The meeting began at 8:01 a.m.

The Chair welcomed the Committee.

The following items remained on the Consent Agenda and were unanimously approved.

Consent Agenda:

1. College of Aeronautics
   a. CRC – AVM 3303 – Transportation Logistics

2. College of Engineering

3. Department of Chemical Engineering
   a. CRC – CHE 3103 – Heat Transfer Processes
   b. CRC – CHE 3104 – Mass Transfer Processes

4. Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
   a. CRC – ECE 3240 – Junior Design
   b. CRC – ECE 4991 – Electric and Electronic Circuits

5. School of Arts and Communication
   a. ANM – Minor in Philosophy
   b. ANC – HUM 2211 – British Literature and Culture
   c. ANC – HUM 3420 – International Law & Politics

Consent Agenda Discussion Items:

The following item was discussed and unanimously approved.

1. College of Aeronautics
   b. ANC – AVM 4202 – Airport Terminal Development (SI)

There was a question about the Committee’s process in handling Scholarly Inquiry (SI) requests. It seemed that, in the past, more attention was paid to such requests, but now the reviews seemed almost pro forma. In fact, a signature is not even required on the documentation. The Chair responded that, when the Committee was asked to review such requests, it was determined that when a new course is brought before the Committee that will be used for the SI requirement, the Committee must approve not only the course syllabus and related details common to all courses brought before the Committee, but also the details of the justification for the SI (or “Q”) designation. If the Committee does not deem the details of the SI request to be sufficient, the addition of the new course is not approved. In that way, the Committee shows its approval or rejection of the SI request. Similarly, if a request to add the SI designation to an existing course is brought before the Committee, the Committee can approve or reject the request based upon its review of the supporting documentation. If the Committee rejects the request, the course does not receive the SI designation. It was suggested, in the interest of clarification, that a signature block for the UGCC Chair be
added to the SI request documentation. Liz Fox (Director of Catalog) indicated that this is possible and would forward proposed changes to the form to the Chair.

As there was no objection to the submitted material in this instance, the course and the SI request were unanimously approved.

The following items were discussed and unanimously approved.

2. College of Business
   a. CRC – BUS 4701 – International Business
   b. CRC – BUS 4702 – Business Strategy and Policy
   c. CRC – BUS 4788 – Business Plan Research

A question was asked as to whether the exception being requested was intended only for the Logistics Management program, or if the Department of Extended Studies was okay with all students within the department taking these courses. In response, it was stated that it is okay for all students within the department to take these courses. In fact, it was asked what would need to be done to include the department within the College of Business within BANNER, because there are several more such courses that have or will have restrictions for only students within the College of Business but BANNER will not automatically recognize those students within the Department of Extended Studies (which is within the College of Business), necessitating a similar exception as being requested on the three courses before the Committee today. In response, it was stated that such a change would require new major codes and classifications within BANNER which is not a trivial matter, and this is why such changes have not been made before. Given the complexities of getting BANNER to recognize that the Department of Extended Studies is, in fact, within the College of Business, it was decided that adding the exceptions to each course would be, at least for the time being, the easiest approach.

The following items were discussed and unanimously approved.

5. School of Arts and Communication
   c. ANC – HUM 2490 – Introduction to International Politics
   d. ANC – HUM 3410 – Geopolitics and World Geography

There was a concern as to the appropriateness of a syllabus explicitly listing classroom policies such as “no talking or whispering,” “no sleeping,” and “no reading of books or materials from other courses,” and listing negative consequences for doing so. It was felt that this could be insulting to the students, and it should be implicitly understood that such activities are inappropriate in the classroom. While many agreed that this is probably not the best approach, no one could point to any policy that prevented an instructor from listing such classroom rules and consequences for breaking them. It was noted that the instructor who teaches these courses was not present and thus could not provide comment, but that the instructor will be made aware that this discussion took place and of the concern expressed by the Committee.

