**ALL UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE**
**May 8, 2025**
**2:30 - 4:30 PM**
**Miller Oval**

**Present**: Patricia Arend, Franca Barricelli, Michael Burns, Josh Cronin, Laura Garofoli, Mathangi Krishnamurthy, Patricia Marshall, Tim St. John, Peter Staab, Kisha Tracy, Paul Weizer, Mark Williams

**Absent**: Aline Salles

1. **Call to Order**
   Co-chair Weizer called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

2. **Minutes**:
   Motion: Peter Staab, to accept the following draft and approved minutes from the AUC standing committees
   Second: Kisha Tracy

   Drafts: Curriculum, May 1, 2025 and Student Affairs, May 6, 2025
   Approved: Student Affairs, April 1, 2025; Policy, April 10, 2025; and Curriculum, April 10, 2025

   Vote: 11/0/0

   Motion: Peter Staab, to approve the of minutes the May 1, 2025 AUC meeting.
   Second: Kisha Tracy

   Vote: 11/0/0

3. **Proposals to Recommend for Approval**
   a. <u>**AUC #109** Art of Video Game Music</u>
      Motion: Kisha Tracy
      Second: Josh Cronin

      **Discussion**: Jane Fiske noted that this course examining how classical music is used in video games has been offered successfully as a topics course, and the department now wishes to add it to the catalog.

      Vote: 11/0/0

   b. <u>**AUC #89** Add Minimum Grade Requirement for Students in Early, Childhood Elementary, and Special Education Licensure Programs</u>
      Motion: Peter Staab
      Second: Josh Cronin

      **Discussion**: Dustin Halterman and Kimberly Bennett presented this proposal seeking to set a GPA requirement of 2.0 for all Elementary, Early Childhood, and Special Education (moderate and severe) programs, in an effort to ensure educator quality and align departmental practice with similar policies at other Massachusetts public universities.

      The co-chair noted two questions asked of this proposal at the Student Affairs sub-committee meeting:

1. Whether students are removed from the major if their GPA remains below 2.0 after retaking a course. The presenters confirmed an answer of "no."
2. Whether students are allowed to retake a course more than once. The presenters affirmed an answer of "yes."

The co-chair also noted the friendly amendment recommended by the Curriculum sub-committee to remove the last sentence in #24 as confusing: "If a grade lower than a 2.0 is earned in a Major-required EDUC/SPED course, then it can still be allotted toward credits earned and general education requirements."

A friendly amendment was made by the AUC to clarify that "students won't receive credits toward the university 120 requirement when taking the course a second time."

Vote, with the responses to questions #1 and 2 and the friendly amendments: 12/0/0

c. **AUC #90** Change to the Educational Studies Major
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Josh Cronin

**Discussion**: In presenting the proposal, Denise Sargent noted that when the Educational Studies major was created, a basic methods course was created but never offered. At this time, the department wishes to remove that course, EDUC 3014 (Instructional Strategies across Environments), and replace it with SPED 3150 (Science and Social Studies for Diverse Learners).

Dr. Sargent accepted a friendly amendment to delete EDUC 3014 (Instructional Strategies across Environments) from the catalog.

Vote, with the friendly amendment: 12/0/0

d. **AUC #91** Remove EDUC 2009 Art and Science of Education and EDUC 3035 Arts Integration from the Early Childhood Education Major
Motion: Peter Staab
Second: Kisha Tracy

**Discussion**: Karen DeAngelis presented the proposal, noting that the department wishes to remove the two indicated courses as requirements of SPED programs, given the NECHE request that departments create more space for electives for students. In evaluating their curriculum, Education faculty identified these two courses that are not aligned with licensure requirements. She confirmed that EDUC 2009 and EDUC 3035 will still be available for students to take as electives.

Vote: 12/0/0

e. **AUC #92** Remove EDUC 2009 Art and Science of Education and EDUC 3035 Arts Integration from the Elementary Education Major
Motion: Kisha Tracy moved to bundle AUC #92, #93, and #94
Second: Peter Staab

f. **AUC #93** Remove EDUC 2009 Art and Science of Education and EDUC 3036 Arts Integration from the Moderate Disabilities (PreK-8) Major

g. **AUC #94** Remove EDUC 2009 Art and Science of Education and EDUC 3036 Arts Integration from the Severe Disabilities Major

Vote: 12/0/0

h. **AUC #87** Honors Seminar in Scientific Inquiry

Motion: Kisha Tracy

Second: Peter Staab

**Discussion**: Emma Downs explained the goal of creating this course, to add a science option that is aligned with the General Education Honors seminars in other disciplines. The focus of the seminar will change with the instructor teaching the course.

