

Fall CAS Faculty Meeting Minutes (15 Dec 2021)

3:30 pm: The online meeting was called to order by Dean Mark Button. The meeting was then immediately paused for 30 minutes due to a tornado warning. The meeting reconvened at 4:00. By 4:15, there were 103 attendees.

1. Short business items

- i. Approve Mark Griep as secretary. Poll results: 20 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain. The motion passed.
- ii. Robert Gorman is hereby appointed Parliamentarian
- iii. Approval of Minutes from the Spring Faculty Meeting held on April 20, 2021. Poll results: 52 yes, 0 no, 7 abstain. The motion passed.

2. Opening remarks from the Dean

Dean Mark Button: Remarks will be short due to our compressed schedule. Thank you for your continued resilience, and dedication to our College mission. The contributions of faculty and staff continue to be extraordinary and truly inspiring.

Guidance will be forthcoming about the potential for masking during Spring semester.

There are three significant items today — experiential learning, a change to the College Bylaws about due process, and seventeen curricular changes. One of the priorities for the University and College is to ensure that, by 2025, every student has had experiential learning prior to graduation. These experiences can be transformative for students and are important to future employers. The support and funding of experiential learning is at the heart of the College's comprehensive campaign goals. I'm pleased to report that a \$1M lead gift was made to the college to support experiential learning with funding to begin next semester.

The College is a strong supporter of UNL's anti-racism journey. Our support includes the creation of a new Asian American Studies program by the Institute for Ethnic Studies.

The College has also implemented changes to the search process that support our efforts to ensure diverse staff and faculty candidate pools.

Additional updates will be sent by email, and includes a note about support from President Carter to address nationally competitive salaries for all faculty and professors of practice as well as equitable compensation for staff.

3. Discuss recommendation from the Dean and the College Executive Committee to approve the proposed changes to the Bylaws of the Faculty, Article II – adding Section 4 which addresses academic due process.

Button: The first motion is a discussion about a change to the bylaws that came out of a system-wide recommendation to review items related to academic due process. The proposed change ensures due process in all situations where a personnel issue may yield an adverse decision. Faculty members must be informed of complaints against them and have an opportunity to respond to those complaints.

Pat Dussault (Assoc Dean): Dussault read the motion and asked for comments.

Tom Marley (Mathematics): Does "lecturer" include temporary lecturers?

Dussault: Yes, the change covers all faculty positions, including research professors.

Mark van Roojen (Philosophy): Does the five days indicate the time during which you must be informed about the complaint, or the time to respond to the complaint?

Dussault: In parallel with other bylaws, it provides five days to respond.

Button: Seeing no further comments, we'll move on to the next item.

4. Recommendation from the Dean and the College Curriculum and Advising Committee to approve the proposed university-wide experiential learning requirement.

Button: The experiential learning requirement is a recommendation from the Dean and the College Curriculum Committee. This motion was discussed at the Spring faculty meeting. Since then, many questions about the motion have been addressed. In anticipation of more discussion, speakers are asked to limit their comments to roughly three minutes. Speakers won't be called a second time until everyone with comments has had a chance to speak.

June Griffin (Assoc Dean): Experiential learning was proposed in Spring as a requirement, and it generated a robust discussion. We decided then to defer the vote to gather more information, clarify the process, and to reduce the burden on faculty and staff. Specifically, the Academic Solutions Council led by Amy Goodburn, Associate Vice Chancellor, developed a proposal to guide the approval of experiential learning requirements. This document has been widely shared.

Experiential learning moves learning out of the classroom and into the world by having students perform field work, participate in Learning Abroad or undergraduate research, write a thesis, or participate in an internship. These experiences are critical to student success in finding the job they seek or gaining acceptance to graduate or professional school. In the past, the process for participation was not clear. The process has now been clarified and will become a regular part of student meetings with their advisors. Some students have been unaware of these opportunities or did not recognize them as being valuable. By making it a requirement, we ensure that everyone has a chance to participate. Most of these experiences are zero-credit opportunities so that students don't have to pay to engage.

It is important to keep in mind that departments do not need to develop experiential learning requirements for their majors because students have an array of potential opportunities already. Their advisors will help them find the experiences that meet their interests and goals. The other point to remember is that faculty will continue to determine which individual students they choose to mentor for these experiences.

The Committee proposes to amend the catalog description as recommended by the Academic Solutions Council. It involves a slight change so that students "complete" rather than "take" the requirement.

Button: Looking for a second to start the discussion.

Debbie Minter (English): I second the motion so we can start the discussion.

Stephen Ducharme (Physics): I've raised some opposition to this. First, there is already an opportunity for experiential learning, indicating that the need is already being met. The opportunities should be available and varied. Second, it is unnecessary to pass this

motion because there are already more than enough opportunities. Finally, it is a burden to students to meet yet another requirement.

Shireen Adenwalla (Physics): I am in favor of experiential learning, and note the large number of types of opportunities, but don't know how the Dean's office will judge whether the requirement has been met.

Chad Brassil (BioSci): I am in favor of the motion. From a DEI lens, we are making it explicit that this is the path to success.

John DeLong (BioSci): I am in favor of the motion. The component that needs to be addressed is that participation in experiential learning is currently not explicit.

Kathy Castle (CommStudies): I am in favor of the motion. There is inequity in student perception of access to these opportunities. It is imperative that we make this explicit.

Peter Dowben (Physics): I ask everyone to vote against the measure. Either experiential learning is substantive or not. If it is not, we don't need it. If it is, then a one-semester experience is not enough, and it is burdensome to students to meet this requirement. NSF won't pay for UG research under these conditions. A meaningless indicator of experiential learning doesn't help anyone on their transcripts.

