

## 4/19/18 GAC Approved Minutes

Minutes of the Graduate Academic Council meeting of April 19, 2018 11:00 AM, UAB 320  
Approved by the Council on 05/10/2018 by vote of 6-0-0

In attendance: S. Rafferty, G. Berg, K. Chan, S. Faight, Z. Lawrence, C. Lawson, N. Turner  
K. Williams, J. Bartow(staff), J. Deden(staff),  
Guests: Dan Mahar – Registrar’s Office  
Shanise Kent – Graduate Education Office

- 1) Draft minutes of the March 1, 2018 meeting were approved by vote of 7-0-0
- 2) Dean’s Report – President Rodríguez has at expressed desire on several occasions to form a Graduate School and Dean Williams welcomes comments on that from the GAC.  
He reviewed highlights from the preliminary report of the Ph.D Career Pathways survey. Alumni have been surveyed and the focus now is on current 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year students. Majority of results were as anticipated.
- 3) Chair’s Report – Chair Rafferty informed the GAC that the Senate is reviewing Committee membership staffing for next academic year. Concerned that there may be a high number finishing their terms on the GAC, he asked that, if possible for continuity, if some members would consider extending their term on the GAC. He is also willing to chair again next year, if the Council agrees to that.
- 4) Report of the Committee on Curriculum and Instruction (CIC) – Committee Chair Kevin Chan reviewed the proposed and recommended changes (appended to these minutes, below) to five degree programs:
  - a) Master of Arts - Industrial/Organizational Psychology Program (curriculum change)
  - b) Certificate of Graduate Studies - Community Collee Leadership Program (add distance ed delivery authorization)
  - c) Master of Arts – Geography (curriculum change)
  - d) Master of Science – Professional Accountancy (curriculum change)
  - e) Doctor of Philosophy – Curriculum and Instruction (add distance ed delivery authorization)The CC&I approved and recommends all 5 proposals. The GAC accepted the report and in doing so its 5 recommendations therein, by a vote of 7-0-0.
- 5) Proposed revision to the University’s Academic Grievance Policy – J. Bartow gave background to why the policy needed to be revised and fielded questions. The Council requested that the change in the proposal be reworded from “two months” to “60 days”.  
The GAC approved the revision with the condition of the change to “60 days” by vote of 7-0-0.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved 7-0-0

Meeting adjourned 11:33 AM

End of 4/19/2018 GAC Minutes

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## Curriculum and Instruction Committee Report

April 9, 2018

Proposals reviewed: Industrial/Organizational Psychology Master of Arts Proposal, Community College Leadership Certificate of Graduate Study Proposal, Geography Master of Arts Proposal, Professional Accountancy Master of Science Proposal, Curriculum and Instruction Doctor of Philosophy Proposal

Committee Members in Attendance: Keith Chan (chair), Stephen Weinberg, Magdia DeJesus, George Berg, Natalie Turner, Sydney Faight, Haijun Chen

Staff: Colleen Davis

### Industrial/Organizational Psychology Master of Arts Program Proposal

The committee had discussed the proposed changes at length and conferred with the department regarding programmatic questions. There is a program proposal that will be reviewed soon regarding the Industrial/Organizational Psychology doctoral program that aligns with these changes and answers the questions posed by the committee. The committee voted to approve the following changes (7 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain):

- Develop I/O Psychology specific statistics and research methods course to fulfill the statistics and research methods requirement (new courses are APSY501, APSY738). The program currently uses APSY 510 and APSY511 (doctoral level sequence) or EPSY530 and EPSY630 (offered in the Educational Counseling Psychology Department as part of various Master's and Doctoral level programs). Select few of the MA students take the Ph.D. level statistics sequence in Psychology since the vast majority were not prepared for the doctoral level sequence, while others take statistics in Educational Psychology. Neither option ideally fits the needs of the MA students. These new courses prepare the MA students for applied and academic careers in I/O Psychology.
- Replace APSY758 Ethics and Professional Issues in Industrial and Organizational Psychology with a broader course APSY 750 Foundations in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. The materials of APSY758 will be part of the new course APSY750 (roughly 1/3 of the course material). The I/O Psychology faculty decided that APSY758 does not meet the needs of the program and a broader course addressing ethics and professional issues, along with a number of other foundational topics, was needed. The department found that many of the MA students do not have sufficient background in I/O Psychology, APA style, or the tools needed to succeed in graduate school and in the profession. Therefore the department decided to create a course that covers these issues plus ethics, and is comparable in rigor and substance to the other courses needed to obtain the MA.

### Community College Leadership CGS Program Proposal

The department is seeking approval to add the distance format to the registration of this program. There are no changes to the curriculum. The program will not be fully online, but will be at least 50% online. Registration with the distance format is required if the program can be completed at least 50% online. The committee voted to approve the distance format designation (7 approve, 0 disapprove, 1 abstain).

