Hi Richard and Prem,

I just received several Option Changes from Integrative Biology with two items of ambiguity or lack of clarity for students. For reference, I will use Proposal 93230 (pre-med option) as an example.

Item #1: In the Core Requirements, COMM 218 is listed followed by the parenthetical clause (recommended for the major communications requirement). Before being aware that they had done this consistently in all of their recent option proposal submissions, I sent back their pre-vet option requesting that they clarify whether COMM 218 was actually required for the option, or if other COMM courses were viable options with COMM 218 simply being recommended, or if COMM 218 was a strict requirement for completion of the option. After seeing this similar language on the second option proposal, I called Brock in IB for clarification. The university requires students to take COMM 111, COMM 114 or COMM 218 to complete the university Speech requirement. The Biology major requires students to take COMM 111 or COMM 218, thus recommending that BI students no take COMM 114 for their university COMM credits. I asked Brock if a student (who had selected the pre-med option and who had taken COMM 111 instead of COMM 218) could still complete the pre-med option and, while vague, he seemed to indicate that yes a student could take COMM 111 instead of COMM 218, but that the way they wanted to list COMM 218 as a requirement, but not really a requirement, and that this is ‘standard practice’. This seems very ambiguous and misleading. I would appreciate a discussion about this during the first 20 minutes of CC mtg on Friday and specifically 1) get consensus from the council on whether this is ‘standard practice’ and/or if it should be allowed to list courses as requirements when they are actually only recommendations and also to 2) get some information from the Registrar’s Office on how this would be implemented in the programming especially in the context of ‘optional options’ as in the case of the BI degree.

Item #2: In the Writing Intensive Course Selection (again using Proposal 93230 as an example), they indicate that students must select one course from the following list, then proceed to list an option where two courses are required. I indicated that IB should change the wording to clarify that students should select one of the following options for WIC requirements, rather than one course for WIC requirements. When I contacted Brock in IB about this, he indicated that students cannot take BI 415H without first taking BI 414H, however the class schedule does not indicate that BI 414H is a prerequisite for BI 415H. He also indicated that BI 414H is not designated as a WIC (which it is in the class schedule) and that only BI 415H is, thus it is a two-part course which spans two terms, in essence. The two-course series happen to be Honors courses (BI 414H and BI 415H) in these option proposal and I have reached out to the Honors college for clarification on the prerequisite status and am waiting for a response. I understand that several programs are testing out these ‘two part courses which span two terms’ for WIC courses, and I would like some guidance on how to proceed as, according to the class schedule, in the case of BI 414H and BI 415H, there is no indication that these courses must both be taken to get credit for ‘the course’ and if they are two independent courses which can be taken separately, then it is misleading to state that students must take ‘one course’ to fulfill their WIC requirement when, in fact, they must take two. I would also appreciate a discussion about this in the larger sense of, “Are these ‘two-part courses which span two terms’ a new and acceptable model?” – e.g. can/should we turn the quarter system to a semester system without changing the system? ...and, if so, how will they be coded in the system? Does a grade not get issued for the first course-part until completion of the second course-part?

I have postponed my review of the remaining IB Option Proposals until after a discussion and consensus of the council can be obtained.

Thanks, Tasha