

Proposed changes to the Group I/II course classification system and implementation timeline

This proposal is presented in response to the Academic Plan aim to Achieve Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Research. Action Item 5.4 of the High Quality Undergraduate and Graduate Programs section requested that the Senate Undergraduate Studies Committee:

Review and revise the requirements of the Social Sciences and Humanities Groups 1 and 2, along with the various "Science" and "Arts" course groupings to ensure consistency in application, as well as to explore opportunities for course delivery efficiencies.

The proposal is in three parts. Part 1 outlines the structure of the review that a sub-committee of SUSC undertook to understand the current system, the issues that have arisen over time and the options for revising the system. Part 2 outlines a proposal for both campuses for a new grouping system based on discipline funding. Part 3 provides an implementation timeline for the new system based on discussions with the Registrars Office.

SUSC would like to thank the members of the sub-committee who undertook this work: Dr. Richard Maundrell, Dr. Andrew J. Dean, Dr. Nandakumar Kanavillil, Ms. Brenda Winter and Dr. Gillian Siddall. The Committee would also like to thank the representatives of the Registrars Office for their work on the implementation of the proposal: Andrea Huillery, Cathie O'Connor, Margaret Anderson and Ashley Beda.

Part 1: Review of existing system

As part of the University's academic planning process, the Senate Undergraduate Studies Committee has undertaken a review of the Group I/II course classification system, which, according to the former Registrar, has been a fixture in the LU calendar since 1964.

These groupings, and the program requirements based upon them, were intended to provide breadth to undergraduate degree programs. At its inception, the system would have applied to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, which would have constituted a substantial majority of students at the time. As the University has evolved, the reorganization of faculty divisions has limited the Group I/II system to the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities and, to a lesser extent, the Faculty of Science and Environmental Studies.

Group I Listing – Humanities (2012-13):

Computer Science

English (exceptions below)

History

Indigenous Learning

Languages

Mathematical Sciences

Music

Philosophy

Religious Studies (exceptions below)

Visual Arts

Women's Studies 1100, 2317, 2711 and 3010

(Women's Studies 1100 counts for purposes of fulfilling both Group I and Group II requirements and Women's Studies courses cross-calendared with Group I.)

The following courses do not count for purposes of fulfilling Group I requirements:

(a) English as a Second Language (ESL);

(b) English 1074, 1807, 2038;

(c) Religious Studies courses that are cross-calendared with Group II courses;

(d) Women's Studies courses that are cross-calendared with Group II courses.

Group II Listing – Social Sciences (2012-13):

Anthropology
Economics
Geography
Gerontology
Political Science
Psychology
Social Work
Sociology
Women’s Studies 1100, 3030

The following courses do not count for purposes of fulfilling Group II requirements:

- (a) Music, Visual Arts;
- (b) Religious Studies courses other than those cross-calendared with Group II courses;
- (c) Library and Information Studies with the exception of LIS 2030 and 2050
- (d) Women’s Studies courses that are cross-calendared with Group I courses.

As an exception to the above list, note the use of Indigenous Learning 2805 to fulfill the Group II requirement in concurrent Education programs with a major in Indigenous Learning.

LIS 2030 and 2050 may be used as Group II requirements.

While the original groupings would have been based largely on the division between social sciences and humanities, that classificatory boundary has been eroded over the years by the reorganization of faculty structures at Lakehead. Some academic units that would traditionally have been categorized as social science have migrated to Science or Health Sciences, and some that remain do not readily lend themselves to classification as either social science or humanities. Given the current disposition of the groupings, their continued relevance and utility is very much in question.

A further complication is the adoption by the Orillia campus of a separate system of classification using Area I, II and III. In reviewing the Group I/II system, the committee considered a number of possibilities:

1. Do away with it.
2. Retain but revise and rationalize.
3. Replace with a more general breadth requirement such as “2 FCE’s from within the Faculty and 1 FCE from any other Faculty” or “3 FCE’s outside major (or faculty).”
4. Take Orillia’s “Area” system and modify it in such a way that it replaces the Group I/II system.
5. Devise a new system of classification.

In keeping with the broad thrust of the Academic Plan to ‘*ensure consistency in application, as well as to explore opportunities for course delivery efficiencies*’, the Committee was unanimous in deciding that Lakehead was best served by a new classification system that applied across both campuses.

PART 2: A PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE

Recent discussions held within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities suggest that there continues to be support for a breadth requirement of some kind, but not necessarily the Group I/II system. What the committee proposes is the “A.J. Dean Plan” whereby each course calendared at LU would be categorized according to a generally accepted system:

Type A: Humanities (SSHRC funded disciplines)

Type B: Social Sciences (SSHRC funded disciplines)

Type C: Engineering, Mathematical and Natural Sciences (NSERC funded disciplines)

Type D: Health and Behavioral Sciences (CIHR funded disciplines)

Subject to negotiation, each faculty and/or department would be responsible for classifying its courses according to type (some courses might fit in more than one category). The Senate Academic Committee could adjudicate disputes about which courses belong where. All breadth requirements would be defined at the departmental level. Letter designations on the course calendar would make it easy for students to use the classification system and it would be straightforward enough that it would lend itself to an automated degree auditing process, thereby freeing up student counseling resources for more substantive academic/career counseling.

PART 3: IMPLEMENTATION

On October 22, 2013, a meeting was held with representatives of the Office of the Registrar to discuss the course grouping proposal and the feasibility for implementation. Specifically, the discussion included how these changes could be reflected within the student information system and then within the degree audit. It was agreed that the proposed changes could be implemented. Given the significant amount of work involved in making these changes, a potential start date of Fall 2015 for the 2015-2016 academic cycle is recommended. In order to implement this proposal, the following implementation timeline is offered:

Timing	Related Activities
November 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SUSC proposal to Deans for review • SUSC proposal to December meeting of SAC for review
January 14, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAC recommendation to Senate as Notice of Motion
February 10, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate approval of SAC recommendation
Winter 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAC directive to academic units to assign course categories for all courses belonging to that unit • SAC compiles and reviews information, settles disputes, and shares with academic units • Revise Curriculum Navigator course fields to include new course categories on all forms • Create new Course Type codes in the student information system
Spring - Fall 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Councils revise faculty Regulations regarding breadth requirements (grouping) • Academic Units make program revisions for all programs using grouping language (i.e. Group I and Group I requirements) and include transition plans (where necessary)
Fall 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of course designations for Senate approval • Add Course Type codes in the student information system (for 2015-2016 timetable preparation)
January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last Senate meeting for submission of: faculty Regulations, Additional Course designations, Program revisions

Winter 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of curriculum changes by Senate subcommittees • Senate approval of curriculum changes • Approved regulations, course designations, and program revisions are calendared, update University Regulations definitions page • Degree audit is modified for each program to reflect the changes
Fall 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new students are bound by new grouping regulations

The proposal was distributed to all Deans on the 28th of November, 2013. On the 12th November, 2013, the proposal was discussed at SAC and approved, and is now being placed on the Senate agenda for the 14th January 2014 as a Notice of Motion. It is the intention to vote on the proposal at the February 2014 Senate meeting, and if the vote is favorable, implementation will commence as outlined in the timeline.

If there are any questions, please contact either the Registrar or myself.

Dr. Wayne Melville
Chair
Senate Undergraduate Studies Committee
21 November 2013