

Forestry Advisory Committee Agenda Feb. 24th 2021

Held virtually via ZOOM

4:00 PM

In attendance:

Dr. Tim Baker, Valerie Elder, Dr. Erin Kelly, John Anderson, Jeff Jones

Excused:

- I. Introduce new faculty – Valerie Elder
 - a. Valerie grew up in Humboldt County on a cattle and timber ranch in Kneeland. She is a forestry graduate of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and earned an M.S. in Forestry from West Virginia University. She took summer courses here at CR and worked seasonally for timber companies locally and in Oregon. Before coming to College of the Redwoods she was a Professor of Practice for Oregon State University in the Forestry and Natural Resources Extension Program, serving Clatsop, Tillamook and Lincoln Counties. She is interested in cross-boundary conservation and worked for the Buckeye Conservancy a conservation focused landowner non-profit and as an associate Faculty member here at CR.
 - b. John Anderson, Jeff Jones and Erin Kelly also provided introductions.

- II. Program Updates – Tim
 - a. COVID challenges
 - i. It's been one year since the pandemic began and last year, we quickly converted courses to an online format after spring break in response to shelter-in-place orders. This Fall and Spring were able to host some courses in a hybrid format, or fully online format prioritizing lab time for valuable field skills. We have been offering mainly online lectures- synchronous Zoom or recorded videos and a mixture of face-to-face and online laboratories. We are still offering a full range of classes.

This has been a challenge for some students who prefer the field component of our courses. Some students have taken advantage of the hybrid nature of these courses attending from the far reaches of our county and areas such as Hoopa and Southern Humboldt where travel would normally hinder their participation.

At this point we are scheduling many of our fall courses for face-to-face instruction. Some courses such as our geospatial courses seem to work well in the online format and has the potential in drawing in a bigger pool of students The FNR career seminar course lecture has been converted to a podcast lecture which has enhanced the diversity and availability of guests across the sector to participate. Many challenges but also innovation has resulted from pandemic instruction.

As a result of this process, we have now certified all of our courses are certified to be in hybrid or fully online if we choose to offer them this way in the future as well. Our forestry courses will mostly return to face-to-face because of student interest.

b. Curriculum

i. Geomatics Certificate

1. Our old local certificate was retired because it was too many units to maintain as a local certificate. Our plan is to offer a new certificate a 1-year Certificate of Achievement in Geomatics.

Courses would include:

- a. Introduction to Geospatial Concepts
- b. Introduction to Geographic Information Systems
- c. Introduction to Remote Sensing
- d. Introduction to Surveying
- e. Introduction Engineering Graphic Course

Some students are taking these courses for job enhancement for example employees of Caltrans We are hoping to get this approved this semester.

ii. Change 2-year FNR Certificate into 1-yr

1. Our present Certificate of Achievement in Forest Technology is a 2-year certificate which consists of all our FNR courses and some general education courses. Currently most students who get the present certificate also get the AS degree. The Society of American Foresters Accreditation progress report recommends clarification between the Associates of Science (AS) in Forest Technology degree we offer and the Certificate of Achievement (CA). One of the issues the Accreditation committee has raised is that our program learning outcomes are not distinct enough between the CA and the A.S. This would give us the chance to make the CA a clearly distinct program with its own unique PLOs and would be useful for the students who come to us already with a degree who just want the FNR basics. And with the Geomatics certificate (assuming we get that through quickly) we'd have both sides of it covered.

Proposed coursework is designed to be completed in 1 year or 1 year and 1 semester. The idea is to create a basic field skills type of certificate so it wouldn't have any of the geospatial courses in it, nor wildlife or watershed but would have the rest of the FNR

courses and no outside English or Math. The prioritized courses would help a student succeed in their first years in the field. The course for the certificate *-though we think all the courses are valuable-* would include:

Fall

FNR 1- Intro to Forestry (3)

FNR 46- Technology and Applications in Natural Resources (1)

FNR 51 Dendrology: the Identification and Study Of Woody Plants (3)

FNR 52 Introduction to Surveying (4)

Spring

FNR 5 Forest Ecology and Management (3)

FNR 54 Introduction to Natural Resources Inventory Techniques (4)

FNR 60 Forest Health and Protection (3)

FNR 77 Introduction to Wildland Fire (2)

+ either a CE summer internship *or* FNR 10 in the second Fall. That would give us 11 units in the Fall and 12 in the Spring + 2-4 CE units in the summer of 4 units of FNR 10 in the second Fall.

