

Graduate Academic Council

2021-2022

Minutes of the Graduate Academic Council meeting on 3/1/22, 11 AM via Zoom

<https://albany.zoom.us/j/93081726775?pwd=SDVjNFZEMUhPR2FWWExUL1h2SCsrdz09>

Approved by the Council on 4/6/2022.

In attendance: G. Berg (Chair), S.Appe, K. Colvin, O. Lunin, G. Massara, J. Napoleon, K. Stanwicks, A. Gill, A. Dawson, E. Rich, K. Williams, S. Kent (staff), C. Davis (staff)

Guests: Linda Millenbach, Mary Gallant, and Celine LaValley (School of Public Health); Richard Fogarty (Associate Vice Provost and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education); Kathie Winchester (Undergraduate Education Office); Melissa Powers and Rachael French (Registrar's Office)

1. Approval of this GAC Agenda after moving item 8 before items 6 & 7.
2. Approval of the minutes of the GAC meeting of 2/2/2022 - No updates to the minutes.
3. Dean's Report – Kevin Williams presented
 - a. The annual [Three Minute Thesis](#) competition is coming up; this week are the preliminary rounds. Friday March 11th 3:30 final round. Faculty and staff are encouraged to attend the final round once the location is available.
 - b. Kevin discussed the graduate program re-registration project again. Further information will be sent from the Graduate School once the 145+ programs have been reviewed.
4. Chair's Report – George Berg
 - a. George discussed the UAC effort regarding the undergraduate program re-registration project. Based on what UAC has seen, this will definitely generate business for GAC at some point.
 - b. Items 6 & 7 on the agenda – George offered his appreciation for the GAC members who have volunteered to serve on these sub-committees. GAC members will be hearing from George or Richard Fogarty shortly. Please reach out to George if you would like to volunteer.
5. Program proposal for review: Population Nursing MS
 - a. The general program overview was presented by Mary Gallant and Linda Millenbach. This new program will be fully online and will prepare advanced practice nurses in community and population health. This is an area that nursing is moving into more, but there are not many existing programs to address this need. This program will require a bachelor's in nursing for admission. It will have a blend of nursing and School of Public Health expertise. There are 6 new nursing courses and a change to one existing course to make it online. The rest of the courses are already online as part of the MPH program the school has. This will consist mainly of part-time students who are working in the field already (this is how the current online MPH program is set up so they anticipate this new program being similar). There is a companion proposal at SUNY for BSN; the implementation of BSN and MSN would be at the same time, with the BSN serving as a pathway to the MSN. There is potential for recruiting students from across the country. The school plans to add more concentrations to this program in the future (possibly in Nursing Education and Emergency Preparedness).
 - b. Questions –

- i. What will the clinical experience be? The School of Public Health has a strong relationship with the Department of Health (DOH). This program will prepare nurses for public health experience. The school has reached out to other institutions to build relationships for clinical experiences. Experience will contain the core competencies required for public health nursing.
 - ii. Where are we recruiting? The school will recruit our own BSN students and will need to recruit with community agencies. This program will appeal to nurses who want to broaden and get into the community setting. The school currently has nurses in their online MPH program.
 - iii. Recruiting and placement; where will they work and will you provide career support services? Opportunities will exist in the location of the student's clinical placement. There is potential for industry placements, insurance companies, clinic settings, and in emergency rooms. Because of the pandemic, there will be more opportunities for nurses with experience in population health. The school has a career services unit and they will build on existing Public Health relationships.
 - iv. A motion to approve the proposal was given and no further discussion occurred. GAC voted in favor (10-0-0).
6. Combined Undergraduate/Graduate Policy Sub-committee – Professor Richard Fogarty, Associate Vice Provost and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education
 - a. There is a current program proposal in UAC that is requesting to double count more than 12 credits. Rick is proposing that instead of approving these as individual exceptions, we consider adjusting the existing policies to increase the amount of credits. It does not seem fair to not allow a proportionate amount of credits to double count for graduate programs that are larger than 30 credits. A sub-committee is being created to consider the policy updates.
 - b. Combined programs allow our strongest undergraduate students to be better served and challenged in ways they may not be challenged in their undergraduate programs. There are fiscal issues, but it would benefit our strongest students to loosen these limits.
 - c. The master's degree should represent another achievement beyond the bachelor's degree, so the question is how many credits should be allowed to double count while maintaining the integrity of the graduate program? We need to craft a policy that benefits the varying credit levels while keeping financial concerns in mind.
 - d. Question – is there a number in mind? This will be discussed in the sub-committee but Rick will propose something for the committee to start with.
 - e. There are two issues that need to be considered: (1) how many credits they can double count and (2) when does graduate tuition cost become effective? The sub-committee will need to pull these issues apart because we have to take financial aid regulations into consideration.
7. Shared Resource Course Sub-committee – presented by Jen Goodall; An email from Graduate School last month generated a discussion regarding this policy in both UAC and GAC. George sent out a list of volunteers to Jen for a sub-committee and she will contact the group to set up an initial meeting in a few weeks.
 - a. NYSSED is scrutinizing registration documents, especially in syllabi in terms of shared resource courses. There must be a clearly articulated different set of requirements at the undergraduate versus graduate level of the courses.

- b. There is a concern about the level of learning our graduate students are getting if there are no differentiations between undergraduate and graduate course requirements. Graduate students should be coming away with something different from a course than the undergraduate population. They should be going deeper into the materials. Expectations should be higher, acquisition of comprehension and skills should be higher/deeper. They are paying more for the course.
 - c. Graduate students are also benefitting from having undergraduate students in their courses. Typically the best undergraduate students are registering for the shared resource courses, which also benefits the graduate students.
 - d. There was a brief discussion about the processing of Course Action Forms in terms of approvals and coordination between Undergraduate Education and the Graduate School
8. CC&I Report – Kim Colvin provided the report; report at end of minutes. Motion to accept the report; no discussion took place. GAC voted to accept the report: 10-0-0
9. No other business discussed
10. Adjourn 12:11pm

CCI Report – February 2022

Committee members electronic review: Susan Appe, Haijun Chen, Kimberly Colvin (chair), Andrew Gill, Eliot Rich, Jeannette Sutton

Staff: Colleen Davis

Program Proposals Reviewed: Philosophy MA Program, Atmospheric Science MS and PhD Programs, Computer Science PhD Program, Higher Education MS Program

Philosophy MA Program Proposal:

The Department of Philosophy is proposing edits to their MA program as follows:

- Non-thesis track: 30 credits
 - Reduce the overall credits from 44 to 30
 - Remove the PhD qualifying exams as the culminating requirement
 - