

**Graduate Academic Council
2008 – 2009**

Minutes of the Council meeting of November 11, 2008
Approved by the Council on March 2, 2009

In attendance: J. Baronner (staff), J. Bartow (staff), F. Bolton (staff), T. Clyman, G. Denbeaux, M. Earleywine, S. Friedman, L. Kranich (Chair), J. McLaughlin, W. Meredith, M. Pryse, K. Reinhold, B. Shaw, C. Smith

Unable to attend: H. Horton, A. Pomerantz

Guests: R. Collier, R. Gibson, R. Hoyt, G. Moore, R.M. Range,

1. Minutes from 10/27/2008 were voted on and approved by unanimous vote.
2. Dean's Report – M. Pryse

Dean Pryse distributed an article from today's *Times Union* entitled "Call for cuts, tuition hikes at SUNY." Once Governor Patterson alerted us in the spring, budgetary cuts were enacted. However, additional cuts are now requested. According to the article, SUNY's finance committee has approved the 2008-2009 cuts. Early on resignations of TA lines would be replaced, but October brought a hard freeze disallowing substitutions. Any returned 2008-2009 monies from the Schools and Colleges would positively impact the 2009-2010 budget by possibly reducing the impact of 09-10 cuts. We face a painful year of cuts to our base, and the question remains whether grad student support will be part of the 2009-2010 budget. Dean Pryse stressed her desire to be more specific but has not been given sufficient budgetary information. She hopes to retain monies for items she considers sacred such as GTOP and our ability to offer "extended year" dissertation funding. GTOP is a pipeline support for those EOP undergrad students wishing to stay with the University to obtain a masters degree. Stipends have been increased in the last couple years for our grad students. This Fall we promised incoming Fall 2008 students that were consistently funded by their department and eventually achieve advancement to candidacy, that they would be provided an additional or "extended" year of funding to support the writing of their dissertations. If budget cuts are implemented, Dean Pryse believes we will retain at least \$250,000 in next year's budget to continue this program. At this time of the year we normally would be aware of dollar amounts for graduate support funding, but that amount may not be provided until the end of January. Until final figures are provided by SUNY Central, the budget amounts remain uncertain.

Dean Pryse mentioned her invitation and appearance at the Governance Council meeting yesterday. She discussed GAC's amendment to the charter.

3. Chair's Report – L. Kranich

At its last meeting, the Governance Council discussed the Senate Charter amendment proposed by GAC and issued a counter proposal which will be distributed to GAC members.

At the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) meeting on November 3rd, the Interim President and Interim Provost discussed SUNY's budget. The full extent of the mid-year cuts and those for '09-'10 will not be known until after November 18th when the State Legislature returns. It was emphasized that *nothing* will be off the table for consideration.

Also at the SEC meeting, Interim President Philip discussed the student housing shortage and, in particular, mentioned the impact on first year foreign graduate students, among others. The Chair took the opportunity to suggest that first year foreign graduate students be given higher priority than seniors (and possibly juniors) in allocating the current stock.

The Chair mentioned that the Interim Provost's *Going Forward Plan* is well underway, and the results from the campus-wide discussions are being compiled. The impact, if any, on graduate studies is unknown. The Chair suggested accessing the WIKI site for the *Plan* at <https://wiki.albany.edu/display/goingforward/Home>

The issue of statutes of limitations for academic grievances, contained in CEPP's report from October 16, was also discussed at the SEC meeting. The Chair of the Undergraduate Academic Council expressed interest in formulating similar rules at the undergraduate level. However, it was pointed out that each School or College has rules pertaining to undergraduate grievances.

Professor Myrna Friedlander will attend the November 24th GAC meeting to update the Council on the revisions for the Certificate of Graduate Studies in Health Disparities. The Chair will forward the updated information to Council members.

Some of the Council's standing committees are constituted improperly in violation of the Senate Charter. This item has been placed on today's agenda.

Finally, SEC discussed a proposal by the School of Public Health to withdraw from an intended joint venture between Union Graduate College, Albany Medical College and UAlbany. Prior to completing the venture, Union College chose unilaterally to drop Albany Med as a partner and replace it with Mount Sinai. While the original proposal may have received partial endorsement, it was never properly registered

with the State Education Department, nor have any students been admitted to the program. Jon Bartow will investigate what is required to deregister the program, and he will report to the Council at a future meeting. The Council voted unanimously to deregister the program in the event this is necessary.

4. Committee Reports

Committee on Educational Policy and Procedure

The Committee discussed the appropriateness of formulating and adopting uniform guidelines for the establishment of cross-disciplinary MA/PhD programs. The Committee voted unanimously to propose that no new policies are needed and that such programs should be regulated by the current PhD practices, namely, it is left to the discretion of the PhD faculty to decide how many (if any) of the MA credits are applicable to the PhD.

The second item discussed by the Committee pertained to the equivalency of Graduate and Undergraduate Credits. After reviewing suggestions provided by Vice Provost Ray Bromley, the Committee voted 5-0 to retain the current policy where undergraduate credits cannot be applied as transfer credit for a graduate program and only graduate credit is eligible as transfer credit should remain.

The final item for review and discussion regarded policies for Graduate Certificates. Information has come forward and will be presented for discussion at the October 30th meeting.

The Council voted unanimously to separate the three items for voting purposes.

Discussion of MA/PhD programs for the MA Women's Studies/PhD Sociology:
Chair Kranich reminded the Council that GAC had been charged by SEC with investigating precedence for cross-disciplinary MA/PhD degrees and for determining whether it would be appropriate to adopt uniform policies and procedures for such programs. The findings and recommendation by the Council would then be forwarded to Interim President Philip. Despite having found no such precedent elsewhere, it is the recommendation of CEPP that no new procedures are necessary.

Guests were invited to the GAC meeting to discuss concerns and to present questions. K. Reinhold expressed apprehension over approving passage of the bill since it could set a precedent for future programs with no requirements for how many combined courses are acceptable. Would it be possible to approve this program while explicitly recognizing that not every combined program would be similar? Committee Chair Smith commented that a student should not be forced to complete extra classes

simply to fulfill required credits (if there were limitations on the extent of double-counting.) It was emphasized that it is a department's responsibility to ensure that an applicant has completed all requirements before being accepted into an advanced degree program. Also, a review counselor evaluates a student's completed curriculum before granting a doctoral degree. A maximum of 30 credits from completed Master's programs from institutions other than UAlbany are allowed for double-counting toward an advanced degree of equal credits to that of the Sociology PhD simply as a residency requirement.

Kranich pointed out that, from an external point of view, a PhD is often taken to incorporate an MA in *that* discipline. Hence, the perception would be that a graduate holds the *equivalent* of an MA in Sociology, an MA in Women's Studies and a PhD in Sociology. He asked if, in light of the many Women's Studies courses that are currently cross-listed with Sociology, it would be possible to cross-list the specific courses for this MA degree thereby giving the students the option of taking them as Sociology courses? Since the current regulations prohibit double-counting of credits at the same level, a student would have the prerogative to call it a Master's in Sociology or Women's Studies.

It was agreed that some form of cross-disciplinary programs make sense. It is common to have UAlbany MS/MA holders in one discipline apply for a PhD in another area. Examples include MA Latin American, Caribbean and U.S. Latino Studies/PhD Spanish, MA Women's Studies/PhD Sociology, MPA Public Admin/PhD Educational Administration and Policy Studies, etc. The Communication Department, which does not have a doctoral program, advertises a "Sociology/Communication option" within the Sociology PhD Program in which applications are reviewed by both the Communication and Sociology faculty. Students enrolled in the program take approximately half of their total coursework in the Communication Department and eventually obtain a PhD in Sociology with a concentration in Communication. Similarly, students can obtain a PhD in Spanish with a concentration in LACS.

M. Range pointed out that all relevant university bulletins explicitly state that all Master's work must be completed before a student can proceed with a doctoral degree. There may be extreme cases within the same department, but such situations would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Faculty in departments would not accept a student for the Master's or Doctoral program before reviewing a student's credentials. With the MA Women's Studies/PhD Sociology program, it appears the other way around. Few complete the MA in Women's Studies and then apply for a Doctorate in Sociology. Rather, most are matriculated Sociology PhD students who wish to obtain a Master's degree in Women's Studies. Of the 14 prior cases in which students were awarded the two degrees, 11 were PhD students seeking a Master's degree. Range commented that he understands and agrees with granting advanced

standing. However, for the majority of students going through the program, the issue of advanced standing is not applicable. J. Bartow pointed out that a student in a doctoral program wishing to obtain a Master's must apply for that degree and meet the requirements therein.

Smith quoted from the 2000-2001 Graduate Bulletin: "Applicants for admission to the doctoral programs above who have completed graduate courses or programs elsewhere, therefore, may apply for admission with advanced standing and be allowed a maximum of 30 credits for courses applicable to a Ph.D...." A UAlbany Master's program in the same discipline is not limited by double-counting. Smith commented that the Master's faculty must determine the outcome for a doctoral student seeking substitutions via completed Master's courses. For the students cited earlier, all students would have to complete the requirements of the Master's program. Credits completed towards a Master's program are approved by Master's level faculty while the doctoral credits would be approved by the PhD faculty. Smith commented that a student can apply for any desired degree. However, criteria must be met before a student is given admission to any program. Graduate degrees of different levels exist that include double-counting. There are no regulations since students start out in one level and then decide to apply for a higher degree. Again, faculty determines requirements for the programs.

Dean Pryse stated that we are dealing with the issue of *congruent* and *overlapping*. When the program was proposed, nowhere did it state that *all* Women's Studies courses would be accepted in the Sociology PhD program. This program specifies a subset of courses that would be congruent to a PhD program and only those courses would be allowed and counted for a PhD in Sociology. There may also be some confusion between *departments*, *interdisciplinary* and *non-disciplinary*. It is understood that the words "discipline" and "department" are used in the same vein. Many departments now accept Master's degrees/courses from a different department/discipline towards their PhD program if the coursework is equivalent. Women's Studies has cross-listed courses from other departments, and it works for interdisciplinary Women's Studies. It was noted that both Sociology and Women's Studies have determined that the cross-listed courses are a congruent set for the combined program. It was also noted that double-counting exists at the undergraduate level. A student who obtains a Master's in Women's Studies and a Doctorate in Sociology is prohibited from obtaining a Master's in Sociology.

It was noted that questions being raised in today's meeting for this proposed program may be raised by others at SUNY. A student needs a certain amount of discrete credits, and not all courses must be cross-listed. This program has both discrete

courses and other courses that are double-counted. Yet we are proposing this as a standard program, and SUNY will look at it carefully.

Pryse commented that one cannot reverse apply to a Master's program after receiving a PhD (in the same area). When she was Chair of Women's Studies, they investigated doctoral programs at other universities. New doctoral degrees were created for some Women's Studies programs at the University of Michigan.

Kranich commented that if the present bill is forwarded to SUNY without comment by GAC, it may be perceived as an attempt to conceal its novelty. We must acknowledge the lack of precedent. When GAC approved the bill, it was without sufficient knowledge of the background. He commented that GAC should have been informed that no similar (State registered) programs exist at UAlbany or apparently at any other North American universities. G. Moore mentioned that this question was never asked.

Registrar Bob Gibson informed the Chair that until a bill is actually signed by the President, it remains a *proposal* and not a bill. R. Collier commented that a similar incident happened with Religious Studies, where a proposal was turned back after being approved but was not signed by the President.

Range pointed out that the proposal would not simply regularize the current practice of the Women's Studies and Sociology Departments in offering these degrees, and thus avoid the need to approve the same course sequence multiple times, as the sponsors contend. But rather, by combining such cross-disciplinary MA/PhD degrees in a joint program, the proposal creates an entirely new category. In light of this and the excessive double-counting, we will have a problem with SUNY – this is not a 100% bullet proof proposal.

