May 8, 2017

MEMO

To: Judy McDonald and Sheila Converse, Faculty Senate
From: Ana M. Rodríguez-Vivaldi, Associate Dean/ General Studies Programs Director
Re: New concentration subject: Applied Technologies

The General Studies- Physical Science (Bachelor of Science degree) has been one alternative used by a few engineering students unable to complete their degree. These students, working with a faculty advisor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, work out a program of studies where they include some of their engineering courses as one of their areas of concentration in order to complete the degree. Over the years, this has allowed a number of students to graduate on a more or less timely manner, and go on to pursue their professional lives.

During last year’s catalog revisions, we listed all the potential disciplinary areas that tend to be used for this option for official coding purposes, including the ones from engineering. However, this raised a very understandable concern in our VCEA colleagues given that they have to contend with strict accreditation issues. We discussed this at length with them, as well as our colleagues from the Registrar’s office, and have settled on an alternative that will allow students to continue using courses from VCEA as one of their areas, but brought together under a broader, more generic subject. We all agreed that the term ‘applied sciences’ would be descriptive enough to house courses in computer science, engineering or other technical disciplines, while the other disciplinary areas these students usually use (Astronomy, Chemistry, Geology, Math, Physics or Statistics) will continue to be listed individually. Housing VCEA courses under this subject will facilitate advising and coding at the Registrar’s level, and ensure the students get proper credit when they are being cleared for graduation. The area will be listed under this name in their transcript as well.

Students who are already certified into the concentrations (four at this time) will be allowed to stay in them, but moving forward we want to drop the VCEA disciplines as specific concentration areas. So, in order to move this through quickly we would like to request that this new concentration, “Applied Technologies,” be approved and that specific engineering disciplines be dropped from the catalog description, with an effective date of fall 2017.

The new description would read:

**General Studies- Physical Sciences.**

*This degree has two plans of study (Plan A or Plan B). Both require, CHEM 105 and 106, MATH 171 and 172 and PHYSICS 201 and 202. Plan A students must have a primary and secondary concentration. For the primary concentration students are required to complete minimum of 24 credits (minimum 15 credits*
at the 300-400 level) from one of the following areas: Applied Technologies (computer science, engineering or other technical disciplines), Astronomy, Chemistry, Geology, Math, Physics or Statistics, working with the academic advisor for this program in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. For the secondary concentration a minimum of 15 semester credits (including a minimum 6 at the 300-400-level), must be completed in another academic department, program or area published in the catalog. Both concentration areas require a minimum 2.0 GPA.
Plan B students must complete 39 credits (minimum of 21 credits in the 300-400 level) in three or more physical sciences with a minimum of 9 credits in each concentration area and a minimum 2.0 GPA in each concentration area.

Let me know if you have any questions, and thank you for your consideration of this request.

Cc

John Schneider, VCEA Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, VCEA
Larry Hufford, Director of SBS, Interim Director of SOA, Associate Director of General Studies-Science
Julia Pomerenk, Registrar
Becky Bitter, Senior Assistant Registrar
Suzanne Lambeth, Assistant Registrar
Gayle Anderson, Principal Assistant, Faculty Senate