENT

TO: Chairperson of the Faculty Senate
FROM: President of the University

Returned.

- a. Approved .
- b. Approved subject to final approval by Board of Governors _____.
- c. Disapproved _____.

10/31/95
(date)

Robert L. Carothers
President

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
The Graduate School

CURRICULAR REPORT FROM THE GRADUATE COUNCIL TO THE FACULTY SENATE
REPORT NO. 1995-96-1

At its Meeting No. 323 held on September 22, 1995, the Graduate Council considered and approved the following curricular matters which are now submitted to the Faculty Senate for information or confirmation as indicated.

I. Matters of Information

A. College of Arts and Sciences

1. Department of Political Science
a. Temporary Course

PSC 507X Government Financial Administration II,3
"Hands on" coverage of technical and political elements of financial management in public policy settings: control systems, financial reporting, capital budgeting, fiscal environment and general purpose financial statements. (Sem) Pre: An advanced public policy course. Leazes

II. Matters Requiring Confirmation by the Faculty Senate.

A. Graduate School of Oceanography

1. Add (New)

OCG 673 Fisheries Oceanography I,3
Physical and biological processes acting at the egg, larval, juvenile and adult stages of commercially important fish and shellfish. Topics include: growth, survival and recruitment dynamics; larval dispersal and fish distributions; long-term abundance changes in relation to climate. (Lec 3) Pre: Graduate standing or permission of instructor. OCG 501, 561 recommended. Offered in odd-numbered years. Next offered Fall 1997. Collie/Buckley

2. Change in description to read-

OCG 652 Marine Geophysics II,3
Survey of basic subdisciplines of marine geophysics including plate tectonics, magnetics, gravity, heat flow, reflection and refraction seismology. Basic theory and methods of data collection and interpretation are emphasized. (Lec 3) Pre: OCG 540 or permission of instructor. In alternate years. Next offered Spring 1997. Larson/Kincaid

B. College of Engineering

1. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
a. Add (New)

CVE 651 Design of Highway Bridges I or II,3
Design specifications and analysis methods for highway bridges. Loads. Design of steel I-beam bridges, reinforced concrete bridges and plate girders. Orthotropic analysis. Bridge details and substructure. (Lec 3) Pre: CVE 561, 465, 453. Tsiatas, McEwen

CVE 552 Structural Timber Design I or II,3
Study of wood properties and design considerations. Design and behavior of beams, columns, beam-columns, and wood fasteners. Analysis and design of structural diaphragms, shear walls and box beams. (Lec 3) Pre: CVE 352. Tsiatas, Veyera

CVE 549 Nonbituminous Transportation Materials and Mix-Design I, 3

Surficial and subgrade soils, mineral aggregates, Portland cement concretes, mix-design methods, material characterization and testing, fracture, fatigue, new nonbituminous pavement materials and additives, and pavement recycling. (Lec 2, Lab 3) Pre: CVE 347 or equivalent. Offered in odd-numbered years. Next offered Fall 1997. Lee/Marcus

- b. Change in title and description to read-

CVE 548 Bituminous Materials and Mix-Design II,3
Asphalt binder, bituminous mixtures, conventional and superpave mix-design methods, material characterization and testing, fracture, fatigue and permanent deformation, novel pavement materials and additives, and pavement recycling. (Lec 2, Lab 3) Pre: CVE 347 or equivalent. Offered in even-numbered years. Next offered Spring 1996. Lee

C. College of Resource Development

1. Department of Resource Economics
a. Changes in credits

REN 534: Economics of Natural Resources-credits changed from 3 to 4

REN 634: Economics of Resource Dev.- credits changed from 3 to 4

**GENERAL EDUCATION PILOT PROJECT
EVALUATION REPORT**

October, 1995
Prepared by John F. Stevenson, Co-chair
Liberal Education Subcommittee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 1994, the University College and General Education (UCGE) Committee convened a Liberal Education Subcommittee whose charge was to oversee and direct efforts to pilot-test elements of proposed new general education requirements. An essential feature of the Pilot Project was ongoing evaluation of the innovative aspects of the proposed program, and this report summarizes findings from the evaluation of 15 pilot courses conducted during the 1994-95 academic year.

