

Minutes of the Graduate Academic Council meeting on 05/03/21, 9 AM via Zoom

Approved by the Council by vote of 10-0-0 on 10/4/2021.

In attendance: G. Berg (Chair), S. Appe, A. Dawson, S. Faight, M. Ferraino, A. Gill, O. Lunin, R. Morse, E. Pacer, K. Stanwicks, C. Wolff, K. Williams (ex officio member), S. Kent (staff), J. Deden (staff)

Guests: Zina Lawrence, University Senate Chair

1. Approved this GAC Agenda
2. Approval of the minutes of the GAC meeting of 4/5/2021 - 10-0-0
3. Dean's Report – Dean Williams thanked the GAC and committees for all the contributions and work this year. He would like GAC to work on obtaining guidance and guidelines from departments regarding dissertations and theses processes. Fielded questions from the Counsel. Comment brought up regarding dissertation guidelines, that one way is to focus on the committees, specifically having one member be of equal or greater seniority than the dissertation/thesis advisor to exert authority if needed. Another suggestion is to come up with best practices for dissertation/thesis advisors and committees. No updates – This semester's compressed schedule came with some adverse effects. Commencement for Spring 2021 is in-person.
4. Chair's Report – Chair Berg had no report.
1. Committee on Curriculum and Instruction (CC&I) Report – S. Faight reviewed the attached proposals. All proposals were approved by the CC&I. After discussion, the GAC accepted the CC&I's report by a vote of 10-0-0.
2. Nominations and voting for Graduate Academic Counsel's Chair for 2021-22 – Current chair George Berg was the sole nomination for chair of GAC for the 2021-2022 academic year. Zina Lawrence led the nominations and voting process. After his departure off camera and audio, the remaining GAC members voted George Berg to continue as GAC Chair for the 2021-2022 academic year, unanimously 9-0-0.
5. Business Administration (BA) MBA 1-year Program Proposal – Proposal is for a new modification of the MBA program. The proposal was originally reviewed by CC&I. CC&I then sent a list of questions back to the BA department. This is the final review of the proposal, which is being done with the GAC to facilitate timely processing for the 2020-2021 academic year. Z. Lawrence fully discussed the new program's details, CC&I's questions, and BA's answers. Following discussion, the GAC approved the proposal by a vote of 9-1-0.
6. Any Other Business – None

Meeting adjourned at 9:55am without opposition.

Next meeting to be announced.

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CC&I Report – 4-27-21

Committee members electronic and in-person review: Susan Appe, Haijun Chen, Sydney Faight (chair), Andrew Gill, Ilka Kressner, Jeannette Sutton, Stephen Weinberg

Staff: Colleen Davis

Program Proposals Reviewed: Behavioral Neuroscience PhD, Information Science MS Intelligence Analysis Concentration, Forensic Biology MS, Physics MS, Teacher Leadership CGS, Educational Psychology PhD, Information Science PhD

Behavioral Neuroscience PhD

In 2018, the Department of Psychology submitted program proposals for all five of their doctoral programs to change the research requirement to a milestone notation, rather than registering for APSY 600A and APSY 600B. The elimination of the 6 credits should have translated to a reduction of overall credits for the programs. Each doctoral program will be submitting proposals to reduce the overall 66 graduate credits required to 60 graduate credits required. We have reviewed the Behavioral Neuroscience PhD proposal and based on the department’s justification, the committee voted to approve the reduction (7 approved, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

Information Science MS Intelligence Analysis Concentration

The College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity is proposing minor edits to the Information Science MS program, Intelligence Analysis concentration as follows:

- Remove the core course requirement of CIST 614 Administration of Information Agencies (3)
- Increase the concentration core course requirement from 6 to 15 courses and add the following courses:
  - o EHC 554 Political Violence, Insurgency and Terrorism
  - o EHC 556 Homeland Security Intelligence
  - o EHC 569 Cyber Threats and Intelligence
- Replace the current Tool course of IST529 Text Analysis with IST532 Information Analysis Techniques and Technologies
- Reduce the concentration electives from 12 credits to 6 credits
- The overall credits will remain at 36 graduate credits required for the program. The elimination of IST614 from the core is accounted for in the increased credits required for the concentration. Typically, the concentrations for the Information Science MS program consisted of 21 credits. The Intelligence Analysis concentration will now be 24 credits, with a core course requirement of 12 credits (reduced from 15 credits). Total program requirements of 36 credits.

