

4 June 2014

Dear Kellee,

my comments on the two memos (one from you, one from Yan) re SOSC econ courses and ECON in between the lines of the two memos, in red, below. My comments/ this file may be shared freely.

Best,

Carsten

W: Econ and SocSci UG committees meeting

1 message

Kellee S TSAI <ktsai@ust.hk>

Wed, Feb 5, 2014 at 10:11 PM

To: "sosc-fac-list@ust.hk" <sosc-fac-list@ust.hk>

Dear Colleagues,

This is ECON's response to my summary of our meeting last month.

Best,

Kellee

From: Yan YU <yanyu@ust.hk>

Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2014 1:51 PM

To: Kellee Tsai <ktsai@ust.hk>, Albert Francis PARK <albertpark@ust.hk>

Cc: Naubahar Sharif <sosn@ust.hk>, Erik Baark <sobaark@ust.hk>, Jerry Patchell <sopatch@ust.hk>, Cameron CAMPBELL <camcam@ust.hk>, Siu LEUNG <sfleung@ust.hk>, 'Juanyi Xu' <jennyxu@ust.hk>, Josephine WONG <sojowong@ust.hk>, 'Wooyoung Lim' <wooyoung@ust.hk>

Subject: RE: Econ and SocSci UG committees meeting

Dear Kellee:

Thank you for summarizing the main points from our last meeting. I'd like to emphasize that it is based on our position that the Econ department should have the ownership of UG Econ courses,

I do not agree that ECON "owns" UG economics courses. It can own UG ECON courses, i.e., it can own economics courses offered by the ECON department, but not economics courses offered across the university by other departments.

we agreed to accommodate the teaching need of economists in Sosc. Here's our interpretation of the three main principles:

1) We welcome Sosc faculty to teach our existing Intro Micro and Intro Macro (university common core Econ courses), subject to the teaching assignment of the Econ Department head.

I do not agree to ECON telling SOSC what economics courses SOSC can teach, let alone allow ECON to limit the type of economics courses offered by SOSC to Intro Micro and Intro Macro, and yet further let alone making SOSC teaching such courses dependent on the teaching assignment of the ECON head. [SOSC is not a service facility to ECON.]

When Sosc faculty teaches these two courses, the teaching "credit" goes to the Sosc faculty.

2) SOSC faculty are welcome to propose new non-Common Core higher level Econ- related electives with more social science attributes, such as behavioral social science, empirical methodology in social science, etc.

I do not agree to ECON regulating what *content* of SOSC courses ECON may allow.

3) For the possibility of co-listed new common core classes: we agreed this on an Environmental-Economics-related course. For co-listing of other potential new common core courses, we'd like to consult

more Econ faculty members.

Regards,
Yan.

From: Kellee S TSAI [<mailto:ktsai@ust.hk>]

Sent: Friday, January 24, 2014 10:16 PM

To: Yan YU; Albert Francis PARK

Cc: sosn@ust.hk; sobaark@ust.hk; sopatch@ust.hk; Cameron CAMPBELL; Siu Fai LEUNG; 'Juanyi (Jenny) Xu'; Josephine C M WONG; 'Wooyoung Lim'

Subject: Re: Econ and SocSci UG committees meeting

Dear Siu Fai, Yan, Jenny, and Wooyoung,

Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with the SOSC Curriculum Committee earlier this week. As a newcomer to UST, I especially appreciated meeting you in person and learning more about your concerns regarding the course offerings of SOSC economists. Below is a summary of the three main principles that emerged from our conversation:

1) SOSC faculty are welcome to teach existing Common-Core ECON classes (e.g., Big Problems, Country Reports, Intro Micro, Intro Macro) as long as they use the same course number, textbook, syllabus, and grade distribution principles. SOSC faculty would get “credit” for that teaching even with a ECON prefix in the title.

I regard it as a violation of academic freedom to be told which textbook to use, how the syllabus has to read, and what the grade distribution is.

I do not agree to SOSC being treated as a service facility to ECON.

2) SOSC faculty are welcome to propose new non-Common Core electives in economics. These are more likely to meet with ECON’s approval if an initial draft of the syllabus is circulated for informal feedback from their curriculum committee before getting to the formal course proposal stage (when the window for revision is pretty much closed).

If the (secret) HKUST regulations are inappropriate in the view of ECON, I do not acknowledge that ECON has the authority to regulate what SOSC should do. If ECON finds something wrong with the (secret) regulations, then the matter should be raised with those who issue the (secret) regulations so that they be revised. [I speak of “secret” regulations as these regulations are not available on the internet and I have further been unable to obtain a copy of the regulations from David Mole, who I was referred to by the President.]

3) Possibility of co-listed new Common Core classes: Given that we are currently searching for two environmental economists (one will be housed in SOSC joint with ENVR, the other housed in ECON joint with ENVR), we discussed how to allow both colleagues to teach a new Common Course, e.g., Introduction to Environmental Economics. We agreed that they could be co-listed with both the SOSC and ECON prefixes as long as the course content was also equivalent. This is assuming that we are permitted to co-list Common Core classes with the same content.

I have shared this summary with the SOSC faculty and the senior leadership who have been cc-ed on correspondence relating to Carsten's grievance. Both the SHSS Dean and several SOSC colleagues have expressed gratitude that we were able to have a constructive initial meeting. We will keep in touch as SOSC engages in course planning for the next academic year.

Best regards,
Kellee