To provide a variety of perspectives on the accomplishment of objectives, students, instructors, tutors, and faculty advisors were all asked questions about the pilot courses. The design of the evaluation also included collection of some data from comparison courses. Here are some of the major findings and conclusions:

- Compared with students in comparison sections, students enrolled in pilot sections had significantly more positive attitudes toward the University learning climate from the outset and these attitudes stayed more positive.
- There were no significant differences between pilot and comparison sections in student expectations of remaining at the University to graduation.
- Students in pilot sections were more likely to discuss the course with other students between classes.
- During the spring semester, more class time was devoted to discussion activities in the comparison sections than in the pilot sections.
- Qualitative comments by students and instructors in pilot courses suggest a greater sense of camaraderie, feelings of being valued and respected, a sense of being personally involved, and a pull toward greater engagement with the academic life of the University.
- Looking back in the following semester, students who had taken pilot sections reported that the small class size of these courses was responsible for more active participation in class.

Conclusion: Small class size offers the potential for more active and collaborative learning, hence more "bonding" to the University. However, all-freshman classes also present special challenges that call for training and support for instructors.

- Students in writing-intensive pilot sections reported spending significantly more time on writing activities, with 72% working on writing assignments at least weekly (compared to 33% in comparison sections) and 60% spending at least an hour on writing between classes (compared to 28% in comparison sections).
- In the fall semester students in the pilot sections rated the course as significantly more effective in raising their writing skills than did students in comparison sections. Instructors shared this view.
- Qualitative comments by students indicated high regard for the value of writing in improving discipline-related knowledge and reasoning, student-instructor interaction, and generalizable writing skills. Ninety-one percent said they would take another writing-intensive class.

- Undergraduate tutors (and by implication the Writing Program that trained and supported them) were highly valued by students and instructors, especially in the spring semester.
- Added writing assignments took extensive class time, much instructor thought about clarity and structure of expectations, and out-of-class grading time.

Conclusion: The benefits reported by students and instructors make a powerful case for the added instructor training and workload investment required to offer writing-intensive general education courses.

- Student study skills were more enhanced in pilot sections in the fall semester, but more enhanced in the comparison sections in the spring.

Conclusion: More explicit attention to this objective is necessary.

- The pilot instructors spent an average of approximately 9 hours per week outside of class to prepare conventional 3-credit general education sections and the 4-credit pilot sections added approximately 3.6 hours per week to this time after the initial development of materials and assignments.

- Students reported putting in 45-50% more study time between classes for pilot courses.

Conclusion: Despite substantial increases in workload for both students and faculty, both groups perceived great benefit (to learning and sense of connection) from the more intensive and extensive engagement offered by 4-credit courses, and these findings support the potential of this innovation.

I. Introduction

In January 1994, the University College and General Education (UCGE) Committee convened a Liberal Education Subcommittee created by the Faculty Senate. The Subcommittee's charge was to oversee and direct efforts to pilot-test elements of proposed new general education requirements that were being developed by the UCGE Committee at that time. The pilot-testing began in the fall of 1994 and continued in the spring of 1995. Piloting will continue in the 1995-96 academic year. An essential feature of the Pilot Project was ongoing evaluation of the innovative aspects of the proposed program, and this report summarizes findings from that evaluation.

A preliminary oral report based on the Fall, 1994 experience was provided to the UCGE Committee at the beginning of the Spring, 1995 semester, and this report was also made available to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the administration.

Based on the UCGE Committee proposal, the subcommittee was charged to sponsor, supervise, and evaluate seminars for freshmen and sophomores with maximum enrollments of 25 students. The seminars were to be designed to introduce students to modes of thinking and methods of inquiry of a particular academic domain (natural science, social science, arts, and humanities) and/or to multiple perspectives on a contemporary topical issue, following guidelines set forth in draft form by the UCGE Committee. These guidelines called for use of active and collaborative methods of instruction and explicit attention to learning skills (learning how to learn). Consistent with the UCGE Committee proposal, the seminars were to be offered for 4 credits, with additional work requirements for students emphasizing the acquisition of proficiency in one or more of three skill