#### Geography Master of Arts Program Proposal

The department is proposing to increase the requirements for core courses in both tracks, reducing the number of credits required in professional track, and increasing the total number of credits in the academic track. The rationale for these changes originates from changes in the faculty and the new MS in Geographic Information Science. With the arrival of new faculty members, the department is able to increase the course offerings in the geography program, and at the same time involve more students in research. The creation of the Geographic Information Science MS program has allowed the technically oriented student to complete this specialized program, and allows the department to adjust the Geography MA program for students interested in human or physical geography. The committee voted to approve the following changes (8 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain):

- Increase the number of required core courses from 9 to 18 credits (add AGOG503, AGOG504/APLN538, AGOG529 to the existing AGOG500, AGOG502/APLN504, AGOG596/APLN556 requirement; this reduces the electives).
- Reduce the Non-thesis track (professional track) from 36 to 30 credits overall. The department believes that these changes to the MA professional track will attract students who already employed in state and federal agencies as specialists geographers, geologists or hydrologists with BA or BS degrees in geography, geology or environmental science. The same track will be attractive to recent graduates who want to improve their chances of obtaining meaningful, better-paid jobs. Students enrolled in the professional (30 credit) track can complete their degree within one year: two 12-credit semesters and a six-credit summer session.
- Increase the Thesis track (research track) from 30 to 36 credits overall. Although the department does not have a PhD program, proposed changes in academic track should give students more time to produce a meaningful, solid master's thesis that should complement their internship and research experience and improve their chances of admission to a PhD program. These students will have a summer session in which to complete their fieldwork or internships.

#### Professional Accountancy Master of Science Program Proposal

The proposed change replaces BFIN603 with BFIN525. The change is necessary, since the prerequisite for BFIN603 is BFIN525 and the department feels that 525 is more appropriate for the program. In the event that students take only one finance elective, BFIN525 is the course they should take according to the department. The committee voted to approve this change (8 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

#### Curriculum and Instruction PhD Program Proposal

The department is seeking approval to add the distance format to the registration of this program. There are no changes to the curriculum and the program will be fully online. They will take advantage of telepresence technology, platforms like Zoom and Blackboard. This will include possible classroom formats: 1) face-to-face, synchronous class sessions; 2) blended classes (combination of online and face-to-face); 3) online-only synchronous class sessions; 4) online-only asynchronous class sessions.

Registration with the distance format is required if the program can be completed at least 50% online. The committee voted to approve the distance format designation (8 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

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(Approved addition/change highlighted)

### **Procedures for Resolving Academic Grievances**

Students who seek to challenge an academic grade or evaluation of their work in a course or seminar, or in research or another educational activity may request a review of the evaluation by filing an academic grievance.

The Graduate Academic Council (GAC) and the Undergraduate Academic Council (UAC), through the work of their respective Committees on Admission and Academic Standing (CAAS) are responsible for insuring that approved procedures exist within the schools, colleges, departments (if applicable) and programs of the University for students to file academic grievances. Copies of established grievance procedures shall be filed by each academic unit with the Offices of the Dean of Graduate Education and the Dean of Undergraduate Education and available to students at each school/college dean's office.

It is expected that the grounds upon which an academic grievance may be based should be clearly identified. Such grounds may include variance from University grading standards/policies, grade calculation inconsistencies with that announced in published course syllabi, procedural abnormalities, or other factors that are alleged to have denied the student a fair evaluation. It is not expected that grievances will propose that the professional obligation of faculty to fairly evaluate academic material within their field of expertise will be supplanted by alternate means without procedural cause.

A student who seeks to dispute a grade or evaluation must initially pursue the matter directly with the faculty member involved. If not satisfactorily resolved directly with the faculty member, a written grievance may be filed with the program/department, or directly with school/college for units that are not departmentalized.

Should the grievance not be satisfactorily resolved at this initial level of review, students may pursue further consideration of the grievance at the next organizational level until such time as the grievance is considered at the University level by the GAC or UAC CAAS, as appropriate. **To be considered timely and eligible for University level consideration, a grievance review must be requested by the student no later than 60 days from the notice of decision at the school or college level.** Action on an academic grievance by the appropriate CAAS, upon acceptance by the GAC or UAC, as appropriate, is final and not subject to further formal review within the University. Only at this final level of grievance determination by the CAAS

may a grade or other such evaluation be changed against the will of the faculty member(s) involved. In such rare cases, the Chair of the GAC or UAC, or its respective CAAS, as appropriate, may consult at his/her discretion with departmental faculty and/or appropriate scholars to determine an appropriate grade and authorize its recording by the Registrar.

In reviewing an academic grievance, the CAAS will consider the formal written petition from the student and corresponding written response/comment from the faculty, along with all records of consideration of the matter at prior levels of review. Although rare, the CAAS reserves the right to conduct a hearing with all parties present or it may decide to meet with each party separately. The nature and number of the representatives attending any such meeting will be at the discretion of the CAAS. These procedures adopted are those which the University believes will provide all parties involved the opportunity to present complete and factual information as necessary for the CAAS to render a fair decision.

#### Rationale for proposed change

*Disputed academic grading/evaluation matters that linger without attention and review become increasingly difficult to resolve as time passes, especially when staff changes, records become less available and recollections diminish. Programs, departments, school and colleges have varying procedures and processes. Once these school/college processes potentially funnel into University level review, a submittal deadline is desirable.*