

EPC Minutes
October 15, 2021

In attendance: Jim Barber, Annie Blazer, Candice Benjes-Small, Ben Boone, Susan Bosworth, Magali Compan, Jim Deverick, Josh Erlich (chair), Larry Evans, Sallie Marchello, Christy Porter, Cory Springer, Kristin Wustholz, Tom Zhang

Visiting: Meghana Boojala, Vicka Heidt, Mary Kardos, Rachel Li, Suhas Suddala

1. Minutes from October 8, 2021 were approved

2. Consent calendar

Biology - Undergraduate

Curriculum change

Chemistry - N/A

Curriculum change

Approved.

Other proposals

CHEM 361 - Global Topics in Chemistry

New Course

Approved.

UREG Department - Self design

Curriculum change

Tabled. Ben will ask Shelly and Suzanne to address two concerns: 1) how will the vice-dean solicit faculty input for approval of self-designed majors and 2) the self-designed B.S. has a limited number of NQR disciplines listed for potential courses—should this list be expanded or replaced with different language?

UREG Department - Transfer Credit Policy

Curriculum change

Approved. Language clarifying policy for COLL 300 credit for transfer students was provided—the transfer credit document now lists “study abroad” instead of course-work.

3. Update on Pass/Fail Task Force

Several students that have various leadership roles on campus, including members of the Pass/Fail Task Force, joined the meeting to provide student perspectives on the proposed Pass/Fail policy. In response to the concern that students might use this policy to raise their GPA, one student pointed out that this policy is limited to courses that challenged you outside of your major. Another student pointed out that any Pass/Fail policy will impact GPA, but that this policy might make first-years and sophomores more likely to try a hard course. It was pointed out that this policy would likely result in an increase of the overall average GPA at W&M. In response to whether the students thought this would impact the value of their degrees, some responded that W&M's reputation as a challenging academic experience was unlikely to change. One student raised the point that this policy would encourage students to use their Pass/Fails more wisely, rather than making a snap decision during the first week of classes.

Another student shared that making the decision that week is stressful. Ben pointed out that limiting Pass/Fail to four courses means that it only impacts 10% or less of a student's coursework. The policy (in whatever form EPC approves) will be brought to FAS for a vote at the December meeting.