Minutes for May 1, 2025, Courses and Curricula Meeting

Location: 232 Mulder

Committee members present: Allen, Blackwell (Chair), Duck, Elder, LeJeune, Ordes, Pittman, Purifoy (Secretary), Shaffie, Stegall, Wright

Absent: Franklin (attending department meeting)

Ex-officio: Drs. Beard and Halpin; Ms. Bobi Delaney (Registrar)

Guests: Drs. Ghimire, Lueder, and Sammons

**Summary of Votes (formal minutes follow this section)**

1. Vote to batch vote: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1(Franklin) not voting because of absence)
2. Course addition: ARIN 1000.
   1. 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1 not voting for reason of absence (Franklin)
3. Course additions: ARIN 2000, ARIN 3000, ARIN 3200, CSCI 4750, CSCI 4760, CSCI 4770 (batch vote)
   1. 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1 not voting due to absence (Franklin)
4. Curriculum addition: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Minor
   1. 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1 not voting for reason of absence (Franklin)
5. Curriculum modification: creation of AI concentration in BS in Computer Science
   1. 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1 not voting for reason of absence (Franklin)
6. Adjournment
   1. 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1 not voting for reason of absence (Franklin)

**Formal Meeting Minutes**

Dr. Blackwell called the meeting to order shortly after 12 PM, as a quorum had been established.

Dr. Blackwell read the following results of online votes on minutes into the record:

* April 2 minutes: 11 in favor of approval, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 1 not voting by the time voting closed (Allen).
* April 14 minutes: 11 in favor of approval, 0 opposed, 1 abstention (Franklin)

Dr. Blackwell introduced Dr. Tanya Lueder, who explained the rationale behind the new concentration and minor in Artificial Intelligence. The department emphasizes that the new courses can be taught with current (largely) full-time faculty, library resources, equipment, support staff, and budget; thus, the current state hiring freeze will **not** affect the department’s ability to offer these courses/curricula. The Artificial Intelligence Minor offers marketable skills with wide applicability; Dr. Lueder describes this as offering students the skills to USE the tools available. The Concentration in Artificial Intelligence offers Computer Science Majors a specialization that enhances graduates’ employability; Dr. Lueder noted that this concentration is for those who BUILD the tools that others will use.

Discussion ensued on the following topics:

1. Dr. Elder, while supportive of the new proposals, expressed great concern that they had been uploaded into Curriculog April 24, over two months past the due date for proposals; proposals submitted very late, if returned for any reason, may miss inclusion in the catalog.
2. Dr. Sammons indicated that it was urgent that these proposals be approved in time for the 2025-2026 catalog.
3. Several committee members and guests noted that approval of these courses and curricula under consideration in this meeting would position LSUA to offer unique programs—and that delaying approval another year or more might result in losing the window of opportunity to offer these courses and curricula; if LSUA delays approval of these curricula and, in the interim, several other schools propose similar curricula, LSUA could be perceived as offering a duplicative specialty curriculum that students could get elsewhere. If LSUA’s program is perceived as duplicating a specialized curriculum available at several other state schools, the Board of Regents is unlikely to approve LSUA’s proposal. Further, a follow-up discussion revealed that the Board of Regents prefers to approve free-standing degree programs where minors or concentrations within existing degrees are already in place; losing the window of opportunity to get these two curricula approved jeopardizes LSUA’s ability to offer any free-standing degree in Artificial Intelligence at ANY point in the future.
4. Several committee members noted that their students might benefit from the Minor in Artificial Intelligence, and other committee members suggested that, even if students did not take all the courses for the Minor, taking one or two courses in AI would help students learn marketable skills
5. The low cost to students was noted at several points. Open-source materials used in some courses keep costs low for students. Further, no additional fees are proposed for any of the courses.
6. In general, the committee found the proposals to be very detailed and thorough.

Dr. Blackwell indicated that batch voting would be possible with this set of proposals. She solicited a formal voice vote on voting in batches. Duck moved to batch vote where possible; Shaffie seconded. The formal voice vote was 11 in favor (Allen, Blackwell, Duck, Elder, LeJeune, Ordes, Pittman, Purifoy, Shaffie, Stegall, Wright) in favor of batch voting, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 1(Franklin) not voting by reason of absence.

