

UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL

MINUTES

April 3, 2024

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Romney 102

Council in Attendance:

Marc Giullian (Business)
Scott Powell (Agriculture)
Brennan Reeves (Office of International Programs)
Catherine Dunlop (Letters)
Sweeney Windchief (Education)
Stephanie McCalla (Faculty Senate)
Amy Reines (Sciences)
Rollin Beamish (Arts)
Katey Franklin (Health & Human Development)
Stephan Warnat (Engineering)
Wade Hill (Nursing)
Heidi Koenig (Student Representative)
Craig Ogilvie (Dean of The Graduate School)

Also in Attendance:

Emily Peters (Graduate School)
Susan Raph (Nursing)

Absent

Brian Rossmann (Library)
Christopher Livingston (Architecture)

Meeting started at 10:32 a.m.

March 20, 2024 minutes

- Motion to approve by Beamish, Franklin 2nd, 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention

Announcements

- Faculty Senate update (McCalla)
 - Faculty Senate meeting today: update on faculty compensation, discussing 2 graduate policies: eligibility for assistantships and academic standing
 - Eligibility for Assistantships: language on “departmental or university limits” was removed
 - Academic Standing:
 - Removed: Committees should not base their decision solely on one item, e.g., a qualifier exam.

- Added: Committees should weigh the student's overall performance and come to a consensus before making their decision.
 - Added: Note, comprehensive exams (section 5.3.5), thesis (section 5.2.9) and dissertation defenses (section 5.3.6) are handled separately and are described in separate sections of graduate school policy.
- Update from the Dean
 - Lauren Cerretti selected for Diversity & Inclusion Excellence award
 - Heidi Koenig defending her dissertation on Friday 3:10pm in Byker Auditorium
 - April 12th GradCat Spring Summit professional development event
 - First ever free application week for graduate students April 20th-27th: marketing will be program specific - those interested in increasing applications, but the fee waiver will be system wide for this week
 - Outside of this week programs can request codes to give application fee waivers
 - Will learn from this week and do something similar in the fall
 - Currently at 2,000 applicants; 700 admitted
 - Applications down in some departments due to faculty retiring and TT lines not being filled. Need TT lines to take on new graduate students. Is there anything we can do?
 - Best to advocate to your college dean
 - Retired faculty serving on graduate committee policy: have been unable to locate the state policy about a waiting period. Suggest moving the policy forward to JAGS without the link.
 - No objections

New Business

- PMHC-CERT Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Certificate, program changes (Susan Raph, Mark and Robyn Jones College of Nursing, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Wade Hill)
 - Proposed program change would add a 3-credit diagnostic course, increase the total credits from 31 to 34
 - Raph and Hill provided justification for a psychiatric specific diagnostic course: psychiatric nursing is very different from the other areas of nursing; most students do not come in with a psychiatric mental health background.
 - Current guidance in curriculum changes is to avoid increasing credits. If emerging content needs to be added, ask for an equivalent reduction somewhere else.
 - Also concern of tuition increase for students
 - MRKCON looked at reducing other credits. Clinical hour requirement makes it difficult to reduce credits. Due to current CCNE accreditation requirements, the clinical aspects must match the DNP psych curriculum.
 - The curriculum will have to increase by 2 more credits (to 36) next year due to these accreditation requirements
 - This certificate is an efficient way to basically double the scope of a graduate-qualified nurse's practice. It is a bare-bones curriculum.
 - Comments

- Since this certificate is for graduate-prepared nurses, can courses be added as leveling courses on individual basis with the base curriculum less credits?
 - Doesn't meet the accreditation requirements, and most of the students don't have the mental health background
- Counseling has a similar diagnostic course
 - The class (NRSRG 616: Psychiatric Case Formulation) already exists and is taught to the DNPs, just adding it to the certificate curriculum
- Can't see a justification of not allowing this increase in the number of credits. The values behind this are very important: promoting wellness and mental health in Montana communities. Seems this has been very carefully designed.
- There is so much diversity in graduate programs. Graduate programs follow the standards of national bodies, changing needs in the industry, accreditation; these degrees lead to licensure. It's not always realistic to keep the credits the same.
- Beamish motions to support the credit increase to 34 and the increase next year to 36, Warnat 2nds
 - 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained
 - Motion passes unanimously
- Raph will send Dean Ogilvie a written explanation to include with Dean Ogilvie's approval of the program changes

Old Business

- Increasing UGC student membership: updates from governance subcommittee
 - Only concern was where the students come from? Should the process be outlined?
 - Already ask deans to nominate faculty from their college—can extend that process and ask for a student nomination as well
 - Discussion on adding a graduate student senate
 - Proposed in the past, but previous proposal was stopped
 - Hybrid solution was to add graduate students on various campus councils
 - Distinct conflict of interest with undergraduate body representing graduate students (ex: teaching and grading undergraduate students)
 - Invite Steve Swinford to discuss this at a UGC meeting later this semester or in the fall
 - Has been challenging to get student representatives, so leaving the bylaws vague might be best
 - Powell motions to approve, Beamish 2nds
 - 9 in favor, 0 abstention, 0 opposed
 - Motion passes unanimously
- Reserved limit for accelerated programs
 - Based on previous UGC feedback, suggest increasing from 12 to 15 credits instead of unlimited. Cases over 15 can be reviewed as an individual appeal.
 - Discussion on transfer/non-degree/reserved credit limit of 9 credits

- Giullian motions to approve increase to 15 reserved credits for accelerated programs, Hill seconds
 - 7 in favor, 2 abstentions, 0 opposed
 - Motion passes
- Appeals policy
 - Subcommittee still working on revised draft
 - Academic Council suggested having a committee to review appeal decisions, UGC discussed graduate dean being first level review, move to committee decision on case-by-case basis
 - Feedback from some departments that the committee should not review the content of the decision, just review if the proper procedure was followed
 - Discussion that it may not make sense to have the grad dean be the gatekeeper of whether the appeal is reviewed by the ad hoc committee or not
 - Suggest having a subcommittee that decides whether to take on the appeal. If yes, convene the full committee.
 - Could have an appeal subcommittee of UGC that serve as consistent members of the committee
 - Form rest of committee on case-by-case basis
 - Suggest one or two open seats that come from the department or college (e.g., department head and one faculty member)
 - Suggest having the option for a student advocate well versed in the process to provide support (like a VOICE Center advocate can assist a student through OIE complaints)
 - Clarification that the current policy draft just gives the appeal committee the authority to suggest a plan of action for the student to continue in the program after a decision that results in dismissal from the program. It would not change a defense or comp from a fail to a pass.
 - Clarification that this process is just for outcome decisions. The policy draft separates the process for outcome decisions from exceptions to academic policies (e.g., excess reserved credits)

Updates from subcommittees

Public comment

Adjourned at 11:26 am

Next scheduled meeting – April 17th in Romney Hall 102