

JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

City University of New York

UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM & UNDERGRADUATE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of October 10, 2024

The Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee held a remote meeting October 10, 2024, via Zoom. Interim Dean Andrew Sidman called the meeting to order.

Present: Roosbelinda Cardenas, Jocelyn Castillo, Angelique Corthals, Tracie Meyers, Nina-Rose Fischer, Sergio Gallegos, Penny Geyer, Thomas Herndon, Kathy Killoran, Ma'at Lewis, Vicente Lecuna (attending for Cristina Lozano-Arguelles), Daniel Matos, Kelly McWilliams, Fatma Najjar, Judy-Lynne Peters, Gohar Petrossian, Amada Santiago, Andrew Sidman, Robert Till, Marisa Tramontano, Gregory Umbach, Anjalina Budhram, Dor Nave.

Absent: Alexa Capeloto, Crystal Endsleigh, Shavonne McKiever, Shreya Subramani, Tiffany Rodriguez, Roberto Visani, Cristina Lozano-Arguelles.

Non-Voting Members and Guests: Maggie Arismendi, Teresa Booker, Bettina Carbonell, Melissa Dolan, Wynne Ferdinand, Johnson Hunter, Olivera Jokic, Dr. Kimora, Evan Mandery, Tim McCormack, Veronica Michel, Chrissy Pacheco, Raymond Patton, Patrizia Pelgrift, Dyanna Pooley, Valerie West.

Dean's Announcements – Interim Dean Andrew Sidman

Interim Dean Sidman welcomed Prof. Tim McCormack and asked him to talk a bit about the proposed Writing Across the Curriculum Standards. This item will come up for discussion at the next UCASC meeting. In the interim, feedback should be sent to Prof. McCormack.

Approval of the minutes of September 6, 2024

No further discussion.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of September 6, 2024. The minutes were approved unanimously with 22 votes in favor.

New Business**Program Review / Programs Subcommittee**

Dean Killoran introduced the first item under Programs, the Self-Study for the BA in Criminal Justice and invited Prof. Evan Mandery to address the committee. He gave an overview of the document. Dean Killoran asked him to talk about the senior thesis classes in a bit more

1 detail. Dean Sidman summarized his assessment of the program and gave his support for
2 adopting this self-study.

3
4 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the Self-Study for the BA in Criminal Justice**
5 **(Crime Control and Prevention). The motion was approved unanimously with 22 votes in**
6 **favor.**

7
8 Associate Dean Killoran explained the revision for the BS in Applied Mathematics -- there
9 will be one new required course in part one of the major for CSCI 358, Machine Learning.
10 This course will replace an advanced calculus class from part two of the major, so the total
11 number of credits remains the same. Associate Dean Killoran introduced professor Hunter
12 Johnson. Professor Johnson elucidated that this revision is in line with changes within the
13 field. He also introduced Professor Fatma Najar to provide her expertise in machine
14 learning, since she contributed to this revision -- the Applied Math major offers two tracks:
15 Data Science and Cryptography. Initially influenced by traditional theoretical mathematics,
16 the program has evolved since its online launch in 2020 to focus more on modern data
17 science. Key changes include adding a year of Python programming and considering the
18 removal of an advanced calculus course, which is essential for theoretical mathematicians
19 but not necessary for aspiring data scientists. Currently, the data science capstone, which
20 involves working on real research projects, struggles because students are still learning
21 basic techniques. The proposed changes aim to enhance students skills earlier in the
22 program so the capstone experience is more meaningful, especially since Data Science is the
23 most popular track. This adjustment also will be made for the Cryptography track,
24 recognizing the growing importance of machine learning in cybersecurity and cryptanalysis.

25
26 Professor Vicente Lacuna asked two questions on behalf of Professor Lozano-Arguelles. (1)
27 Given the race revolving around AI, why is the change focused on machine learning rather
28 than AI and (2) Is it because of a lack of faculty specialized in that field? Or because machine
29 learning is more relevant for cyber security?

30 Professor Najar explained that the department has expertise in AI, since they already have
31 an AI course, however, they are updating it to better align with the data science track,
32 focusing on machine learning. Interest in this course is growing among students. Professor
33 Hunter also emphasized that classical AI and machine learning are not mutually exclusive.
34 He offered that in the textbook by Russell and Norvig, about half of the content is dedicated
35 to machine learning.

1 Interim Dean Sidman added that this explanation also provides an answer to the question
2 asked by Olivera Jokic in the chat “Isn’t AI also one publicity name for machine learning?”

3 There was no further discussion.

4

5 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal to the revision of the BS in**
6 **Applied Mathematics. The motion was approved unanimously with 22 votes in favor.**

7

8 Associate Dean Killoran moved on to the next item – the BA in Sociology is adding an
9 additional required course on Race and Ethnicity (SOC 213) that results in an increase of
10 three credits to earn the Sociology major. This is still within the range for some of our other
11 social science majors. The list of electives within the Sociology major is also being refreshed.
12 She welcomed Professor Marisa Tramontano to discuss the revision. Professor Tramontano
13 explained that adding this course shows the importance of dedicating a full semester to the
14 sociology of race and ethnic relations, even though these topics are discussed in all
15 Sociology courses. The department has worked hard to add to their General Education
16 offerings and SOC 213 is an option for the Flex Core: U.S. Experience in Its Diversity
17 component. So, they typically offer multiple sections of the course and may need to offer a
18 few more. This change also aligns with the Seven Principles for a Culturally Responsive,
19 Inclusive and Anti-Racist Curriculum. Associate Dean pointed out that Sociology majors can
20 double dip and satisfy both a major and a Gen ed requirement.