The first course addition considered was for ARIN 1000 – *Introduction to Artificial Intelligence.* This course is a prerequisite for the other ARIN courses. All necessary elements (CIP code, vote, credit hours, effective date, etc.) were present and appropriate. The course description matched between Curriculog and the MCO. No issues were noted.

Elder moved to accept the proposal for the course addition of ARIN 1000. Stegall seconded. The results of the formal voice vote were 11 (Allen, Blackwell, Duck, Elder, LeJeune, Ordes, Pittman, Purifoy, Shaffie, Stegall, Wright) in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 1 (Franklin) not voting by reason of absence.

The next 6 course addition proposals were considered as a batch. These were the following:

* ARIN 2000 – *Artificial Intelligence Tools and Applications.* All necessary elements (CIP code, department vote, credit hours, effective date, etc.) were present and appropriate. The course description matched between Curriculog and the MCO.
* ARIN 3000 – *Data Science* All necessary elements (CIP code, vote, credit hours, effective date, etc.) were present and appropriate. The course description matched between Curriculog and the MCO. Ms. Duck asked why Weka (an “open-source machine learning toolkit”) was specified in the course description. Dr. Shaffie and Dr. Lueder explained that Weka is the most appropriate of all options (to the extent that it is the only real option at present) and that specifying its use eliminates the possibility less appropriate toolkits would be used.
* ARIN 3200 – *Ethics in Computing and Artificial Intelligence.* All necessary elements (CIP code, department vote, credit hours, effective date, etc.) were present and appropriate. The course description matched between Curriculog and the MCO. No issues were noted.
* CSCI 4750 - *Artificial Intelligence.*  All necessary elements (CIP code, department vote, credit hours, effective date, etc.) were present and appropriate. The course description matched between Curriculog and the MCO. The prerequisite, CSCI 3102, is already in the catalog. No concerns were raised.
* CSCI 4760 - *Machine Learning.* All necessary elements (CIP code, department vote, credit hours, effective date, etc.) were present and appropriate. The course description matched between Curriculog and the MCO. This course, too, has the prerequisite of CSCI 3102, which is already in the catalog. No concerns were raised.
* CSCI 4770- *Deep Learning*. All necessary elements (CIP code, department vote, credit hours, effective date, etc.) were present and appropriate. The course description matched between Curriculog and the MCO. This course, too, has the prerequisite of CSCI 3102, which is already in the catalog. Dr. Blackwell, noting that nearly all the courses had a projected enrollment of 25 students, asked Dr. Ghimire how many students Computer Science currently has. Dr. Ghimire estimated the current enrollment of CSCI students at 350, and Dr. Sammons added that this number is expected to double in a year or two. The department thus has robust enrollment and can project adequate enrollment in the courses being proposed.

As there was no further discussion, Elder moved that the committee accept the course additions for ARIN 2000, ARIN 3000, ARIN 3200, CSCI 4750, CSCI 4760, and CSCI 4770. Shaffie seconded. The results of the voice vote were 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 1(Franklin) not voting by reason of absence.

The committee considered the curriculum addition for the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Minor. Again, the committee noted that all required elements (CIP, effective date, etc.) were noted as present and appropriate. It was noted that all classes in the minor were approved previously in the meeting or were already in the catalog.

Elder moved to accept the proposal for the addition of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) minor. Pittman seconded. The results of the formal voice vote were as follows:11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1 (Franklin) not voting for reason of absence.

The committee then considered the Curriculum Modification for the BS in Computer Science. This modification creates a concentration in Artificial Intelligence. Again, all required elements were noted as present and appropriate. The hours for the concentration added up appropriately. All required courses are either already in the catalog or were just approved.

Elder moved to accept the proposal for Curriculum Modification to the BS in Computer Science (the creation of the Artificial Intelligence concentration). Purifoy seconded. The results of the formal voice vote were as follows: 11 in favor, 0 opposed,0 abstentions, and 1 (Franklin) not voting for reason of absence.

With no further business to discuss, Dr. Blackwell thanked the committee for its service and professionalism.

Elder moved to adjourn. Purifoy seconded. The formal voice vote was 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 1 not voting for reasons of absence.

*Respectfully submitted by Alice Blackwell on behalf of Sandra Purifoy*