Pryse pointed out that despite its lack of bullet-proofness, combined degree programs would be useful as a marketing device to attract more applicants. It was mentioned that the Economics Department is trying to attract more domestic students and perhaps it could offer some sort of combined program. Also, it would be more attractive for applicants to combine a Master's in Physics and a Doctorate in Nanoscale Science and Engineering.

Regarding precedence, Range commented on the existence of an *external* degree program that combines a Master's in Public Administration and a PhD in Law that involves two universities. Pryse mentioned that the University of Michigan has a variety of dual degree MA/PhD programs including student-initiated programs. Range pointed out that their web site contains a section on double-counting and

double-counting is very limited. Pryse also mentioned the MA in LACS and PhD in Spanish here at UAlbany. Master's students can apply for a PhD in Spanish but with a LACS track. Range asked whether we could establish a Women's Studies track in Sociology rather than create a new structure for which there is no precedent? G. Denbeaux pointed out that Nanoscale Science and Engineering has plenty of programs where students may double-count in the doctoral programs. Similarly, a Women's Studies Master's student could apply for a Doctorate in Sociology and certain students could be pre-approved. He does not believe it is a large step between now and what is being proposed. Smith asked why wouldn't the University want to have this officially on the books with New York State as a registered program as opposed to what is currently occurring unofficially.

Collier commented that although this is logical, we must remember the proposal involves SUNY Central. Although he has no concerns regarding curriculum, there is a concern that it may bounce back from downtown. The proposal needs to be accompanied with more information when going to the President. The premise must be that the doctoral program has 60 credits, and students can double-count at the lower level. He had no qualms about double-counting for the quality of *this* program. He would not want to see the new program interfere with the establishment of a doctoral program in Women's Studies in the future and would welcome an interdisciplinary doctoral program which draws upon 5 or 6 disciplines.

Range again suggested that a Women's Studies track be incorporated within the Sociology PhD program. This would demonstrate concentration in the area without raising the issue of double-counting credits.

Pryse suggested that after 1.5 hours the discussion be closed and the guests asked to leave.

Kranich again asked if the Sociology Department would be willing to cross-list the Women's Studies courses comprising the MA? If so, there would be no need to address the issue of "cross-disciplinarity" since the joint program would be "intradisciplinary." Moore said they would not be willing to do so. J. Bartow pointed out that in cross-listing courses, they are then officially offered by both departments. If the courses currently exist within both departments, then they are probably already cross-listed. Sociology does have a "gender track." Gender studies within the department is highly ranked.

After invited guests departed the meeting, the Council voted 8-1-1- to accept and approve the first part of the Committee's report. Kranich moved that, if the Interim President were to sign the bill and forward it to SUNY, then it should be accompanied

by a note explaining the precedent-setting nature of the program. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-3-1. Jon Bartow offered to compose the wording.

Actions on other items in the Committee report were postponed until the next meeting.

Committee on Admissions and Academic Standing

The Committee considered Petition 0809-2 and voted unanimously to approve the student's petition. After Chair Clyman presented the student's petition, the Council voted 7-0-0 to approve the Committee's recommendation and in doing so, therefore, the student's petition for exception.

Committee on Curriculum and Instruction

The Committee reviewed two requests: (1) the School of Business has proposed a realignment of its accounting programs, and (2) the School of Public Health is requesting modifications to its DPH program. The Committee forwarded questions on both proposals to the Schools and will again address the two requests once answers are obtained. The Council voted unanimously to accept the Committee's report.

5. Committee Memberships

Jon Bartow noted (thanks to Jean McLaughlin) that Library faculty are considered teaching faculty. In consideration of specified GAC committee memberships as detailed in the Senate Charter, Greg Denbeaux volunteered to remain on the Committee on Curriculum & Instruction but also join the Committee on Admissions and Academic Standing. Jon will analyze the memberships and propose to the GAC Chair what schools and/or colleges should be solicited for additional volunteers.

