

# CALS Academic Planning Council

Meeting via Zoom

February 16, 2021, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Welcome and introductions

Review agenda

Revisions to current agenda

**Attendees:** Erika Anna, Laura Hernandez, Michael Thomas, Rick Lindroth, Jamie Nack, Xuejun Pan, Scott Lutz, William Tracy, Samuel Butcher, Michael Xenos, Jeremy Foltz, Nicole Perna

**Absent:** Jed Colquhoun, Barb Ingham

**Ex Officio:** Kate VandenBosch, Karen Wassarman, Mark Rickenbach

**Guests:** Kevin Shinnars

**Minutes taken by:** Sarah Barber

## Consent Agenda

1. Approve minutes for February 2, 2021 meeting  
*Item 1 was approved by consent.*

## Action and Discussion Items

2. Genetics BS, MS, PhD, Doctoral Minor and Cytotechnology Program Review (first discussion)

*Bill Tracy, Professor in Agronomy and review committee chair, presented the committee's findings and recommendations. The other committee members included Katy Forest (Bacteriology), Erik Dent (SMPH, Dept Neuroscience), Beth Meyerand (GFEC rep). The review committee reviewed five programs. BS in Genetics and Genomics, MS in Genetics, PhD in Genetics, PhD minor in Genetics, and the Cytotechnology certificate.*

*Overall, the programs are strong. There are dedicated faculty and staff. The department has made substantial changes in the last 10 years. Considerable effort has been made to improve instruction since the last program review. Genetics 466 is an example of an improved course.*

## Recommendations

- *BS Genetics and Genomics*
  - *Undergraduate would like to take major courses earlier*
  - *Program is growing and will need more help and lab space.*
  - *Need to update assessment plan and course syllabi*
  - *Improve career advising*
- *PhD Program*
  - *Identify ways to increase stipends for graduate students for recruitment of best students.*

- *Students requested the TA assignments and prelims not fall during same term*
- *Cytotechnology Certificate*
  - *Increase enrollment to max capacity of 12 (7-8 students currently)*
  - *Improve student success on board exam*
- *MS and PhD minor*
  - *Clarify purpose of programs*

*Q: What is their current TA stipend?*

*A: Evidence came from student interviews.*

*Comment: Recently voted to raise to \$31K.*

*Comment: Some faculty have analyzed the program's cost of living and stipends and it shows stipends are low.*

*Q: What would rectify the issue of undergraduates getting into the major sooner?*

*A: Students need two semesters of biology before taking core courses in the major. The program has created one or two new courses for first-year students.*

*Q: Why does Cytotechnology have low enrollment and lower certification test scores?*

*A: There have been leadership changes. Professor Sundling has now been hired to work through these problems.*

*Q: Is there more information about the innovative training for TAs?*

*A: No, but committee can ask program about this.*

*Q: Why the disconnect for needing TAs but TAs being used as graders?*

*A: Four students stated this during the interviews. However, one student was a TA for a new 100-level course and is teaching.*

*Q: Is the graduate program an inclusive environment? Any issues raised about climate and equity, diversity, and inclusion?*

*A: The self-study addresses this. This is a focus of their graduate seminars and discussion groups. The committee felt it was a work in progress and that the department is focused on this.*

*Q: Can you discuss the students' need for more career advice?*

*A: Undergraduates happy with professional academic advising they would like more career advising.*

*Comment: They might consider a careers course.*

*Questions for 2<sup>nd</sup> discussion:*

- *What evidence is available demonstrating that the current stipend rates are hindering the recruitment of students?*

- *How are TAs currently deployed and used in the department? Please comment on the TA experience falling during the same term as the students' prelims. Finally, can you provide a brief overview of your TA training?*
- *What plans does the department have to educate students on career paths in the field?*

3. *Developmental Economics Undergraduate Certificate (AAE) and Business Management for Agriculture and Life Sciences Undergraduate Certificate (AAE and LSC) Program Review (first discussion)*

