

BLAS Coordinating Committee
November 29, 2023
Meeting Notes

Attending

Rolando Diaz	Amy Gantt	Amy Mills
Maribeth Nottingham	Tim Patton	Jake Pruett
Wilma Shires	Nirmala Soundararajan	
Jeni Maple, ex officio	Susan Hodson, ex officio	

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Amy Gantt, BSLAS CC Chair.

2. **Approval of minutes:** Amy Mills motioned to approve the minutes from October 16, 2023, seconded by Nirmala Soundararajan. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. **Coordinator's Report:** Jeni Maple provided updates on efforts to development additional programmatic assessment measurements, including an exit survey for graduating students, which is currently being implemented this fall, as well as work on an alumni survey, which she hopes to implement in the next academic year. She is also developing a degree plan questionnaire/agreement to be used in advising to specifically address interdisciplinary connections and connections to career goals in degree plan. She will be meeting with professional advising staff who advise for the LAS program for input and assistance in implementation.

4. **Old Business**

- a. **Discussion regarding increasing credit hours for LAS 4991:** Jeni Maple reported an update on two topics discussed in the previous meeting regarding this proposal. In discussing the potential student impact in terms of cost, the question was raised of how many students only lack LAS 4991 at the time they declare LAS as their major. Jeni Maple spoke to Registrar Rachel Toews in an attempt to gather this data. However, there is currently no way to find this specific data. For instance, students often do not officially update their majors at the time they make the change. The Registrar could only provide data on the number of students who are only enrolled in LAS 4991 during the semester they apply for graduation. Looking at a sample of the 235 LAS graduates since Fall 2020, 21 were only enrolled in LAS 4991 their last semester. However, that also includes students who have completed numerous classes since declaring as an LAS major but happen to only take LAS 4991 in their last semester (e.g., failing or dropping the course in the previous semester). Jeni Maple noted that there are a few students in LAS 4991 this semester who are only enrolled in the course but have taken other courses since declaring as LAS majors. She also shared a document summarizing and comparing multiple examples of Capstone/Senior Seminar courses offered at SE. Rolando Diaz sent the English Capstone syllabus to add to the comparison and noted that the English course can be taken for variable credit. Jeni Maple said that option would help LAS majors who need one or two extra hours, but it would not address the programmatic and assessment issues. However, it might be a good option if the course remains a 1-hour

course. Amy Gantt asked whether the proposed increase to LAS 4991 would be to 2 or 3 hours. Jeni Maple explained that the course was originally proposed as a 3-hour course, and while she has considered 2 hours as a possible compromise, she ultimately believes the course would need to be 3 hours, particularly because it is the only course all LAS majors take. Following discussion of this point, Amy Gantt said the committee would be supportive of a change to either 2 or 3 hours and would defer to the coordinator's recommendation. She also asked if the goal is to implement the change by Fall 2024, but Jeni Maple said she believes that proposal and approval process takes time and said she expects Fall 2025 to be more realistic. She said that she plans to meet with Academic Affairs by the end of fall or early spring for clarification on the process including the timeline.

- b. **POAR Outcome #4:** Following up on previous discussions of potential changes to or deletion of program outcome #4, Jeni Maple reviewed the feedback received on the last two POARs as well as the last external review. She reported that the report received mid-to-low scores for the question relating to the number and content of the outcomes but that no specific comments were provided about the number or content of the outcomes. Instead, comments focused on the need for multiple assessments and assessments beyond the Capstone course. Jake Pruett shared his experience serving on the POAR review committee, noting that there is no "magic number" of outcomes. He said that reviewers tend to look for distinct goals and objectives and that there are multiple objectives for each goal and numerous measures of assessment. He recommended focusing on adding and diversifying assessment measurements and looking for options beyond the Capstone course and assignments. He asked about ways to document/include other courses taken that meet learning outcomes and objectives. Jeni Maple mentioned that she hoped the graduate exit and alumni surveys would help with this in the future but agreed that it would be beneficial to include other courses. She mentioned that some previous POARs had utilized general education assessment data, but reviewers had commented that those weren't really program-specific, since all students must complete those. Jake Pruett volunteered to review previous program reviews and try to help brainstorm ideas.

5. **Adjournment:** Rolando Diaz made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Wilma Shires, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:30.

Respectfully submitted by Jeni Maple