Vote: 12/0/0

Motion by Kisha Tracy to consider the PL designation

Second by Mark Williams

**Discussion:** Dr. Tracy noted that the syllabus contains no course outcome related to PL, indicating that the General Education designations are supposed to be demonstrated through course outcomes or assessments related to them. After discussion, the committee suggested that the presenters use this feedback to consider revisions to the syllabus.

Vote: 9/1/2

Peter Staab moved to consider the SI designation

Second by Kisha Tracy

Vote: 12/0/0

i. **AUC #84** IDIS 1250 as IDIS Elective

Motion: Kisha Tracy

Second: Josh Cronin

**Discussion**: Jessica Robey spoke to the proposal, noting the course's design as an inter-disciplinary and introductory examination of Sustainability Studies. The department wishes to make the course available as an elective option for IDIS majors.

j. The proposer accepted a friendly amendment by the committee to add the following clarification to #2: Brief Proposal Summary: "Add IDIS 1250 Introduction to Sustainability Studies to IDIS Electives needed to satisfy the IDIS BA and BS Major."

k. Vote: 12/0/0

j. **AUC #85** IDIS 2215 for IDIS Elective

Motion: Kisha Tracy

Second: Josh Cronin

**Discussion**: Jessica Robey presented the subject matter of this course as a multi-disciplinary cultural history of nature: how we construct the idea of nature and define our relationship to it.

The proposer accepted a friendly amendment by the committee to add the following clarification to #2: Brief Proposal Summary: "Add IDIS 2215 to IDIS Electives needed to satisfy the IDIS **BA and BS** Major."

Vote: 12/0/0

k. **AUC #86** ART 3700 for IDIS Elective
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Josh Cronin

**Discussion**: Jessica Robey described this course on women, art, and society as seeking to fuse gender studies, art history, and social history.

The proposer accepted a friendly amendment by the committee to add the following clarification to #2: Brief Proposal Summary: "Add ART 3700 to IDIS Electives needed to satisfy the IDIS **BA and BS** Major."

Vote: 12/0/0

l. **AUC #111** New Course: Eat, Speak, and Learn Italian
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Peter Staab

**Discussion**: Rala Diakité spoke to the proposal, indicating that the course has been offered both abroad and on campus as a Topics course that blends Italian language with food studies.

Vote: 12/0/0

Kisha Tracy moved to consider the General Education attribute DP
Second: Josh Cronin

**Discussion**: Peter Staab noted that the old LA&S designations are no longer necessary and so proposed a friendly amendment to strike them from #2 on the proposal.

Vote, with the friendly amendment: 12/0/0

m. **AUC #114** MAJ Requests for the Department of Nursing
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Josh Cronin

**Discussion**: In speaking to the proposal, Deborah Benes noted that the department over-looked three courses in the LPN to BS (NURL) Major when it submitted the NURL major designation request in 2022. It now seeks to add the following General Education attributes to the following courses in the NURL program:

- AIA for NURS 3710 (Evidence Based Practice in Nursing)
- CV for NURS 4400 (Community Health Nursing)
- IHIP for NURS 4800 (Selected Nursing Practicum)

The department also requests the major designation requirements be retroactive for all students entering the LPN to BS in Nursing track starting in 2022.

Kisha Tracy requested that courses with the MAJ attribute be listed on departmental four-year plans. A discussion ensued about whether or not MAJ attributes should be listed in the catalogue, with committee members agreeing that some clarification on the question is warranted.

Vote: 12/0/0

n. **AUC #98** Creation of Social Research Methods (SOC 3XXX) course
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Josh Cronin

**Discussion:** Patricia Arend presented AUC #98, as the proposer, Min Li, had not yet arrived. Whereas the department had divided their basic research skills course into two separate classes on quantitative and qualitative research methods years ago, they now wish to recombine the two classes into Social Research Methods, which will become a required course.

Two friendly amendments emerged:
1. Change pre-requisite from MATH 1700 to either MATH 1100, 1700, or 1800
2. Shorten the course description so that it does not exceed 50 words.

Vote: 11/1/0

**Discussion:** Upon the arrival of Dr. Li, the committee considered the proposed General Education attributes, including AIA and IHIP. The IHIP request is based on the presentation of the course as being writing intensive and including student/faculty collaborative research. After some discussion, the proposer agreed to un-check and remove #14: Student/Faculty Research from the proposal as a friendly amendment.