Chair’s Note: After the meeting, Ms. Fox emailed the Chair to point out that the Student Handbook does have a policy on “disruptive behavior” and that it permits instructors to enforce classroom rules that he or she deems appropriate, but that final adjudication of such rules is left to the Dean of Students and not the academic dean nor the department head.
Discussion Items:

1. Modification of the University Core Curriculum – Dr. Archambault

The Chair summarized the discussion from the previous meeting, noting that the Committee agreed to use the existing core outcomes as a starting point rather than starting from scratch, that the outcomes related to communications, humanities, and the social sciences would be the ones to focus on (at this time) for wording changes, that the School of Arts and Communication (SAC) would propose courses it envisions in a new general education core, and that the Committee agreed by vote to keep the size of the core at its current level.

The Chair asked Dr. Rosiene (SAC) to present the humanities proposal he had distributed to the Committee (and which is attached to these minutes). Before doing so, Dr. Rosiene commented that he discussed the possibility of including oral communication into the core outcomes, and believed that, in light of the Committee’s previous vote to retain the same number of credit hours in the core, the school would prefer not to including that element. He noted that faculty who teach COM 1101 (Composition and Rhetoric), COM 1102 (Writing about Literature), and COM 2223 (Scientific and Technical Communication) did not believe that sufficient assessable material related to oral communication could be included into these courses, given other course requirements. Dr. Rosiene suggested that any program that wishes to include more oral communication could do so at the program level. It was asked whether, for those programs that may wish to include oral communication, would SAC be willing to teach COM 2370 (Speech) more often, to which the response was “yes,” though SAC is considering renumbering the course to the 1000-level, comparable to other institutions with a similar course.

Dr. Rosiene yielded the floor to Dr. Perdigao (SAC) to discuss the humanities proposal as she was instrumental in developing it. Dr. Perdigao fully summarized the proposal, including the background for how and why the Civilization sequence (HUM 2051 and HUM 2052) was designed, justification for the elements of the proposal, and how the proposed changes would benefit the students and the university.

One of the proposed changes would be to require the “third” humanities course (a humanities elective in many programs) be at the 3000 or higher level. The proposal noted that prior to 2011, most of the 2000-level humanities courses were restricted to the Civilization courses, and that several 3000-level courses were dropped to the 2000-level. It was asked if that meant that SAC would be seeking to renumber those courses back to the 3000-level, to which the response was “no,” that many of them needed to stay at the 2000-level to accommodate the proposed new course sequences, but that the department offered several courses at the 3000-level. It was further asked whether a 3000-level course can be mandated for the general education core considering that the core is supposed to be those courses completed within the first 60 credits which are only generally considered to be courses at the 2000-level or below. There was also a concern that a transfer student coming to the university with an Associate degree would be deemed to have satisfied all core requirements, but such a student likely would not have taken a 3000-level course. Similarly, there was a concern that students transferring HUM 1xxx or 2xxx courses could not use that credit. It was noted that other institutions often include an upper-division humanities course in their cores, and if the concern were strong enough, perhaps the 3000-level course could be made part of the University core, which is broader than the general education core.

Another comment was made about the SACS-COC requirements, which state that, at a minimum, an institution’s general education core require only 3 credit hours of humanities/fine arts, 3 credit hours of
social/behavioral sciences, and 3 credit hours of natural sciences/mathematics. It also states that the core should ensure breadth of knowledge, and the concern is that the proposed new sequences seem to be too narrowly tailored. A comment was made about the “introduction/reinforcement/mastery” phrase (described by SACS-COC) as one justification for the proposed sequences, and it was asked where in the SACS-COC documentation this was shown to be required and how it could be reconciled with the minimum credit hour requirements listed above, to which the response was that it wasn’t so much a requirement on the core as much as it is language related to assessing the outcomes, and the SACS-COC documentation could be forwarded. In response to the perception that the sequences are narrowly tailored, it was noted that the sequences provide the breadth of coverage of a topic (history, literature, etc.) by requiring the students to complete the sequence, though some thought this was better described as “depth” rather than “breadth.”

