

Date: Sat, 20 Jan 1996 22:13:51 -0800 (PST)
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Subject: core and intro to specialty area programs

Environmental studies has been working on a model where we will try and do two core programs per year and in each one have an environmental theme that allows us to cover one year of general biology and develop quantitative methods/math skills. At the sophomore and transfer entry level we have proposed a four-faculty program (or pair of cooperating two-faculty programs) taught by two natural scientists and two social scientists. IES will cover 8 q.h. general chemistry plus quantitative methods and social science in the fall and winter and then break up into half-time options for Spring, with one of the options being general biology. I have heard that within S&M, you have been talking about core programs that incorporate chemistry.

Given that we will have introductory chemistry every year in IES plus M&M and hopefully a FONS program, I think that we will have too much duplication of chemistry if we try to do it in core.

A FONS program which incorporates chemistry, biology and math (but not physics) seems to make sense as a way to control the overload of information students get in FONS while still giving students a chance to get a lot of science done in one year if that is their goal. We might want to make FONS a two-quarter program breaking up into half-time options in the Spring parallel to the planning for IES. We could even consider doing the same thing with M&M, making a half-time organic option one of the Spring choices.

What do S&M folks think about placing quantitative methods and physics as the basic sciences in a core program? Thus a student who took the S&M core program followed by FONS would have basic chemistry, biology and physics coupled with good quantitative skills. A student who took one of the IES core programs followed by M&M would also wind up with chemistry, physics, biology and math at the end of his/her sophomore year. In both scenarios, we can avoid trying to force too much science into any one program and thus maintain room for some significant exploration of social, ethical, and humanities issues.

For 1997-98, would it make sense for Rob Cole to try to put together a core program along a Water theme where he incorporates his physics and computer/math skills. IES would mount a Political Ecology core program and a natural history core program. How does that sound as a set of core programs incorporating science for 1997-98?