

New York City College of Technology
Interdisciplinary Committee
April 29, 2014

Reneta D. Lansiquot, Founding Chair
David B. Smith, Secretary

Present: Dionne Bennett, Monica Berger (Webmaster), Gwen Cohen Brown, Candido Cabo, Justin Davis, Aida Egues, Urmi Ghosh-Dastidar, Laina Karthikeyan, Paul King, Jean E. Kubeck Hillstrom, Janet Liou-Mark, Sean P. MacDonald, Robert Leston, Laureen Park, Johannah Rodgers, Olufemi Sodeinde, Andleeb Zameer, Rebecca Shapiro (non-voting member)

Absent: Reginald A. Blake, Ezra Halleck (excused)

Chair Reneta D. Lansiquot called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM

1. Minutes from March 25, 2014 meeting were approved.
2. Reneta informed the committee that, after a meeting with the Provost and reminder emails to the Registrar and select administrations, there is still no CUNYfirst College Option designation for Interdisciplinary courses. She pointed out that this is also an issue for courses in the other two categories in the College Option, for example, Communication (formerly known as Speech) courses.

Every semester, we must keep track of all designated Interdisciplinary courses and sections numbers. For next semester, this information is available here:

<http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/ids/current-courses/fall-2014/>

3. A few IDC members expressed concern regarding the effort of faculty development of courses.

Paul volunteered to develop interdisciplinary courses development workshops that will be held in January during new faculty orientation events. This workshop will focus primarily on how to redesign existing courses to fulfill the Interdisciplinary College Option.

Does the school have any ways of reimbursing faculty for Interdisciplinary course development? Reneta pointed out that she has created two Interdisciplinary College Option courses without reimbursement and that this is service to the College. One of these courses will be co-taught with Candido and was approved by College Council today.

Provost will not agree to assigning double workload. However, there are grants used for curriculum development. These should be pursued. Summer salary may be possible.

4. Rebecca discussed the status of the updated interdisciplinary course brochure. Final suggested edits should be sent to her.

Janet suggested that the current brochure should remain aimed at faculty. However, we should make a flyer with available courses for students which also notes why interdisciplinary studies will enhance their ability to succeed in the workplace.

We should perhaps administer an interdisciplinary course survey for students.

5. We discussed the feasibility of the IDC proposing a special topics interdisciplinary course that focuses on big-picture concepts. This course would be housed in the School of Arts & Sciences.

Dionne mentioned that this type of course could be similar to the “Big Themes” courses at UCLA with a lot of instructors.

Jean pointed out that there are already some courses in other departments that have this structure. David noted this is being worked on in General Education Committee as well.

Reneta proposed that we table the discussion until after her next meeting with the Provost to see if there can be funds this summer to develop School of Arts & Sciences or College-wide Special Topics Interdisciplinary courses.

6. We discussed Reggie’s Undergraduate Research Committee Research Mixer that will be held on May 7 at 3-5 PM. IDC members will have 10-15 minutes in the program.

Monica will provide an overview of interdisciplinary studies geared towards that student audience and note existing interdisciplinary courses.

Urmi will discuss the current SENCER grant and opportunities for interdisciplinary research. A student who has successfully completed interdisciplinary courses and research studies will be recruited to briefly discuss what was gained by these experiences.

Monica will post information about the Research Mixer on our OpenLab site.

<http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/ids/>

7. Dionne proposed starting Race & Gender interdisciplinary working groups similar to those pioneered by the University of Chicago. This would be done in a way that enhances faculty productivity so that they are focused on interdisciplinary studies that can be published. This is especially important to support faculty to develop their own intellectual and scholarly work. Although interdisciplinary courses may be a product of this work, this would not be the primary goal.

Reneta pointed out that this would facilitate an interdisciplinary culture at the College.

Dionne plans to start with one interdisciplinary working group in the fall.

8. We agreed that meeting after College Council next semester may not work for everyone. David proposed meeting on Tuesdays at 12:45 PM when there is no College Council, Exec or standing committee meetings. This time seemed to work for those present.

9. Next meeting Tuesday, May 13 after College Council, at approximately 2 PM.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.