Current Program	Proposed Program
Core Courses – 9 credits	Core Courses – 6 credits
Research Course – IST608	Research Course – IST608

Internship Course - IST678	Internship Course - IST678
Concentration Core - 6 credits	Concentration Core - 15 credits
Concentration Tool - 3 credits	Concentration Tool - 3 credits
Concentration Electives - 12 credits	Concentration Electives - 6 credits

- The college is requesting these changes based on the following justifications:
  - Creating defined concentration goals
  - Improving the skill level of Intelligence Analysis concentration graduates
  - Making the experience/skills of these graduates more consistent
  - Increasing career-appropriate and concentration-goal aligned content
  - Ensuring a clear pathway for completion of the concentration, even as other schools/colleges reduce offerings in the current budgetary environment
  - Reducing the courses/sections required in each semester and over the course of the year

Based on the department's justification above, the committee voted to approve the proposed program changes (6 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

#### Forensic Biology MS

The Department of Biological Sciences is proposing minor edits to the admission requirements for the Forensic Biology MS program as follows:

- Increase the grade requirement for undergraduate prerequisite courses in Genetics and Molecular Biology from C to B.
- The other admission requirements will remain as is (bachelor's degree in a natural science; grade of C or better in the following undergraduate prerequisite courses: biochemistry and immunology).

The program has gone through several revisions over the last few years and has added several new dedicated forensic courses. There is now a very strong genetics and molecular biology component within the program. Students with C grades in undergraduate genetics and/or molecular biology will find it very difficult to obtain B grades in the required graduate level courses.

Based on the department's justification above, the committee voted to approve the proposed program changes (7 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

#### Physics MS

There are two options to completing the Physics MS program: Option A (thesis based) or Option B (additional academic course requirements and comprehensive exam). The Department of Physics is proposing the following changes to their Option A MS program:

- In option A, remove the core course GPA requirement of 3.0. This is separate from the overall 3.0 GPA requirement of all graduate degree programs. There is an additional 3.0 GPA requirement in the 18 credits of core courses in the Option A program.
- In option A, adding the language of “as advised” to the 12 credits of electives or research requirement
  - o Currently appears as “12 credits of electives of research in Physics (APHY695 or 699), with at least one credit of APHY699”
- No changed to Option B requirements.

The department indicates that Option A in the MS program is intended to focus on research and an MS thesis, and based on this they feel the University’s overall program GPA requirement of B or better is a sufficient academic standard. The additional requirement of the 3.0 in the core courses is overly strict. The “as advised” language for the electives is already reflected in Option B requirement and the department is looking to add this to Option A.

Based on the department’s justification above, the committee voted to approve the proposed program changes (7 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

#### Teacher Leadership CGS

The Department of Literacy Teaching and Learning is proposing to add the Distance Education Format to the Teacher Leadership CGS. This program is interdisciplinary, with concentrations in Literacy, Educational Theory and Practice, and Educational Policy and Leadership. All three of the departments associated with this program have online programs. Based on this, students who complete the Teacher Leadership CGS can complete 50% or more of the 15-credit program online. Based on this, distance education format is required for compliance.

Based on the department’s justification above, the committee voted to approve the proposed program changes (7 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

#### Educational Psychology PhD

The Division of Educational Psychology is proposing to make the GRE admission requirement optional. Currently, the GREs are required. The department believes this will potentially increase the number of applicants to the program. The department does not want to remove it entirely at this time, and instead would like to make it optional for applicants to decide on submission. The department will review all of the applications on all aspects. Applicants will not be penalized in the application stage and the assessment stage for not submitting the GRE scores. It will add to the applications materials, but not negatively impact the applicant if it is not included. The division will give greatest weight for admissions on prior academic performance, a writing sample, statement of purpose / goals, and letters of recommendation. GRE scores, if available, would only be considered in cases where the scores differ from the weight of other evidence, and they would only influence a determination if the GRE scores triggered a new understanding of the other evidence.

