Meeting Minutes: Committee on Physics and Astronomy

Meeting Minutes
Academic Advisory Committee on Physics and Astronomy
April 24, 1997
State University of West Georgia, Carrollton, Georgia

The 1997 meeting of the Academic Advisory Committee on Physics and Astronomy was held on the campus of the State University of West Georgia on April 24, 1997. The meeting was called to order by Professor Ron Ezell, Chairman, at 3:30 P. M. A list of attendees is attached to these minutes. After a round of informal self introductions, Professor Ezell briefly discussed, as informational items, actions taken during the year by the Executive Committee. These included: the structures of the Area F core requirements for Physics, Astronomy, and Physical Science,our input regarding the Quality Core Curriculum, andcommon prefixes and course numbers.

Professor Dennis Marks initiated a discussion of the approved suffixes for course labeling. They are H (Honors), L (Lab), and K (Lab and lecture combined). After a discussion of this topic, a motion was made and seconded that this body should encourage local institutions to get these correctly recorded, particularly in the case of showing the suffix K in Bulletins and on transcripts. This motion passed unanimously. A related issue discussed was the proper use of the fourth digit of the course number; this is intended to indicate courses which comprise a sequence. A motion was made and seconded that all institutions should use the fourth digit of zero for all non-sequence courses. Because of concern that this would be unduly restrictive, an amendment was proposed and seconded that zero should be preferred but that otherwise the digits 1-4 inclusive should be avoided. This amendment failed by a vote of 15 no, 6 yes, 1 abs. The original motion passed with a vote of 25 yes, 1 no.

Regarding the system-wide prefixes, the issue was raised that some institutions are planning to introduce "integrated" science courses, *i. e.* courses which will include material from sciences outside our juridiction (*e. g.* chemistry, biology, or geology); six institutions present at the meeting indicated that this was their plan. In an attempt to have a system-wide uniformity in prefixes for such courses, these six representatives were polled and their preference was for the three-letter prefix SCI. It was felt that other possibilities were much less informative and that an exception from the "four-letter rule" should be sought. The entire Committee then supported this choice of prefix unanimously.

Professor Ezell then informed the Committee that we have been instructed to provide brief course descriptions for commonly numbered courses. It was decided to have the Committee act today on course content and then to have the Secretary/Chair Elect, Professor F. Todd Baker, draft appropriate verbiage. The following actions on content were taken:

- PHYS 1211 (or 2211)
    - Mechanics: unanimous approval
    - Thermodynamics: 22 yes, 1 no, 2 abstain
    - Waves: 21 yes, 5 no, 1 abstain
    - Sound: 1 yes, 26 no

- PHYS 1212 (or 2212)
    - Electromagnetism: unanimous approval
    - Optics: unanimous approval
    - Modern Physics: 19 yes, 6 no, 1 abstain
- PHYS 1111
    - Identical topics as PHYS 1211: unanimous approval
- PHYS 1112
    - Identical topics as PHYS 1212: unanimous approval

After some discussion it became apparent that there is insufficient uniformity in the Physical Science courses planned at the various institutions for us to be able to write common course descriptions for PHYS(PHSC) 1011 and PHYS(PHSC) 1012. A motion was made and seconded that, due to the welcome diversity of offerings around the system, there should be no common courses in Physical Science. This passed unanimously. We thus will withdraw the previously submitted common courses PHYS(PHSC) 1011 and PHYS(PHSC) 1012. Individual institutions may choose either PHYS or PHSC as a prefix for courses in Physical Science.

A spirited discussion of the possibility of establishing system-wide uniformity for awarding Advanced Placement credit followed. The excellent work by Professor Ntungwa Maasha in tabulating the current policies system-wide was acknowledged. Because of the complexity of the issue, the admitted ignorance of necessary details by many Committee members, issues of institutional autonomy and self-interest, and the fact that we expect quite small numbers of students to be affected, a motion was made and seconded to table this issue. This motion passed by a vote of 26 yes, 1 no.

The topic of Area F Outcomes was next addressed. There seemed to be confusion as to what is actually required here. The Committee referred this issue to the Executive Committee for appropriate action at such a time as they deem appropriate.

It was suggested by Professor Ezell that, in addition to specific recommendations made in this meeting, the recommendations made last year regarding the role of this Committee be resubmitted this year. This was unanimously approved.

Professor Marks indicated a desire to try to reach accord on some common courses in Astronomy (ASTR) among institutions which offer such courses. He will take responsibility for trying to do this in the near future.

The Committee is strongly supportive of Faculty Development activities and will continue to be strongly supportive. We are very pleased that Professors J. B. Sharma and Ben DeMayo have successfully acquired

funding from the BOR to support Faculty Development workshops at this year's meeting; these will be held on April 25, 1997.

Professor Ezell announced that the final item to be addressed at today's meeting was the election of next year's Executive Committee. Professor Martin Okafor, DeKalb College, was selected by acclamation by the entire Committee as Chair Elect for 1998-99. Individual groups selected their representatives: Professor Henry Valk, Georgia Institute of Technology, representing larger universities; Professor Surendra Pandey, Albany State University, representing four-year colleges/universities; and Professor Christopher Wozny, Waycross College, representing two-year colleges. The other members will be Professor Ron Ezell, Augusta State University, immediate past Chair, and Professor F. Todd Baker, University of Georgia, Chair.

The meeting adjourned at 6:17 P. M.

Respectfully submitted, F. Todd Baker

ATTENDEES

Ron Ezell, Augusta State University
Todd Baker, University of Georgia
Richard Pryor, North Georgia
J. B. Sharma, Gainsville College
David Wycherley, Dalton College
James Weeks, ABAC
Brooke M. Pridmore, Clayton College and State University
Dennis Marks, Valdosta State University
Walter G. Merrit, Dardon College
Donald Norman, Kennesaw State University
Henry Valk, Ga. Inst. of Tech.
Surendra N. Pandey, Albany State University
Tsun-Hsiung Kao, Columbus State University
Bill Lamb, Georgia College and St. Univ.
Sanjeev Arora, Fort Valley State University
Javier Hasbun, State University of West Georgia
Neil Koone, Floyd College
Gian S. Ghuman (for K. Chandra), Savannah State University
Michael Pangia, Georgia Southwestern State University
Carl Rod Nave, Georgia State University
David Lawing, Macon College
Ntungwa Maasha, Coastal Georgia Community College
Gary Watts, Middle Georgia College

Martin O. Okafor, DeKalb College
Jagdish Agrawal, Atlanta Metropolitan College
Chris Wozny, Waycross College
Morris Whiten, Armstrong Atlantic State University
William Donaldson, East Georgia College
Sam Scales, Southern Polytechnic State University

Added in proof, 4/30/97 Course descriptions of common courses

PHYS 1111 : An introductory course which will include material from mechanics, thermodynamics, and waves. Elementary algebra and trigonometry will be used.

PHYS 1112 : An introductory course which will include material from electromagnetism, optics, and modern physics. Elementary algebra and trigonometry will be used.

PHYS 1211 (2211) : An introductory course which will include material from mechanics, thermodynamics, and waves. Elementary differential calculus will be used.

PHYS 1212 (2212) : An introductory course which will include material from electromagnetism, optics, and modern physics. Elementary differential and integral calculus will be used.