Motion: Peter Staab, to approve AIA
Second: Josh Cronin

Vote: 11/0/1

Motion: Peter Staab, to approve IHIP with the friendly amendment
Second: Josh Cronin

Vote: 12/0/0

o. **AUC #99** Designation of Social Research Methods (SOC 3XXX) as a core required course
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Peter Staab

**Discussion:** Co-chair Garofoli noted that the proposer consulted with Psychological Science, which allows the Research Methods courses from the Behavioral Sciences Department to count for Psychological Sciences.

Vote: 12/0/0

p. **AUC #115** Designation of Social Research Methods (SOC 3XXX) as a MAJ course
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Peter Staab

Vote: 12/0/0

q. **AUC #112** New Course: Tropical Ecology in Latin America (BIOL 2006)
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Peter Staab

**Discussion**: Chris Picone presented the proposal. Having run twice as Topics courses, the department now seeks to add it to the catalog in time to offer it again in Spring 2026.

Vote: 12/0/0

The proposer is seeking AIA, SI, and PL for the course (it will automatically receive IHIP as a study-abroad course). One committee member noted that PLT in #2 should read, simply, PL.

Dr. Tracy raised a similar observation to that noted for AUC #87, that the syllabus lacks learning outcomes and assessments that relate to PL. Dr. Picone responded that the scientific process is inherently procedural and logical. Franca Barricelli inquired whether the question itself raises a question about the General Education attributes: if science courses are inherently both SI and PL, what is the distinction between the attributes?

Vote on PL: 8/3/1
Vote on AIA and SI: 12/0/0

r. **AUC #116** Make Changes to BIOL 1700: add designations, change course catalog
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Josh Cronin

**Discussion:** In presenting this proposal, Daniel Welch noted that the department wishes to restore this course, Human Biology, to rotation to give students an opportunity to learn about the human body. The proposal has three goals: 1) to add a "LAB" designation; 2) the change the course catalog to make it a 3-credit, 4-hour class (it is currently a 3-credit, 3-hour class), and 3) to add the SI General Education designation.

One committee member asked hypothetically whether students in BIOL 1200 and 1300 (Anatomy and Physiology I and II) could be red-carded into this class get credit for both. The proposer confirmed that the answer is "No."

Vote: 12/0/0

s. **AUC #117** Revisions to the International Business and Economics Concentration Curriculum
Motion: Peter Staab
Second: Josh Cronin

**Discussion:** Adem Elveren presented the proposal's tripartite aim:

1. To replace business calculus (MATH 2200) with precalculus (MATH 1300);
2. To increase General Education options for the major by adding seven different English Studies literature courses;
3. To make minor changes to the language to reflect the expanded General Education options and remove typological errors in the catalog.

Vote: 12/0/0

t. **AUC #110** New Course: Introduction to Education (5-12) – Middle and Secondary Minor
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Josh Cronin

**Discussion:** Katy Covino and Nermin Bayazit presented the proposal for a new course, prompted by the BHE recommendation to streamline statewide Middle/Secondary Math licensure programs. The goal is to have at least one General Education course on every campus that can be seamlessly transferred. This is that course.

Vote: 12/0/0

u. **AUC #103** Change in Middle and Secondary Education Minor – Course Replacement
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Peter Staab

**Discussion:** Katy Covino and Nermin Bayazit explained that this existing introductory course is part of the Middle/Secondary Education minor. This proposal seeks to replace the existing requirement (MATH/BIOL/CHEM/HIST/ENGT/SCI 1860 and ENGL 1400) with a new Education course, EDUC 1XXX AUC Proposal ###, with the updated catalog descriptions.

Vote: 12/0/0

v. **AUC #82** Commencement Policy
Motion: Kisha Tracy
Second: Peter Staab

**Discussion**: Barbara Cormier presented the new policy proposal, which seeks to create a written statement of current practice and also add to our existing policy on how undergraduate students are eligible to walk at commencement. Currently, students may walk in the graduation ceremony provided they have no more than two remaining courses (8 credits), one outstanding internship (12 credits), or practicum and seminar (in Education, up to 15 credits), while otherwise meeting all graduation requirements. Though this is our practice, the policy up to now has not been written anywhere. New to the policy, this proposal seeks to cap the length of time a student can petition to walk again to two years.

Barbara noted two friendly amendments from the Policy Committee, which added "Undergraduate students" to the policy as it will appear in the catalog and changed the word "walk" to "participate" in the same catalog description of the policy.

To these, AUC added a third friendly amendment in #24: add the word "single," so that the sentence reads: "Fitchburg State hosts a single annual commencement ceremony at the end of the spring semester."

Vote on the motion, as amended at APC and AUC: 11/1/0

w. **AUC #100** Academic Standing Policy

**Discussion**: Barbara Cormier presented the proposal as an update to current academic standing policies to align written guidelines with practice. The proposal also seeks to introduce clearer procedures for academic recognition by formally introducing "Deferred Suspension" and GPA re-evaluation to increase transparency for students.