Based on the department's justification above and the GRE memo that was circulated last year to the departments, the committee voted to approve the proposed program changes (7 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

### Information Science PhD

The College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity is proposing edits to the Information Science PhD program as follows:

- Eliminate the Business Information and Decision Systems (BIDS) specialization due to non-enrollment
- Add a new specialization in Information for Risk in Emergency Management and Security (IRES) due to need
- Re-evaluate the specialization descriptions and add core courses/course options for each of the existing specializations.
- Eliminate the Apprentice Teaching Option due to non-enrollment

The BIDS specialization has not been active in years and the college is looking to officially remove it from the program requirements. A new specialization is being created to accommodate new course offerings through the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity. The courses being added to the existing specializations are already in use by the college. These courses are outlined in the departmental PhD handbook, but have not previously existed in the graduate bulletin. Since the program proposal must go through SUNY and NYSED for approval, based on the elimination/addition of the specializations, the college is adding the core courses/course options to the other specializations. The additions are as follows:

### *Decision and Policy Sciences (DAPS) – name change to Data Analytics*

- Add prerequisites: an advanced undergrad course in descriptive and inferential statistics, and competency in at least one analytics-oriented programming language
- Required courses – Courses in two areas (Data Management and Analytics Methods) for 9 credits total:
  - Data Management (3 cr) – IST 506 Databases and Data Management (3 credits)
  - Analytics Methods (6 cr) - INF 623 Predictive Analytics (3 credits) or CSI 536 Machine Learning (3 credits) AND Inf 625 Data Mining (3 credits) or ITM 603 Analytics and Data Mining (3 credits) or CSI 531 Data Mining (3 credits)
  - Plus 9 credits of electives as advised in theory, methods, and substantive topics.

### *Geographic Information Science (GIS)*

- GOG 500: Introduction to Graduate Study in Geography: Geographic Thought (3 credits)
- GOG 590: Advanced Cartography (3 credits)
- GOG 596 (APLN 556): Geographic Information Systems (3 credits)
- Plus 12 credits of electives as advised in theory, methods, and substantive topics.

*Information Assurance (IA):*

- Information Systems: (3+ credits. One of the following) - ITM 601 Business Systems Analysis and Design (3 credits) Inf 505 Advanced Concepts and Practices in Software Development (3 credits) CSI518 Software Engineering (4 credits)
- Networks: (3+ credits. One of the following) - ITM 604 Communications, Networking & Computer Security (3 credits) Inf 503 Advanced Networks and Security (3 credits) CSI 516 Computer Communications Networks I (3 credits)
- Databases: (3+ credits. One of the following) IST 506 Database systems and Data Analysis (3 credits) Inf 507 Modern Issues in Databases (3 credits) CSI508 Database Systems I (3 credits)
- Statistics: (3+ credits, advised)
- Plus 9 credits of electives as advised in theory, methods, and substantive topics.

*Information, Government, and Democratic Society (IGDS):*

- PAD 550 Foundations of Government Information Strategy and Management (4 credits)
- COM 520 Theories and Research in Political Communication (3 credits)
- Plus 12 credits of electives as advised in theory, methods, and substantive topics.

*Information in Organizational Environments (IOE):*

- Two concentrations are available General Organizational Studies and Human-Computer Interaction and Organizational Transformation. Each concentration requiring at least 24 credits in coursework in theory, methods, and substantive topics, as advised.

*Knowledge Organization and Management (KOM):*

- IST 602 Information and Knowledge Organization (3 credits)
- IST 533 Information Storage and Retrieval (3 credits)
- Plus 15 credits of electives as advised in theory, methods, and substantive topics.

*Information for Risk in Emergency Management and Security (IRES): (New specialization)*

- EHC 600: Fundamentals of Emergency Management (3 Credits)
- EHC 609: Risk Analysis (3 Credits)
- EHC 610: Fundamentals of Homeland Security (3 Credits)
- Plus 9 credits of electives as advised in theory, methods, and substantive topics.

Based on the department's justification above, the committee voted to approve the proposed program changes (7 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

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Business Administration MBA 1-year Program Proposal

Twenty-six advanced standing credits will be awarded to highly qualified students entering the 56 credit hours Full-Time MBA degree program from AACSB Accredited institutions and with undergraduate preparatory degrees in Business. In addition to admission requirements for the existing MBA tracks,

1-Year MBA track students must have a 3.6 undergraduate GPA and a minimum grade of B+/3.3 in all required business major courses. Preference will be given to applicants that have focused on the area of proposed concentration in their undergrad program of study. After the program director screens for these high-achieving students, the faculty of the department of proposed concentration will provide final approval of candidates applying to their concentration after reviewing their transcripts and may require an interview and/or additional undergraduate concentration-related courses be taken as a condition of admission into the degree program.

