1. Tereasa Brainerd, Associate Professor, presented the Academic Policy Committee’s recommendation for the Divisional Studies Natural Sciences laboratory requirement.

Recommendation
“The APC recommends that CAS adopt the following degree requirement for all undergraduate students: *satisfactory completion of one Natural Sciences course with a laboratory component.*”

- Brainerd provided context vis a vis introduction of the Hub and earlier suspension of the Divisional Studies Natural Sciences laboratory requirement.
- Brainerd noted that prior to suspension of the requirement, 70% of non-science majors took a lab science class at BU; the number of students enrolling in a lab science class has dropped since the suspension. The drop is statistically significant.
- Brainerd introduced the APC’s recommendation.
  i. Reinstitution of the requirement (provided above) with changes in implementation: previously, students met the requirement by enrolling in a course chosen from a ‘blessed’ list of courses that would fulfill the requirement.
  ii. Now, the requirement could be satisfied by a) enrolling in any Natural Sciences course with a lab section, or any standalone Natural Sciences lab class, or b) through other courses that the Natural Sciences Curriculum Committee deem to be lab science, or c) external credit through 1-to-1 course transfer credit or examination (e.g. AP exam).

2. Brainerd invited questions and discussion on the APC’s above recommendation.
- David Somers, Chair, Psychological & Brain Sciences, indicated support for the recommendation and then asked: where would PBS’s standalone experimental psych courses fall?— as Natural Science or Social Science?
  i. Brainerd: The Natural Sciences Curriculum Committee would weigh in.
- Stephanie Nelson, Professor, Classical Studies, indicated support for the recommendation.
- Kyna Hamil, Director and Master Lecturer, Core Curriculum, indicated support for the recommendation and then asked: Do the data show that there are fewer lab classes being offered now (since suspension of the requirement)?
  i. Brainerd: No.
- Jonathan Barnes, Chair, Linguistics, queried the distinction between Natural Sciences and Social Sciences lab classes, asking: what do Natural Sciences courses with a lab component offer uniquely that Social Sciences courses with a lab component do not?
i. Brainerd noted that the question is fair and conveyed her impression that the APC feels there is a real loss relative to what students were doing prior to the suspension of the requirement.

ii. Barnes: Are we getting at methodologies or the need for ‘wet and squishy’ things or what?

iii. Brainerd: We’re getting at the gathering of experimental data with hands-on equipment.

- Jim Johnson, Chair, History, asked if the APC had run similar comparisons of Humanities and Social Sciences students’ enrollment data using the same group of students.
  i. Brainerd: Yes.

- Kimberly Arkin, Associate Chair, Anthropology, asked why the requirement could not be met by a Social Sciences laboratory class.
  i. Arkin: Has the APC considered if reinstating the requirement makes a pathway through the Hub or through major requirements more difficult?
  ii. Brainerd: Natural Sciences students are experiencing the most difficulty completing the Hub and 96% of Natural Sciences students already take a lab class.
  iii. Brainerd: A reinstated requirement would add approximately 200 additional students per annum to Natural Sciences courses and the College can staff this increased demand.

- Stan Sclaroff, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, asked how CGS students transferring into CAS will be impacted by the requirement.
  i. Brainerd: The APC recommends CAS courses specifically to meet the requirement and there is a question about the rigor of CGS courses. It is possible that CGS students would be impacted.

- Dan Clemens, Chair, Astronomy, indicated support for the recommendation.

- Binyomin Abrams, Research Associate Professor, Chemistry, queried the sequence/process for consideration of the recommendation and asked: by considering this recommendation now, are we hedging that the Divisional Studies requirement writ large will not return? If so, CAS should aim for representation on as many Hub committees as possible to ensure that the Hub Scientific Inquiry units include ‘inquiry.’
  i. Brainerd: The APC will not recommend we reinstitute the Divisional Studies requirement as it existed in 2018, however, the APC felt so strongly about the importance of laboratory science in a liberal arts education that it decided to bring forward this recommendation first.
  ii. Abrams: Assuming that the Divisional Studies requirement does not return and that the Hub alone remains, we should be mindful of CGS students who transfer into CAS without yet having engaged with their CAS majors, as adding a CAS-specific requirement could be burdensome, and it is important to be inclusive of all good Natural Sciences courses wherever they are taught, whether CAS or CGS.

- Joe Bizup, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Academic Programs and Policies, asked if it were possible for the APC to review CGS courses and see which could potentially meet the renewed Natural Sciences laboratory requirement.
i. Brainerd: Yes, the Natural Sciences Curriculum Committee could consider.

- Joe Bizup noted that we need to articulate in detail why we are asking this requirement of students, with an eye towards Bulletin copy, and offered potential rationales, including ‘resetting the table’ to the earlier status quo of more students enrolled in laboratory science; a general sense that students need practice with the scientific method; and a philosophy that students should interact with the universe.
  
i. Bizup invited the assembled faculty to suggest additional rationales.

- Kimberly Arkin observed that in the current moment of struggling to talk to students about truth/narrative/reality, it is important for students to have the experience of potentially falsifying assumptions.
  
i. Arkin noted that the point of laboratory science is to get one’s hands dirty and to test empirical assumptions against the world—that such testing is the rationale for laboratory science.

- Arianne Chernock, Associate Dean of the Faculty, Social Sciences, noted that only one cohort of students has completed the Hub, and queried if that single population is enough to determine if the drop in laboratory science enrollments will be durable/is a trend.
  
i. Brainerd: The standard deviation in our statistical analysis shows that we have a trend, but the only way to give a categorical answer is to run this ‘experiment’ for a few more years.
  
ii. Chernock: As a faculty, we need to decide if we want to wait and see if we have a trend.
  
iii. Brainerd: To me, it is clear and unambiguous that we have a trend.

- Binyomin Abrams noted that in the first couple of years covered by the APC’s data, many courses had not yet received Hub units, and suggested that it is feasible, if not likely, that students might have overlooked lab science courses that did not yet carry Hub units.
  
i. Brainerd: We could go back and see.

- Sclaroff asked what will we see from the APC’s next report.
  
i. Brainerd: Anticipate voting on this proposal at the next faculty meeting, and then a presentation of the larger recommendation for the Divisional Studies requirement.

3. Jeffrey Hughes, Professor, Astronomy, and representative to the Faculty Council, presented on the Council’s most recent meeting.

- At the Council, David Carballo presented on the assessment of the Hub. In May, the Hub Committee assessed that Hub learning outcomes have been met. The Hub will return for a follow-up presentation to the Council in September.

- At the Council, Daniel Kleinman presented on a task force on the future of PhD education. The task force is convened and working and will address issues including: funding; dissertation structure; internships; career pathways outside of the academy; student wellness; diversity; and other issues.

- At the Council, there was a discussion of the presidential search committee.
i. In response to this comment by Hughes, Dean Sclaroff noted that he is on the presidential search committee.

4. Dean Sclaroff discussed the presidential search committee.
   • There is a call to nominate candidates.
   • Sclaroff noted that he is bound by strict confidentiality and cannot reveal who has been nominated and/or who has applied.
     i. John Straub, Professor, Chemistry, asked if the CAS faculty could offer the input that the next President should be an academic and not a businessperson.
     ii. Sclaroff noted that he considers it his job to bring forward the voice of CAS faculty and that there should be a chance soon for community input, and noted that he heard the concern.

5. Dean Sclaroff stated that faculty cannot take down posters supporting graduate student unionization.

The meeting adjorned at 4:29PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Arthur Peterson