



The following Motions and Documents were considered by the GFC Programs Committee by e-vote June 1 to 5, 2023:

Agenda Title: **Proposal for Exclusion of Augustana Faculty courses From the Exploration Credit Policy**

CARRIED MOTION:

THAT the GFC Programs Committee approve, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the attached list of Augustana Faculty courses for exclusion from the Exploration Credits policy.

FINAL Item 1



Decision Discussion Information

ITEM OBJECTIVE: To approve the Augustana Faculty request that the courses listed in this proposal be excluded from the Exploration Credit policy

DATE	June 1, 2023
TO	GFC Programs Committee – E-vote
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

MOTION: THAT the GFC Programs Committee approve, with delegated authority from General Faculties Council, the attached list of Augustana Faculty courses for exclusion from the Exploration Credits policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Augustana Faculty supports the new exploration credits policy by offering students a broad choice of courses from a range of disciplines that will continue to be available to students as exploration credits. On the whole, Augustana has prioritized limiting the number of exclusions from the policy as much as possible in order to create opportunities for students to explore courses across the campus. However, Augustana proposes to exclude a small number of courses from the policy.

Augustana Departments conducted internal consultation on this topic, which in turn led to Faculty-level discussions surrounding courses that should be excluded from the policy.

Augustana Faculty, specifically the Augustana Department of Science, is requesting that 11 courses be excluded from the policy.

- AUBIO 350 - Conservation Theory and Biodiversity in Tropical Systems
- AUENV 350 - Conservation Theory and Biodiversity in Tropical Systems
- AUBIO 459 - Field Studies in Tropical Ecology and Conservation
- AUENV 459 - Field Studies in Tropical Ecology and Conservation
- AUBIO 334 - Field Studies in Environmental Science and Ecology
- AUENV 234 - Research and Field Skills in Environmental Science
- AUENV 334 - Field Studies in Environmental Science and Ecology
- AUENV 434 - Advanced Field Studies in Environmental Science and Ecology
- AUBIO 395 - Vertebrate Form and Function
- AUCSC 220 - Software Engineering I
- AUCSC 320 - Software Engineering II

GOVERNANCE OUTLINE



Reasons for exclusion include significant travel implications, enrolment pressures, the requirement for significant group work, and/or financial and ethical considerations in some senior level labs.

Supporting Materials:

- **Exploration Credits - Courses Requested for Exclusion from Augustana Faculty**

SCHEDULE A:

Engagement and Routing

Consultation and Stakeholder Participation / Approval Route (parties who have seen the proposal and in what capacity) <[Governance Resources Section Student Participation Protocol](#)>

Those who are actively participating:

- Augustana Department of Science
- Augustana Student Academic Services Office

Those who have been consulted:

- Augustana Academic Council
- Augustana Fine Arts & Humanities Department Council, Social Sciences Department Council, and Science Department Council [includes student representatives]
- Augustana Curriculum Committee [includes student representatives] - April 28, 2023
- Program Support Team, Undergraduate and Non-Credit

Approval Route:

- Augustana Curriculum Committee - April 28, 2023
- Augustana Faculty Council - May 8, 2023
- GFC Programs Committee – June 1, 2023 by E-Vote

Exploration Credits - Courses Requested for Exclusion from Augustana Faculty

The Augustana Faculty Department of Science requests that the following courses be excluded from the Exploration Credits program:

AUBIO 350 - Conservation Theory and Biodiversity in Tropical Systems

AUENV 350 - Conservation Theory and Biodiversity in Tropical Systems

AUBIO 459 - Field Studies in Tropical Ecology and Conservation

AUENV 459 - Field Studies in Tropical Ecology and Conservation

Rationale: These courses comprise a two-semester long sequence (350/459, respectively) that includes a two week field trip to Costa Rica. A large portion of this course is project-based and involves team work in an intensive field setting. Since this is a team-focused set of courses with a formal application process, it is critical that students are taking this course for a standard letter grade in order to ensure their full commitment to the class expectations.

AUBIO 334 - Field Studies in Environmental Science and Ecology

AUENV 234 - Research and Field Skills in Environmental Science

AUENV 334 - Field Studies in Environmental Science and Ecology

AUENV 434 - Advanced Field Studies in Environmental Science and Ecology

Rationale: The reasons for excluding these courses are as follows: 1) these courses have a limited enrolment, so students requiring them for their programs should be given priority; 2) these courses are offered in alternating years, so students needing them for their programs will have some urgency to take them; and 3) these courses require a substantial commitment in MIS fees, living off campus, and/or travelling off campus regularly.

AUBIO 395 - Vertebrate Form and Function

Rationale: The main concern is lab specimens, which are expensive and difficult to obtain. There are also ethical implications to consider. We have a moral obligation towards the animals we are using for the dissections, and we need to use them fully and not discard them after the first lab (a specimen is used for multiple labs).

AUCSC 220 - Software Engineering I

AUCSC 320 - Software Engineering II

Rationale: The concern here is that these courses involve significant group work in designing and coding a software project, and it might not be fair to those students in the course to be graded if one of their group members is taking the course for exploration credits and therefore may not have an incentive to put in the same level of effort and maintain the same level of commitment to the success of the group. Group work comprises 40%-80% of the students' grade in these classes. Instructors are not provided with information regarding who is registered in exploration credits, so there would not be a "fair" way to construct the groups. If one student suddenly stops working near the end of the term, because they are only aiming for a "pass" in order to receive credit, then this could hurt the entire group. Although this scenario is possible under the current grading system, the opportunity for exploration credits makes this outcome more likely and increases the risk of harm to other students.