21

22 There was no further discussion.

23

24 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal to the revision of the BA in**
25 **Sociology. The motion was approved unanimously with 22 votes in favor.**

26 Associate Dean Killoran introduced Professor Raymond Patton, the architect of the final
27 program revision, who aimed to share this process with several of his colleagues present at
28 this meeting, noting that many of them contributed to the revision. He explained this
29 revision aims at creating a more integrated experience for students. Currently students see
30 a disconnect between the curriculum focused on the common good and justice, and the
31 separate research skills course. Many students struggled to see the relationship between
32 their passion for justice and research, often viewing researchers as distant figures. To
33 address this, the Honor Program has restructured the curriculum to intertwine justice
34 themes with research skills, starting with new introductory courses on action research for
35 entering students. They will also enhance courses like HON 201 and HON 202 by
36 incorporating real-world applications of research and justice. The capstone sequence will be
37 more cohesive, linking courses HON 301 and HON 401 into a ‘capstone experience’.
38 Students will be better prepared to do the research at the capstone level. Additionally, the
39 Program is adding a quantitative reasoning requirement and simplifying program

1 requirements for students who enter as freshmen and upperclassmen. Overall, these
2 changes aim to enhance the integration of research and justice without adding extra credit
3 to the Program, except for a slight increase in the colloquium courses (to 1.5 cr. each).

4 Before opening the floor for discussion, Interim Dean Sidman reflected on a meeting in
5 spring 2022 where these ideas were first discussed and expressed gratitude for their
6 realization. He thanked Professor Patton for his leadership, and acknowledged the faculty
7 involved in the conversations over the past two years. After inviting questions and seeing
8 none, Interim Dean Sidman moved to vote on the proposed revision to the Honors Program.

9 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal to revise the John Jay Honors**
10 **Program. The motion was approved unanimously with 22 votes in favor.**

11

12 **General Education / Courses Subcommittee**

13

14 Assistant Dean Ferdinand introduced the first new course CJBA 130 – Evidence of Things
15 Not Seen: Quantitative Reasoning in Criminal Justice. She explained that it is a new 100-
16 level requirement for CJBA majors that focuses on developing students' quantitative
17 reasoning skills and applying them to real-world contexts. The course uses innovative
18 approaches, such as short writing assignments and open-source data projects, to help
19 students build their skills throughout the semester. Assistant Dean Ferdinand encouraged
20 Professor Valerie West to add to her introduction of this new course.

21

22 Professor West explained that this course aims to teach students to think quantitatively
23 about contemporary issues, particularly within criminal justice. The goal of the course is to
24 demystify quantitative methods and make them accessible to students who may be
25 intimidated by them, focusing on practical application rather than advanced technical skills.

26

27 Associate Dean Killoran added that CJBA 130 will become a required course in the Criminal
28 Justice BA major.

29

30 Professor Michel inquired about the course's placement within the curriculum. She
31 specifically asked if this required course would be in addition to a research methods class,
32 and if so, how it would complement the existing skillset developed by students in the
33 program.

34

35 Professor West responded that the program requires a research methods course and a year
36 of statistics. This new course, CJBA 130, serves as an introductory course to quantitative
37 methods. The program is reducing its year-long introductory course into a single semester,
38 and replacing those credits with CJBA 130, so it is not an overall increase to the credits
39 required to earn the major.

1 Interim Dean Sidman praised the new course, CJBA 130, as an excellent example of how to
2 introduce quantitative reasoning skills at the 100-level. He highlighted the course's
3 innovative approach, particularly the practice assignments that focus on real-world data
4 analysis.

5
6 There was no further discussion

7
8 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal to the new course, CJBA 1XX**
9 **(130) Evidence of Things Not Seen: Quantitative Reasoning in Criminal. The motion was**
10 **approved unanimously with 22 votes in favor.**

11
12 Assistant Dean Ferdinand moved on to Corrections 395 Educating Behind Bars that the
13 members can find on p. 127 in the packet. She explained that Professor Kimora had taught
14 this course for several semesters; it includes significant writing components, such as essays
15 in the midterm and final exams. The course also introduces students to theories of learning
16 and teaching, connecting them to the context of corrections.

17
18 Dr. Kimora did a presentation about the contents of this new course, Corrections 395
19 highlighting that it aims to expand the range of courses within the Corrections Minor, and to
20 introduce students to the field of correctional education. It also focuses on exploring
21 correctional education policies and programs, both domestically and internationally, with a
22 particular emphasis on Norwegian prison systems. The course also includes significant
23 writing components to enhance student learning and critical thinking.