The proposed changes clarify the academic standing policy by introducing formal definitions for Probation 1 and Probation 2, which previously did not appear in the catalog. New language related to Deferred Suspension allows students an additional semester to improve their grades if they are improving but have not quite reached 2.0. The proposal will reserve Deferred Suspension only for those students coming off of Probation 2.

Friendly amendment: remove eligibility of first-semester freshmen for Deferred Suspension and instead require a GPA of 1.0 to progress to Probation 2.

Some committee members expressed gratitude for the effort to clarify policy; however, they found the current proposal still to be confusing. Others found the removal of certain elements to be a marked improvement. One member reported on the effort to identify alternative words to "probation" because of its negative connotation; Barbara responded with student feedback she received on this question: she agreed about the use of the term for the first semester probation, but not the second semester, when the urgency seemed warranted even to students. She felt that the conversation is bigger than this particular proposal at this time and proposed a conversation on the topic as better suited for discussion next year.

Barbara indicated that she will forward the final policy to AUC.

Vote: 11/0/1

x. AUC **#102** Proposal to Implement Two Undergraduate Course Tags Denoting Course

Motion: Peter Staab
Second: Mark Williams

**Discussion**: This proposal introduces two course tags "No$" for no-cost materials and "Low$" for materials costing $50 or less, to help students identify affordable course options during registration. These tags will appear in Banner and be searchable by students to promote transparency and encourage the use of low-cost or open educational resources.

[Co-chair Garofoli continued note-taking…]

Kisha - there is no law or mandate that has been passed, but it has been a strong recommendation from the DHE; clarifying information that was presented at APC; all community colleges have done this, we are in the first third of the state Universities to do this (Salem State just passed it last week); this is not about the quality or efficacy of OER; our own strategic plan says we are supporting OER and OER is included in the metrics to measure the strategic plan; the conversation should be 90% about the value of student transparency, 10% about how we are saying we are going to implement and track usage (tracking falls on Connie, but bc it's not transparent, it's a huge undertaking for her)

Paul - reminder that we are in receipt of the memo from Lena Ficco

Denise Simion - the committee received this about two years ago via memo from DHE to all state institutions; went back to our mission to figure out what it means for us and considered student transparency; does require faculty to use OER; low cost is any materials that are below $50 (determined by lowest cost at the bookstore bc financial aid and veteran students have vouchers to use bookstore); tags would go into College Scheduler and be tagged at the section level only

Josh - appreciates the transparency and is concerned about book costs, but also concerned about how the tags will impact student registration in courses

Denise Simion - surveys say day and time is most important to students

Kisha - cost of books has been on the lower end of the student survey data; the committee is concerned about the students for whom the cost of books is a problem

Tim -110 emergency funding requests this year (double from last year) and 25% were from book costs

Pat M. - historical context: this started in 2018 because of a resolution that students put on the floor at a DHE meeting; this is a key performance indicator (KPI) and performance measurement reporting system (PMRS) regarding affordability that the state collects data about from all of the state institutions; this is related to student success; wider picture at state level about Fitchburg State and how we are perceived; would be a seamless transition for community college students, who already have this info available to them

Patricia - how does this add anything more when we already have the books on the seats list? Why don't we add the cost of books to tuition so that it's a part of the bill and not a surprise as to what books cost?

Mark - has written a course curriculum bc students were complaining about the cost of books in one class; in others, he buys a couple of copies of the book to put on reserve at the library; concerned about the idea that dollar signs will be in the tags, worried that it will track low income students into areas of study based on cost instead of interest/skill

Michael - the potential outcomes for individual students far outweighs any of the pitfalls identified thus far because it helps to make education more feasible for all students

Mathangi - We negotiate prices for the online textbooks with the publisher, but then the bookstore raises prices at least 25% over that negotiated price, which hurts students who are tied to the bookstore

Kisha - agrees with every statement, but this does help students in a lot of respects; the reality is that syllabi aren't available until the first day of class, so if books are required but not in the bookstore list, students can be blindsided; about half of faculty don't use the bookstore; layers of how to find information is hard for students; 90% of our students get financial aid, about, 40% get full financial aid; they get up to $500 in book vouchers, and what they don't use in book vouchers they get in reimbursement; would accept as a friendly amendment to change the tags so there are no dollar signs

Paul - concerned that this will have an impact on enrollments and will then have an impact on what faculty adopt, thus impacting the quality of education (has had this experience in attempting to adopt an OER text); if students can sort courses by these tags, faculty without the tags will lose students, which will force faculty to change their materials, impacting academic quality

