Department of Physical Science Meeting Minutes

September 12, 2025

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Attendees | Present | Absent | Excused |
| Elizabeth Schott (Dean) | X |  |  |
| Luminita Coman | X |  |  |
| Yadab Paudel | X |  |  |
| Marius Coman | X |  |  |
| Kimberly Hilton | X |  |  |
| Soumya Bhattacharya | X |  |  |
| Serhiy Pasishnyk | X |  |  |
| Valentin Zalessov | X |  |  |
| Di Xue | X |  |  |
| Courtney Sparrow | X |  |  |
| Gabriel Gaidos | X |  |  |
| Michael Sauer | X |  |  |
| Terry Ebanks | X |  |  |
| Qin Liu | X |  |  |

**Summary**

Math and Chemistry Club Proposal

Elizabeth discussed Don Ransford's proposal to start an official math and chemistry club chapter, which would overlap with existing interests in competitions and advanced classes. Qin and Serhiy agreed this was a good idea, noting the correlation between strong performance in AP Chemistry and AP Calculus. Elizabeth explained that Don plans to recruit faculty and target advanced-level students in the fall, with a $10 fee per student to cover costs, and suggested exploring connections between the collegiate high schools and local high schools through clubs like Mu Alpha Theta.

Chemistry Course Strategy Planning

Elizabeth led a discussion about the future of chemistry courses, particularly focusing on CHM1020C and CHM2025. She raised concerns about the potential competition between these courses and sought a strategic vision for the chemistry sequence. Elizabeth proposed forming a subcommittee of 3-5 chemistry professors to examine the pros and cons of different options, analyze data on student success and course sequences, and consider ways to expand offerings at smaller campuses. The subcommittee was tasked with making recommendations to the department and administration about course offerings, lab upgrades, and ways to accommodate students' needs.

2025-1020C Course Subcommittee Formation

The group discussed forming a subcommittee to address questions and suggestions about the CHM2025 and CHM1020C course. They agreed to have Courtney as the chair, with other members including Serhiy, Kimberly, and Soumya. Di mentioned she would email the proposal to change the learning outcomes to the group, which would be based on current textbooks.

Lab Coat Policy Discussion

The group discussed issues with lab coats and codes, noting that students were struggling to find the correct sizes and that the current system of returning coats was inefficient. Gabriel suggested students should buy their own coats, which could be reused across different classes, and mentioned that the bookstore already sells them. Serhiy raised questions about whether lab coats are required for courses, and the group agreed that if they were to be made mandatory, it should be included in the safety contract.

Lab Coat Management and Safety

The group discussed lab coat management and safety requirements across different courses. Qin suggested implementing a system where students could write their sizes on hangers to ensure proper return of lab coats, while Gabriel requested lab coats for his course and discussed the possibility of students purchasing them from the bookstore. Courtney noted that her campus has limited funds for lab coat cleaning, suggesting that requiring students to buy their own coats could save money. The discussion concluded with Soumya highlighting the varying safety requirements across different labs, particularly between chemistry and biology courses.

Student Scheduling Conflict Resolution

Terry discussed a challenging situation with a student who scheduled overlapping classes without checking the schedule, resulting in a conflict between a biology lecture and chemistry lab. Despite the student's late request to drop the classes after the deadline, Terry explained that the policy required both the lecture and lab to be dropped together. Soumya offered to help the student by potentially adjusting the lab schedule to solve the schedule conflict. Both Terry and Soumya emphasized the need for better oversight during registration to prevent such scheduling issues.

Campus Registration Policy Discussion

The group discussed issues with students registering for lab classes on different campuses than their lectures, which can lead to scheduling conflicts and safety concerns. Terry explained that students must register for both the lecture and lab together, and Michael suggested that the registrar should prevent students from registering for different campuses within a short time frame. Serhiy proposed adding a warning icon in the registration system to remind students to register for the same campus as their lecture. The group agreed that clear policies should be established in the syllabus regarding attendance and registration, and Libby was mentioned as a potential contact to discuss this issue with the registrar.

**Next steps**

• Courtney Sparrow to chair the chemistry subcommittee to evaluate the future of CHM2025 and make recommendations to Libby and Gus.

• Di Xue to email a proposal to change the learning outcomes for 1020c to all faculty.

• Qin Liu to talk with Rose and Libby regarding lab coat requirements for chemistry courses.