Summary of Decisions – Undergraduate Programs – MAY 2018

Undergraduate program and course issues are addressed throughout the academic year as needed. Our primary assessment exercise occurs during a one-day faculty in-service Planning and Assessment Workshop held at the end of the school year. This workshop was held 7 May 2018, 8:30a – 3:00p

Information used to support assessment and planning:

Instructor reporting on student performance in classes used to evaluate progress on the Learning Objectives for WATS majors.
IDEA surveys for individual courses and department summary
2018 Graduating Senior surveys and exit interviews with Department Head
Review of enrollment, graduation, and placement for WATS majors: 2005-2018
Degree requirements and 4-yr plan for revised major: Mgt. and Restoration of Aquatic Ecosystems
Revised degree requirements and 4-yr plan for major in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences

Principal Decisions

1. Field and Lab Skills in Watershed Sciences

A specific focus in our May 2018 workshop was field and lab skills considered to be essential for all majors in either MRAE or FAAS. Prior to the workshop, a questionnaire was sent to faculty requesting a list of essential field and lab techniques. These were discussed at the May 7 workshop.

Based on a review of course content in required classes, and input from faculty advisors (Wilcock, Gaeta) and Department Head exit interviews, the faculty decided to revive WATS 4510, Aquatic Ecology Practicum, which became dormant with Dr. Wurtsbaugh’s retirement. This course will feature aquatic chemistry and ecology field and lab techniques and will be taught by Dr. Brothers and Dr. Brahney. This course will be required for FAAS majors and will be strongly recommended for MRAE majors in the water quality area of emphasis.

Programmatic change was determined to be inappropriate for MRAE majors because fundamental techniques (e.g. river discharge measurement) were already covered in required classes and because additional techniques were not considered essential across the range of all areas of emphasis in the MRAE major.

2. Courses

WATS 3910 Climatology & Hydrology for Western Watersheds: Dr. Jin will offer this NEW class, which is similar to one he taught when his appointment was split with the Dept. of Plant, Soils, and Climate. The course will have applications geared to WATS students and will be required for MRAE majors.

Capstone I & II: Management and Restoration of Aquatic Ecosystems: A two semester course will be presented for the first time AY 2017-2018. The fall semester will cover professional
topics and an introduction to the design projects. The spring semester will focus on the design project. Existing courses used to provide capstone experience are either no longer offered or not specifically directed to providing a capstone experience.

3. Program Assessment

The faculty reviewed Learning Objectives for MRAE and FAAS. The linkages between objectives and courses required for the major were updated. The current version of *Courses used for assessing learning objectives* is posted on the WATS Assessment web page.

The faculty agreed that a minor in Wildlife Ecology and Management should be developed in the Dept. of Wildland Resources. There is already a minor in Fish Ecology offered by WATS. The strategy behind this is that students interested in both fisheries and wildlife would then have the option of majoring in either WILD or WATS, and more students might find the FAAS major appealing if they were able to also minor in Wildlife.

Submitted by

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