We are seeking CR Forestry Advisory Committee approval to modify this certificate.

Summarized Committee Feedback on making this curriculum committee change is as follows:

Anderson- In favor. In thinking of our company our hiring managers would see these core courses as a benefit. We want to consider the accreditation concerns by SAF. I can see the need to do something like this.

Jones: In my experience as a hiring manager having these core courses pulls a lot of weight when reviewing applications. I am looking for experience in the woods when looking at applications.

Kelly: At HSU we have considered an MF in Forestry for the same reasons, and this certificate would fit a real need. For example, this could benefit someone with a science degree without an applied focus.

We can now submit curriculum documents for approving the certificate.

- c. Program Review/Plans
 - i. We go through an annual program review every year. The report was solid, and basic plans for next year include updating the curriculum for the certificate. We will be working in chainsaw safety and woods safety. We are in a holding pattern as we get through the pandemic.
- d. Enrollment – increase in past 2 years but down a bit this year
 - i. Enrollment has been affected recently by the pandemic in a few ways. We have heard some students are waiting to take courses until we return to face-to-face instruction, other students have taken advantage of the online format who normally wouldn't be able to. Our students are greatly impacted by the current socioeconomic situation- across CA they are seeing enrollment declines at both CSU's and the Community College system. Some of our courses this past year have had high enrollment with increased enrollment caps (Intro to GIS) other courses that are traditionally full had reduced enrollment caps to maintain social distancing in field labs and their enrollment is down approximately 15%. The Inventory course this Spring for example has 13 students while this course is normally 25.
 - ii. Overall, in the past 2 years our enrollment trend has been slightly up. We predict the lower enrollment is mostly pandemic related.
- e. Funding – likely a decline going into 21-22
 - i. Essentially the College receives funding based on enrollment and enrollment is down. So we project to see a decline in funding as this pandemic enrollment cycles through. The College is being proactive in this forecast and has been reorganizing at the administrative level.

Additionally, to address the budget, the College has offered a supplemental retirement program/early retirement incentive. Dr. Baker is one of the faculty they have offered this too. He really likes teaching but is considering. He will make a decision in the next month. The board would also have to approve this even if he accepts it. HSU is a resource if we need it. The advisory committee will need to advocate strongly for a replacement for Tim if he retires. We need two full-time Faculty for SAF accreditation, and would need to fill Tim's position if it becomes vacant. It took Tim 16 years to get second full-time faculty member. We will update the committee as things evolve.

- III. Accreditation Updates and Plan – Tim
 - a. We submitted the progress report last year, and the accreditation committee acknowledged we have some things to address. If we complete the process in 2021 we can complete under 2022-2023 we would be accredited under those

updated standards. The new standards have not been released but we predict this would elevate some areas and cause new challenges. We are very close to meeting the current standard.

- b. Committee Role: The committee will have to contribute to the self-study process of the accreditation process, they will meet the advisor committee.

IV. Internships and Student Recruitment – Tim

- a. We are trying to get students real life experience and connect with internships when available. Our students love the field work because it is what they want to do.
 - i. Redwood Rising , An ongoing relationship with the Park's is decreasing their available positions this year 4 Hydrology and 4 Interpretation and Outreach positions and no forestry positions.
 - ii. We are looking for more internship opportunities for students. Green Diamond and SPI have internship programs. HRC/MRC hires students seasonally for summer positions.
 - iii. Anderson- shared the Cal Poly Summer Forest Management Course (400 level) and suggested a course like that, if possible, for a lower level could be helpful for recruitment and hands-on skills. Baker- Our Timber Harvesting Course is set-up as a capstone course to prep students with the jargon and background information.
 - iv. Some temporary challenges with hybrid learning lacking the connection with students to share internship opportunities. Other challenges include economic stability of students, many works while attending school. It can be a barrier for students to get necessary field experience.

V. Meeting Adjourned: 5:03 PM