There were also questions about why only the proposed sequences could satisfy the requirements of SACS-COC and the core outcomes. For example, why couldn’t a sequence covering European history be equally effective as the proposed American history sequence? The response was that the proposed sequences were designed to reflect the courses and sequences that are currently available at Florida Tech. This led to questions about transfer students who might come to Florida Tech with credit for sequences on comparable but different topics (European vs. American history, for example). Part of the purpose of reviewing the core is to help allow transfer students to use more of their transfer credit. The point was well-taken, but one of the concerns voiced by SAC is that if the core were opened to many other courses (or even just similar sequences), students and advisors may try to cobble together a “sequence” from other courses offered by SAC that are not intended to satisfy the core, with the argument that if European history (for example) is an acceptable substitute for American history, why is not a “sequence” in French history? There was also a concern that if too many humanities courses were permitted, assessment becomes very difficult because all the courses would then have to be assessed, to which it was asked why that is not a problem with the social sciences, natural sciences, or math courses, no sequence of which is prescribed at the core level (only at the program level in most programs). It was suggested that, if the concern is that any language the Committee may recommended might be too broad or ambiguous, then the Committee will keep that in mind and write very specific requirements once a consensus for the requirements was obtained.

The discussion had circled back around to pros and cons of requiring named courses or sequences in the humanities. There was some disagreement as to whether students would get the desired humanities education only by taking a sequence, as opposed to permitting the students to take courses in different humanities-subject areas.

Because it was well after the meeting’s allotted time, the Chair suggested that the representatives take the proposal back to their respective departments and colleges to get their perspectives, and the discussion could be picked up again at the next meeting.

The Chair noted the time of the next meeting, and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and holiday season.

Our next regular meeting is Fri., Jan. 27 at 8:00 a.m. in the Physical Sciences Bldg. conference room (OPS 202). Agenda items are due Fri., Jan. 20.
The meeting ended at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Archambault – Chair
TO: Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UGCC)  
FROM: Dr. Lisa Perdigao, Humanities Program Chair and Professor of English  
        Dr. Robert Taylor, Associate Dean, College of Psychology and Liberal Arts  
DATE: November 14, 2016  
SUBJECT: Proposal for the Modification of the General Education Core: Humanities Courses

The Humanities Program and its offerings at the Florida Institute of Technology have been shaped by the needs of the university. Our faculty members have degrees in individual disciplines (History, Literature, Philosophy, Art History, Political Science, Music, etc.) that collectively constitute the humanities. Interdisciplinarity is the core of our program at Florida Tech, and it is reflected in the core courses that establish foundations in the humanities. These core courses serve as extensions of the freshman-level writing courses and precursors to the specialized electives in individual disciplines and topics.

Historically, the Civilization sequence was designed to perform a specific function in the General Education Core and the introduction: reinforcement: mastery triad outlined by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC), Florida Tech’s regional accrediting body. HUM 2051: Civilization 1 and HUM 2052: Civilization 2 constitute a 6-credit sequence that builds upon the students’ introductory studies in COM 1101: Composition and Rhetoric and COM 1102: Writing about Literature by reinforcing reading, writing, and critical thinking and preparing the students for studies in 3000- and 4000-level Humanities electives that require mastery in reading, writing, and critical thinking. The Civilization 1 and 2 courses cover history, literature, philosophy, art history, political science, and music, providing students with core competencies and foundations for upper-level Humanities courses.

In 2011, the Humanities Program offered changes to the Gen Ed Core requirement of Civilization 2, offering alternatives in HUM 2331: American History: Pre-Columbian to Civil War Era and HUM 2332: American History: From Reconstruction to the Present, HUM 2212 and HUM 2213: British and American Literature 1 and 2, and HUM 2142: World Art History 2. Last year, Humanities faculty started discussing alternatives to HUM 2051: Civilization 1, and the current proposal reflects the substantial work that our faculty has done to reshape our contributions to the core.