The 1-Year MBA Full-Time MBA track will provide ongoing graduate education opportunities for University at Albany School of Business undergraduates, and others, who wish to earn an MBA with a year of graduate level study in one of the existing six specialized concentrations. The 30-credit hour 1-Year program will also meet the growing national demand for shorter, more specialized graduate degree programs in business administration as well as compete with the increasing number of international programs located in Europe and Asia that are one-year in duration.

Fulltime and 1-Year Concentration options:

- Cyber Security
- Entrepreneurship
- Finance
- Human Resource Information Systems
- Information Systems and Business Analytics
- Marketing

Part-time Concentration Options:

- Cybersecurity
- Marketing
- Finance
- Change Management
- Information Systems and Business Analytics
- New Venture Development

Questions from the Committee on Curriculum and Instruction regarding the Business Administration's MBA 1-year Program Proposal, followed by answers from the School of Business.

- How many students are anticipated for this program? **10 students per year**
- Is the advanced standing credit guaranteed to be 26 credits? Or will it be up to 26 credits pending a transcript review? **The advanced standing credits will be 26 – only students who have a 3.3 / B+ or better in the advanced standing courses will be admitted into the one-year program.**
  1. If a transcript review is to be conducted, will the department assign admission deficiencies for the necessary preparatory courses needed? **A transcript review will be conducted; however, deficiencies will not be an issue because only students who have a 3.3 / B+ or better in the advanced standing course will be admitted into the one-year program.**
  2. Is there a specific gap in time for the undergraduate degree being earned and starting the 1-Year program? What about students who have earned their degrees many years ago? Will there be a transcript review and adjustment to the advanced standing credits? How old can coursework be and still count as preparatory courses? Is there an expiration? **Students must begin the 1-year MBA within 3 years of completing their**

undergraduate degree. Students more than 3 years out are eligible for admission into the part-time Evening MBA degree or 2-year Full-Time MBA program.

3. Are you considering a test of materials in addition to a transcript review (non-UAlbany students or students with degrees earned years ago)? **No; however, we will accept applicants only from AACSB accredited schools.**
  4. What does the evaluation process of the transcripts look like for the advanced standing credits? Does this differ for UAlbany versus non-UAlbany institutions? **We will review applicant transcripts to confirm that grades of B+/3.3 or better were received in each course in the undergraduate business major. The same evaluation will be made for UAlbany and non-UAlbany undergraduates.**
- What will happen if a student can only do part-time but wants to do the 1-Year program since it is less credits? It appears to disadvantage part-time students by making them take a program with more credits required. **The one-year program courses will be offered on a full-time schedule (i.e. 8:00AM – 8:50PM). We are not inclined to allow students to take the 1 year program on a part-time basis. However, if within three years of completing their Bachelor's degree an eligible student wishes to complete the one-year program on a part-time basis, and they are able to take classes in the required sequence, even when offered in the day, they will be able to do so. It should be noted that anyone who would be eligible to do so would also be able to waive 10 credits from the Evening MBA. As a matter of practicality, we don't think the additional 8 credit hours (30 vs 38 credits) is significant enough to make the difficulties of scheduling daytime courses worthwhile for a vast majority of students.**
  - Can students swap between the 1-Year program and part-time program? **No. The part-time degree program requires a minimum of three years of post-baccalaureate work experience for admission whereas the 1-year MBA will not accept students more than three years out from their undergraduate degree.**
  - What happens when a student fails a course? Do they have to wait for the next year to take the course again since it is a cohort? **Yes. Similar to the full-time MBA, when a student fails a course, they need to wait to repeat the course when it is offered again the following year.**
  - Is the department considering a combined undergraduate/graduate program for the 1-Year program? If so, would they take grad preparatory courses or start the 30-credit program? **No. It was determined that it is preferable to make the entry decision for the one-year MBA program in the students' senior year.**