**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**

General Faculties Council
**ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE**
APPROVED MINUTES

November 6, 2023, 2:00 - 3:00 pm                         AD 167 (Governors Boardroom)

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**Voting Members**
Leslie Reid (Co-Chair)*
Amy Burns (Academic Co-Chair)
Getachew Assefa
Cari Gulbrandsen
Samantha Thrift
Leanne Wu
Amy Dambrowitz
Qiao Sun*
Sandra Amin*

**Non-Voting Members**
Christine Johns

**Regrets**
Leighton Wilks
Courtney McVie

**Secretary**
Michelle Speta

**Scribe**
Holly Lywin

**Resource Personnel/Observers**
Jaclyn Carter*
Kelly Hoglund*
Elizabeth Pando
Karen Quinn

**Guests**
Darren Bender, Professor, Department of Geography, Faculty of Arts - *attended for Item 4*
Jason Wiens, Acting Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs & Student Affairs, Faculty of Arts - *attended for Item 4*

*Attended virtually*

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The Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. and confirmed quorum.

1. **Traditional Acknowledgement and Approval of the Agenda**

Leanne Wu, Faculty of Science, provided the Traditional Land Acknowledgement.

| **Moved/Seconded** |
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| That the Agenda for the November 6, 2023 Academic Program Subcommittee meeting be approved**.** |
| **Carried** |

## 2. Remarks of the Co-Chairs

The Co-Chairs welcomed Qiao Sun to her first Academic Program Subcommittee (APS) meeting as an ex-officio member from the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS).

## 3. Approval of the October 2, 2023, Minutes

| **Moved/Seconded** |
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| That the Minutes from the October 2, 2023 Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee meeting be approved. |
| **Carried** |

## 4. Recommendation for the Creation of an Embedded Certificate in Geographic Information Science (GIS), Faculty of Arts

Documentation for this item was circulated with the Agenda. Darren Bender, Professor, Department of Geography, Faculty of Arts, and Jason Wiens, Acting Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs), Faculty of Arts presented this item.

Highlights:

- The presenters provided an overview of the proposal to create an 18-unit Embedded Certificate in Geographic Information Science (ECGIS) that consists of four 3-unit core courses and 6 units of electives and is completed concurrently with an undergraduate degree. The new certificate will fill a niche that specifically trains students in geospatial technological solutions and will signal this to employers by having the certificate recognized on transcripts. Currently offered courses will be utilized, limiting the resources required to run the program.

- In response to questions, it was explained that:

  o Under Faculty of Arts regulations, students in the Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Geography will be allowed to "double-count" up to half of the courses in the ECGIS towards their primary field requirements. Students in the BSc in Geomatics Engineering will also be able to apply ECGIS courses towards their elective course requirements.

  o The ECGIS is open to undergraduate students in other disciplines as well, although they may not have the option to apply any of the ECGIS courses for credits towards their majors

  o The entry point for the program is Geospatial Communication (GEOG 380), which is designed to help students explore concepts not typically introduced in high school science curricula

  o In terms of content, the ECGIS overlaps with the existing graduate certificate in Geographic Information Technology (GIT), which has a laddered pathway to the Master of Geographic Information Systems (MGIS) degree. A future goal is for ECGIS students to be able to "fast track" to the MGIS. However, there is currently no mechanism for students to ladder from an undergraduate credential to a graduate credential. MGIS students are currently permitted a maximum of 6 units credit at the 500-level and GIT students are not currently permitted to get credit for any undergraduate level courses.

  o Current courses could accommodate students pursuing the new certificate program, and no additional student advising support structures will be established; instead, department advisors will provide external areas with course maps and recommend students connect with them for guidance. It was acknowledged that existing Information Technology resources may need to be improved but are anticipated to expand in tandem with the program's growth.

- It was noted that within the proposal, there are courses listed from other departments that have been discontinued or are less flexible than available alternatives. Strategies to inform other departments about potential enrolment increases and engagement with the course departments could allow for alignment of learning outcomes between 200-level electives and the certificate program.

- The Indigenous stakeholders' consultation and feedback challenges were discussed. Given the importance of geospatial technologies in work involving Indigenous communities, concerns were raised regarding the limited engagement with Indigenous stakeholders that has been completed to date.

- Exposure to critical Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) concepts within the certificate program was affirmed, despite limited information about this in the proposal. Two faculty members that will be involved with the ECGIS specialize in this field, and application of these concepts was noted in particular for the 500-level courses.

- Addressing different entry points for students already in the program was highlighted, with a need for clear, explicit entry points in the Calendar entry to avoid confusion. The challenge of attracting students who are unaware of the program's offerings but are desirable candidates was also addressed, particularly in the context of promoting the program during the GEOG 380 course.

The Committee requested the following amendments:

- Considerations to provide greater emphasis and exposure of the critical concepts of EDIA

- Explanation for prior unsuccessful Indigenous consultation and how ongoing consultations will be completed

- Updated Computer Science course electives following consultation with the Faculty of Science

- Addition of plan to consult with Faculty of Graduate Studies regarding the development of a pathway to the MGIS degree

- Addition of admission requirements, as outlined in the proposal, to the Calendar entry with clarification regarding GEOG 380 being the first course of the program, not an admission requirement

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**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Program Subcommittee recommend that the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee approve the creation of an Embedded Certificate in Geographic Information Science (ECGIS), effective September 2024, as set out in the documents provided to the Committee, with the requested amendments.

**Carried**

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5. **Status of Program Approvals**

Documentation was circulated with the Agenda for information only. Questions can be directed to the Program Innovation Hub.

6. **Adjournment**

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**Moved/Seconded**

That the Academic Program Subcommittee adjourn the October 2, 2023 meeting.

**Carried**

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The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

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Courtney McVie
Secretary