HUM 2051: Civilization 1 and HUM 2052: Civilization 2 will continue to be options for satisfying 6 credits of the Gen Ed Core; however, we are proposing the addition of four sequences, each representing one of the disciplines that constitute the Humanities Program at Florida Tech (History, Literature, Philosophy, and Art History):
- American History: Pre-Columbian to Civil War Era & American History: From Reconstruction to the Present (2 courses)
- British Literature and Culture (new); British and American Literature 1 & British and American Literature 2 (any 2 of 3 courses)
- Survey of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy & Survey of Modern and Contemporary Philosophy (moved from 3000-level to 2000-level) (2 courses)
- World Art History 1: Pre-History to Early Global Awareness & World Art History 2: Early Modern to Post-Colonial (2 courses)

The sequences that we are proposing open up the core to allow students to focus on a discipline within the humanities. These courses were designed to complement the Civilization courses in the breadth and depth of coverage—as surveys—and equivalent coursework. As with the Civilization sequence, students are required to gain discipline-specific knowledge, competencies in reading and written communication, and critical-thinking skills, for which we have assessable measures. The upper-level (3000- and 4000-level) Humanities electives were designed to be the next tier (mastery level) of courses in the program. Students are able to take these electives after satisfying the prerequisite course that provides the foundation for upper-level, specialized courses, consistent with practices across disciplines at Florida Tech and other institutions. The reinforcement and mastery of reading, writing, and critical-thinking skills in the 2000-level surveys and 3000- and 4000-level Humanities electives are essential to students’ success in upper-level courses in their respective disciplines, particularly senior research projects, graduate studies, and careers.

The proposed sequences reflect the “coherent rationale” required by SACS-COC, avoiding the situation where students migrate between topics and fields, losing the foundational aspect that is reinforced in the Civilization sequence. The sequences are attractive options for both our current students and transfer students, as the courses are consistent with those offered as Gen Ed and program core courses at other universities. We plan to offer a variety of courses each semester (1 and 2 concurrently) so that students will be able to follow their program plans. If a student is not able to take the second course required in the sequence due to scheduling or if he/she realizes that the sequence is not a good fit, the student will be able to take a Civilization course to complete the sequence, as the Civilization courses offer the most comprehensive coverage to satisfy the “coherent rationale” requirement.

We believe that these options will be attractive to our students and faculty for a variety of reasons. They open up what has been perceived as an overly restrictive core, allowing students a selection of courses to take and transfer in, and, additionally, they offer students the possibility of adding one of the Humanities minors. With the approval of UGCC, we introduced a new Literature Minor last year. We hope to add a Philosophy Minor this year and are currently refining our History Minor. These sequences serve as required courses for the minors. Students pursuing Humanities minors will be able to further develop their reading, writing, and critical-
thinking skills, skills that make them attractive candidates for graduate programs and to prospective employers.

Our Humanities faculty has discussed plans for additional sequences to be added in the future. This proposed list reflects our current depth and breadth of coverage within the Humanities Program and ability to meet these needs immediately.

Finally, we propose that the remaining three-credit Humanities course be at the 3000- or 4000-level. In creating these alternatives to the Civilization courses, both in 2011 and in 2016, we dropped 3000-level Humanities courses to the 2000-level. Prior to 2011, our 2000-level courses were mostly restricted to the Civilization courses. Our concern is that without the implementation of a required 3000-level elective, students will not complete the triad by achieving the mastery level, which is a vital component of assessment as mandated by SACS-COC. If students only take 1000- and 2000-level courses, they complete core requirements that are consistent with an Associate’s degree rather than a Bachelor’s degree and do not conform to General Education programs offered at peer institutions.
Summary of Proposed Changes

Humanities (9 credit hours): 3 courses, one of which must be at the 3000- or 4000-level.* Students will be required to take two of these courses as a sequence fulfilling the SACS-COC mandate that the courses demonstrate a “coherent rationale.” The proposed sequences are the following:

- Civilization 1: Ancient through Medieval & Civilization 2: Renaissance through Modern (2 courses)
- American History: Pre-Columbian to Civil War Era & American History: From Reconstruction to the Present (2 courses)
- British Literature and Culture (new); British and American Literature 1 & British and American Literature 2 (any 2 of 3 courses)
- Survey of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy & Survey of Modern and Contemporary Philosophy (moved from 3000-level to 2000-level) (2 courses)
- World Art History 1: Pre-History to Early Global Awareness & World Art History 2: Early Modern to Post-Colonial (2 courses)

*Exception: Foreign Languages taken at the 2000-level or higher may substitute for the HUM course at the 3000- or 4000-level.