24
25 Interim Dean Sidman commends the formal addition of the course to the curriculum,
26 particularly as an option for CJBS students. He appreciates the course's focus on academic
27 learning while also preparing students for real-world careers in corrections, including policy
28 work. He ultimately highlights the importance of policy work in the field and believes the
29 course will equip students with valuable skills for such careers.

30
31 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal to the new course, COR 3YY**
32 **(395) Educating Behind Bars: Policy Implications, Programs and Issues. The motion was**
33 **approved unanimously with 22 votes in favor.**

34
35 Assistant Dean Ferdinand moved on to the final new course, ISP 2XX Doing Justice, and
36 explained that this new 200-level General Education course will complete the ISP program's
37 offering of courses in every Gen Ed category. It will involve two main components: exploring
38 various justice frameworks and developing students' own concept of justice. The course will
39 expose students to diverse thinkers and writing genres, fostering critical thinking and
40 analysis of relevant issues. She welcomed Professor Fischer to elaborate.

41
42 Professor Nina Rose-Fischer offered that the new course's aim is to introduce incoming
43 sophomores to social justice frameworks and to the college's mission of advocacy. It

1 emphasizes interactive learning and critical thinking, with a focus on real-world case studies
2 such as Black Lives Matter and Cesar Chavez. The course culminates in a final research
3 project and multimedia presentation, showcasing students' understanding and application
4 of justice concepts.

5
6 Interim Dean Sidman opined that this new course is intended as a transfer seminar to
7 introduce students to the college's mission of justice. It is designed to provide transfer
8 students with a foundational understanding of the college's core values and principles.

9
10 There was no further discussion.

11
12 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal to the new course, ISP 2XX**
13 **“Doing Justice” (College Option: Justice Core I [200-level]). The motion was approved**
14 **unanimously with 22 votes in favor.**

15 **Course Revisions**

16
17
18 Associate Dean Killoran presented this section. She explained that the English Department
19 was revising the course "Podcasting: Social Impact, Style, and Practice" (English 363) they
20 are lowering the course level to 200, updating the course description, refreshing the
21 learning outcomes and assignments, and providing a new model syllabus.

22
23 Professor Carbonell expanded on the concept and its inception. The course "Podcasting:
24 Social Impact, Style, and Practice" was originally designed as a standalone course, but didn't
25 attract enough students. ENG 363 will be integrated into the growing Digital Media and
26 Journalism Minor, and it fits in with other media courses. By lowering the course level to
27 200-level and updating the learning objectives, the English Department aims to make the
28 course more accessible to students and considers it a valuable addition to both the minor
29 and the English major.

30
31 There was no further discussion.

32
33 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal to the course revision for ENG**
34 **363 Podcasting: Social Impact, Style and Practice. The motion was approved unanimously**
35 **with 22 votes in favor.**

36
37 Associate Dean Killoran proposed that the next two courses will be taken as a slate. The
38 proposal for both courses is to increase the credit value of Honors 181 and 182 from 1
39 credit to 1.5 credits each, totaling 3 credits. This change aims to provide a more consistent
40 and balanced credit load for students at the end of their program. Additionally, Associate
41 Dean Killoran underlined that the Honors 181 and 182 courses typically take place during
42 community hour, providing students with opportunities for collaborative work, activities,

1 and speaker series. These experiences foster a sense of community among Honors program
2 students and the class time and workload is appropriate for students to earn 1.5 credits
3 each.

4
5 There was no further discussion.

6
7 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal as a slate to the course**
8 **revisions, for HON 181 Honors Colloquium I and HON 182 Honors Colloquium II. The**
9 **motion was approved, and the slate passed unanimously with 22 votes in favor.**

10
11 Associate Dean Killoran introduced Professor Amada Santiago to update the members on
12 the course revision for LLS 215 Socio-Political Developments in Contemporary Puerto Rico.

13
14 Professor Amada Santiago added that this revision updates the description of the Puerto
15 Rican course to better reflect its content. The course will now cover the history of Puerto
16 Rico from 1898 to the present, combining elements of both the previous archive and
17 contemporary courses. To accurately represent the course's content, the title and
18 description is also being changed.

19
20 There was no further discussion.

21
22 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal to the course revision for LLS**
23 **215 Socio-Political Developments in Contemporary Puerto Rico. The motion was approved**
24 **unanimously with 22 votes in favor**

25
26 Associate Dean Killoran introduced the next revision as being related to the BS in Applied
27 Mathematics discussed earlier in this meeting. The proposal is to expand the prerequisites
28 of CSCI 358 Machine Learning to accommodate the Python programming course that
29 students take in the Applied Mathematics major, CSCI 172. By adding this alternative
30 prerequisite, the proposal aims to eliminate what would have been a hidden prerequisite
31 for Applied Mathematics students.

32 There was no further discussion.

33
34 **A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal to the course revision for CSCI**
35 **358 Machine Learning. The motion was approved unanimously with 22 votes in favor**

36
37 The meeting concluded at 10:31 AM.

38
39 Submitted by,
40 Patrizia Pelgrift, scribe