END OF GAC 11/11/2008 MINUTES

Attachment #1

To: Graduate Academic Council (GAC)

From: Christy Smith, Chair
GAC Committee on Educational Policy and Procedures (CEPP)

Date: November 11, 2008

Re: Report and Recommendation

The GAC CEPP met on 10/30/08. In attendance were C. Smith (Chair), M. Earleywine, J. McLaughlin, K. Reinhold-Larsson and B. Shaw. Attached is the report and recommendations from the Committee.

Report to the Graduate Academic Council from the GAC Committee on Educational Policy and Procedures, November 11, 2008

MA Women's Studies/PhD Sociology

The Committee was charged with suggesting whether or not it would be appropriate to formulate and adopt uniform guidelines and/or criteria for the establishment of MA/PhD programs and, if so, to propose a timetable.

After careful consideration of the proposal and current University graduate policy, the Committee agreed (4-0) to recommend that no new policies or procedures need to be created for this program and it should be regulated by the current PhD policies for all other programs. Currently, students who complete any Master's degree at the University can apply to a PhD program and it is left up to the PhD department to decide how many (if any) of the credits are applicable to the PhD program. The faculty are responsible for the examination of course to course relevancy and decide if the courses taken meet the course content of any of the required PhD courses and then apply them to the degree program.

There are no regulations in the Graduate Bulletin that limit the amount of credits a UAlbany Master's degree can be used towards a UAlbany PhD. It is a common occurrence to have UAlbany MS/MA holders in one discipline apply to a PhD in another area. Examples that already occur are (but are not limited to): MA Latin American, Caribbean and U.S. Latino Studies/PhD Spanish (which is advertised as such <http://www.albany.edu/lacs/02-05gradprograms.html>), MA Women's Studies/PhD Sociology, MPA Public Admin/PhD Educational Administration and Policy Studies, MS in ANY of the School of Education teacher programs/PhD Educational Administration and Policy Studies, MS General Education Studies/PhD Curriculum, MS Educational Psychology and Methodology/Psy.D School Psychology.

Even students who complete an MS/MA at another institution can still apply a large amount of credits (if not all) from their MA/MS to a UAlbany PhD program. The policy states that:

Residence Study and Advanced Standing

Of the credits of graduate study required beyond the baccalaureate and antecedent to final dissertation research and writing established for all doctoral programs at least 50%, or 30 credits minimum for programs of less than 60 credits total, must be completed through graduate study at this University.

Applicants for admission to the doctoral programs who have completed graduate courses or programs elsewhere may apply for admission with advanced standing

http://www.albany.edu/graduatebulletin/requirements_doctoral_degree.htm#doctoral_residence

Again, it is the doctoral faculty that must decide the course to course relevancy and if there are courses that do fit into the PhD curriculum, then the faculty allows the student apply them to the PhD program. Since the Sociology PhD program is 60 credits, a student who did not complete a Master's at UAlbany, but at another institution, is allowed to apply up to 30 credits from their non-UAlbany MA/MS to the PhD program if the courses are equivalent. This could be in ANY area including Women's Studies if the course work is deemed relevant. This policy coincides with the residency requirement that students must complete at least 50% of their credits at UAlbany. Students in the Psy.D Program must complete 91 credits in order to receive the degree. Based on the above mentioned policy, they can use 45 credits from a prior non-UAlbany degree towards their doctorate (as long as the content is equivalent) even if the MA/MS was not in School Psychology. However, students enrolled in the MA Women's Studies/PhD Sociology would not be regulated by this 50% policy as they completed the MA in residency at the University.

The Committee felt that there is no need for separate policy for the MA/PhD as this already occurs for many programs on campus not registered as combined programs and the Committee recommends to defer to the doctoral faculty to decide if the courses taken meet the curricular requirements of the PhD. This is currently the procedure for any UAlbany student with a UAlbany Master's whether it is in the same programmatic area/discipline or not.