*Kevin Shinnars, Professor in Biological Systems Engineering and review committee chair, presented the review committee's 5-year review report. Nancy Wong and Katherine Curtis were the other committee members. The Business Management certificate is limited to CALS students. This was in response to the Business School's concern about enrollment in Gen Bus 310. The Renk Institute developed the Business Management certificate. AAE developed the Development Economics certificate and is more tied into the department. Each certificate has graduated 100 students over 5 years. They have meet expectations. Both programs are active and vital. Students are satisfied and would recommend certificates to their peers.*

*Recommendations:*

- *Offer the Business Management certificate to SoHE students. Negotiations with the Wisconsin School of Business about their business certificate and Gen Bus 310 would be necessary*
- *Integrate the Business Management certificate with other majors in CALS. It is nicely integrated with Dairy Science.*
- *Improve advising especially around career and internship opportunities*
- *Better define the Business Management learning objectives*
- *Develop a formal assessment for each program*
- *Students seek more business analytics tools, less marketing*
- *Consider a seminar course for each certificate*
- *Use a model like Renk Institute to create better sense of community*

*Q: What are the program's thoughts about expanding enrollment in the business management certificate beyond CALS students? If there is interest, what is the program's plan to advance this idea? Has the program discussed this with stakeholders (prospective students, SoHE, WSB, others)?*

*A: WSB would not allow the certificate to be offered beyond CALS. Careful negotiation required. AAE expressed interest.*

*Q: It appeared that the number of students who declared was much lower than the completion rates.*

*A: The tables in the self-study were not clear. The committee asked and found the material was not well presented in self-study.*

*Q: Can you talk more about Gen Bus 310.*

*A: Students did not feel Gen Bus 310 was meeting their needs.*

*Comment: GB 310 is required for the Nutrition and Dietetics curriculum and often this course fills up quickly before our students are able to enroll in it*

*Comment: Difficult to create new course that would not infringe on WSB or SoHE*

*Q: What is the status of the partnership with Life Sciences Communication for the Business Management certificate?*

*A: There appears to be very little interaction. Students interviewed were interested in swapping LSC 270 with AAE 335 to increase business analytical skills.*

*Q: How is the department addressing student concerns about academic and career advising? How is the program building community for certificate students?*

*Questions for 2<sup>nd</sup> discussion:*

- What are the program's thoughts about expanding enrollment in the business management certificate beyond CALS students? If there is interest, what is the program's plan to advance this idea? Has the program discussed this with stakeholders (prospective students, SoHE, WSB, others)? Please also comment on the role of General Business 310 in the business management certificate curriculum?*
- What is the status of the partnership with Life Sciences Communication for the Business Management certificate?*
- How is the department addressing student concerns about academic and career advising? How is the program building community for certificate students?*

#### 4. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office – Diversity Officer discussion

*Mark Rickenbach presented draft position description for CALS first Chief Diversity Officer. In drafting this, we benchmarked with other institutions. This individual will, in part, support departments in what they are trying to accomplish as well as work on collegewide efforts. This individual will be part of the Dean's Senior Leadership team. There will be opportunities for members of the college to be engaged in the search.*

*Q: How do we attract someone?*

*A: Peer institutions have a back bench. Experience with agriculture and life sciences is preferred.*

*Comment: The USDA civil rights review and individuals addressing farming in minority communities are pools of people who may be able to step in with ag experience.*

*Q: Would someone walking into the position be worried about the College's commitment to subsequent steps?*

*A: The Dean's Office is envisioning 2-3 additional staff members and is working on budgets. This intersects with other mission areas and how we think about a team-based structure that integrates into other units.*

*Q: Should CALS actively recruit faculty for this position?*

*A: Might be good to recruit for both faculty and staff.*

*A: If a faculty member is hired, how much effort would be put into the role?.*

*A: Must seek a diverse and inclusive pool*

*Meeting adjourned at 2:12pm.*