Josh - this proposal isn't impacting cost at all; all professors should be required to put books into the bookstore list so students know

Patricia - these are just labels, not cost; discipline matters - there simply aren't  OER

materials available for all disciplines or courses; sometimes books aren't available in the list because some faculty let students vote on books

Michael - there is data; falcon bazaar swipes have doubled, care referrals have doubled, clothing closet is getting picked clean; students would look at this as more information for decision making; sets a deeper precedent in stone of having professors continually look at costs

Denise - proposal is only about tagging - we do need to provide numbers to the state, and those are being done manually right now

[Floor was opened to guests/audience]

Kate Jewell - we have a new bookstore coming in, so we shouldn't be making a new policy when there is a shift in provider; feels this is intrusive into workload and insulted by message that she's not doing her job by not using OER, feels surveilled, and that the push for creating course materials for free feels like devaluing scholarship; plenty of ways we can send message of care without intruding into courses

Denise - federal law requires that students know the cost of books before registering

Pat M.: KPIs and  PMRS  are on the DHE website

Lena Ficco - Connie doesn't HAVE to do this - it's still voluntary bc it's not a mandate; lab and studio fees aren't required to be listed, but those are just as important/challenging for students

Rala Diakite - OER isn't a logical extension of the federal law; faculty should be able to make our own choices, at Salem State faculty fill out a  form but are allowed to check off that they  don't want to respond to the question of book costs; vouchers are not a good use of financial aid because the bookstore charges far more

Aruna Krishnamurthy - this is a money problem that needs to be solved by a money solution; concerned about courses with gen ed designations being selected by cost and not the value of the course; feels like it's taking agency away from the students, tagging sends the wrong message; unintended consequences down the line

Jackie Kremer- student survey results: 2022 Fitchburg State students, 51% said they choose by courses required for major/minor, 35% by topic, professor, time/day, modality, so 86% choose a course that has nothing to do with cost; for 14%, cost is the primary reason they choose a course; Fall 2024  Fitchburg State students - opt for a course if it is required and fits their schedule, other factors are day/time, faculty, modality, then cost

Linda LeBlanc - can't we collect this data by having tags hidden from students? Faculty issue with not putting books in the seats list is most likely related to adjuncts not knowing if they are teaching until two weeks before the start of the semester

Connie - committee will create documents about what the tags mean and why not all classes can be no or low cost

Josh - are students on full aid less likely to look for classes based on cost?
Kisha - no. It's about students who don't have the resources (usually indicated by financial

aid). The committee knows everyone is doing what they can to reduce costs. The proposal is not perfect and won't solve all the problems, but the hope is that it will spur us on to do more. We are already doing this, but this will just make it more transparent.

Barbara Cormier - for the 14%, if our sister institutions are doing this and we aren't, students will shop around and not come here; lab fees need to be transparent as well

Audrey - how does this make things more transparent? Not all costs are in the seats list and students will be shocked. The proposal adds problems.

Michael - this would be a huge victory for students who need it most

Paul - There's no way for students to balance cost gain with loss of academic quality. We can't quantify the cost of students having a subpar education. Our focus needs to be on what is best educationally, not about cost. Most community college peers are including book costs in tuition.

Pat M. - assumption that OER is inferior is a problematic starting point; Pat trusts the faculty to select the best materials.

Kisha - trusts the faculty to provide quality education and not to make decisions by pressure of cost; adding book costs into tuition is problematic because students may pay for books that they would not actually pay for otherwise

Mark - **Friendly amendment to change  tags to NC for no cost and LC for low cost, instead of the tags with the $ symbol. VOTE on the amendment, 10-0-1.**

Jason Smith - much of conversation has been about solving the problem of costs for students, but this proposal does not address that - it's about transparency and equity; it just gives a searchable piece for students like being able to search for faculty.

Lena Ficco- biggest concern is that it will create problems, and it will take pressure off of the university to address bookstore gouging.

**VOTE on AUC 102 as amended 5 - 5 - 1. Motion fails.**

y. **RNR Proposals for Consideration (all related to AUC #110)**
   Motion: Kisha Tracy, to bundle the following six proposals:
   - AUC #104 Removing MATH 1860 from the catalog
   - AUC #106 Removing BIOL 1860 from the catalog
   - AUC #107 Removing SCI 1860 from the catalog
   - AUC #108 Removing CHEM 1860 from the catalog
   - AUC #118 Removing ENGT 1860 from the catalog
   - AUC #119 Removing HIST 1860 from the catalog
   Second: Peter Staab

   Vote: 12/0/0

z. Items from the Floor

aa. Adjournment