Equivalency of Graduate and Undergraduate Credits

The Committee thoroughly reviewed the proposal submitted by Vice Provost Ray Bromley for policy to address matters of undergraduate credit to graduate credits equivalency. The Committee agreed 5-0 that the current policy that undergraduate credits cannot be applied as transfer credit for a graduate program and only graduate credit is eligible as transfer credit should remain. The Committee recommends that the policy not be changed and undergraduate credits are not acceptable for transfer into a graduate program and they are not equivalent in any way.

Policies a for Graduate Certificates

The Committee is currently considering policies for the various certificates offered at the University. Information not presented at the meeting on 10/30 has since become available and will be discussed at the next meeting.

Attachment #2

Second Draft (10.19.08)

RELATIONSHIP OF GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE CREDITS

Background:

When a course is “shared resources” 400/500 level, both graduate and undergraduate students usually take the same number of credits, but graduate students are expected to either do additional work or be graded at a higher standard, so as to justify their graduate credit-earning status. A rule of thumb seems to be that when the additional work option is followed, it represents between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$ extra assigned effort for graduate students.

For graduate credit to be counted towards the completion of a specific graduate degree or certificate, it must fall within the regulations for that degree or program, most often counting as independent study, OR the Office of Graduate Studies must accept a recommendation from the Graduate Program Director that it contributes directly to the program and can be taken in lieu of another specified course.

In many programs, it is possible for graduate students to do internship, independent study or directed reading credits as part of their degree.

Some graduate students may wish to acquire an additional foreign language, statistical analysis, computing or other specific skills outside their primary discipline of study as part of their graduate degree, and a Graduate Program Director or Dissertation Committee may indicate that acquiring such knowledge is essential for a student to complete a specific piece of research or to properly prepare herself/himself for future professional work in the field.

The Issue:

In the event that a graduate student requests to take a course from outside their Department and have it count towards their graduate degree, and their Graduate Program Director deems that this is appropriate and recommends that it be counted towards the degree, and the course is only available at the undergraduate level, on what basis might an equivalency between graduate and undergraduate credits be determined?

Three Typical Cases Might Be:

1. A graduate student in a social science or humanities discipline realizes that s/he cannot complete masters thesis or doctoral dissertation research without learning the basics of a third or fourth language. For example, an English/Spanish bilingual historian might need to learn Portuguese if s/he is to research the history of international relations in the Paraná Basin.
2. A graduate student in a social science realizes that s/he cannot complete a masters project or a doctoral dissertation on their chosen topic without doing more advanced statistics or programming courses than are offered at the graduate level in their Department. When that students contacts the appropriate Department, s/he is advised that the most appropriate course to take is an advanced undergraduate course, rather than a graduate course. If the student obtains both the agreement of the instructor that they can audit the course and be examined, and the agreement of their Graduate Program Director that work can be counted for graduate credit, what is an appropriate number of graduate credits?

3. A graduate student asks to do a Study Abroad course (GINS) which was designed for, or is primarily for, undergraduates. Such a course may well be a unique educational opportunity which is valuable to the graduate student, and the student may well have approval from his/her Graduate Program Director to count at least one graduate credit towards their Graduate Degree. Nevertheless, if the graduate student simply follows the schedule of the undergraduates and is evaluated in the same way, how many credits should he/she register for?

Suggestion:

So as to ensure that graduate credits are not granted on the basis of parity with undergraduate credits, and to provide a rough guiding principle if the following four preconditions are fulfilled:

1. When, with permission of instructor, graduate students take courses designed for undergraduates because those courses fulfill key objectives in their graduate study plans;
2. When no comparable graduate courses are available;
3. When taking those courses is approved by the graduate student's Graduate Program Director to contribute towards their graduate degree, and Independent Study or Study Abroad graduate credits can be awarded;
4. When graduate students are assessed to the same standards as the undergraduates taking the same coursework.

It is suggested that the equivalency of credits should be as follows:

- 2 undergraduate credits = 1 graduate credit
- 3 or 4 undergraduate credits = 2 graduate credits
- 5 undergraduate credits = 3 graduate credits
- 6, 7 or 8 undergraduate credits = 4 graduate credits

Attachment #3

This attachment is a pdf file with the subject of “Report and Recommendations” via the CC&I Committee.