Regina Werum (Sociology): A number of courses already meet this requirement so why not make it automatic. It would be less burdensome than finding a mentor and a project.

Jeannette Jones (History): I've worked with nine first-generation students through UCARE. When I wrote recommendation letters for six of them, it mattered that they had experiential learning. What can we do to make this less burdensome?

Button: The two dominant questions are: How to decide what counts as experiential learning? How will students know how a course meets this requirement?

Griffin: Permanent, regular courses (field courses, research courses, Math in the City, etc.) will be approved for meeting the experience. In CLSS, students will be able to search for courses that meet the designation. UCARE projects will have an associated zero-credit course that meets the requirement. Writing a thesis or internships will be associated with zero or three credit courses depending on the unit's current structure. The academic advisor will help them find these opportunities.

Button: Are there additional comments?

Jody Kellas (CommStudies): I am in favor of the motion, and I agree with some of the concerns, but I find that students often need a requirement to incentivize them to participate. Experiential learning sparks their participation in innovative activities.

Dowben: I am not opposed to research experience or experiential learning. My objection is that having a line on the transcript for experiential learning won't mean anything. This requirement will add inequity rather than equity. Isn't adding this burden counterproductive for struggling students, especially those with financial burdens?

Jones: Students have asked to work with me to get those experiences, and it not a burden. Although some of these students have jobs, they are missing out on this important component of their education if they don't participate. How do we have this requirement without increasing the burden?

Griffin: The new scholarships will pay students to carry out community internships, or publish a paper

Katrina Jagodinsky (History): I want to reiterate the point about paid research experiences, such as UCARE, FYRE, and paid community internships.

Button: Thank you for the conversation. Let's call the question. Poll results: 58 yes, 21 no, 10 abstain. The motion passed.

5. Recommendation from the College Curriculum and Advising Committee to approve for the 2022-2023 Undergraduate Catalog.

Eric Malina (Chemistry): There are 17 different items today. We'll vote on each in turn.
[None of the following items received any comments]

a. Changes to the college portion of Catalog:

i. Course Restrictions (page 9)

Poll results: 57 yes, 2 no, 15 abstain. The motion passed.

Poll results: 63 yes, 0 no, 2 abstain. The motion passed.

ii. New Catalog Requirement Policy for Transfer Students and Prior Year Catalog.
(pages 10-12)

b. New major in **Multi-disciplinary Studies**.

Poll results: 64 yes, 4 no, 9 abstain. The motion passed.

c. Changes to the major in **Chemistry** – Restructuring the major: BA – Changes in required credit hours and core courses; BS – Creating options: Professional Option and Chemical Biology Option.

Poll results: 73 yes, 1 no, 3 abstain. The motion passed.

d. Changes to the minor in **Greek** – Changing credit hours for minor.

Poll results: 68 yes, 0 no, 10 abstain. The motion passed.

e. Changes to the minor in **Latin** – Changing credit hours for minor.

Poll results: 68 yes, 1 no, 8 abstain. The motion passed.

f. Changes to the minor in **Communication Studies** – Deleting the Plan B option.

Poll results: 66 yes, 0 no, 7 abstain. The motion passed.

g. Changes to the major in **Environmental Studies** – Increasing core credit hours, adding to core requirements and adjusting option credit hours due to increase in core hours.

Poll results: 71 yes, 0, 6 abstain. The motion passed.

h. Changes to the major in **Ethnic Studies** – Removing emphases and creating options: Multi-Ethnic Studies Option, Latinx and Latin American Studies Option, African and African American Studies Option; and Indigenous Studies Option.

Poll results: 67 yes, 1 no, 7 abstain. The motion passed.

i. Deletion of the major in **Latin American Studies** – Declining interest in major; this will be an option under the Ethnic Studies major.

Poll results: 71 yes, 1, 3 abstain. The motion passed.

j. Changes to the minor in **U.S. Latina/Latino Studies** – Changing the title to Latinx Studies.

Poll results: 63 yes, 2 no, 6 abstain. The motion passed.

k. Changes to the minor in **Native American Studies** – Changing the title to Indigenous Studies.

Poll results: 64 yes, 0 no, 4 abstain. The motion passed.

- l. Changes to the minor in **Mathematics** – Deleting the Plan B option.
Poll results: 66 yes, 1 no, 5 abstain. The motion passed.
- m. Changes to major and minor in **French** – Increasing major to 33 hours and minor to 18 hours; changing required courses to both.
Poll results: 68 yes, 0 no, 3 abstain. The motion passed.
- n. Changes to major and minor in **German** – Increasing major to 33 hours and minor to 18 hours; adding required courses to both.
Poll results: 71 yes, 0 no, 2 abstain. The motion passed.
- o. Changes to major and minor in **Russian** – Increasing major to 33 hours and minor to 18 hours; adding required courses to both.
Poll results: 70 yes, 0 no, 2 abstain. The motion passed.
- p. Changes to the minor in **Psychology** – Deleting the Plan B option.
Poll results: 72 yes, 0 no, 3 abstain. The motion passed.
- q. Changes to the major in **Anthropology** – Increasing credit hours for major with increased core credit hours and an additional required course in Forensic Option.
Poll results: 71 yes, 0 no, 2 abstain. The motion passed.

6. Questions and Feedback

Button: Thank you for staying past the hour. We've never had a tornado warning coincide with a faculty meeting before.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mark Griep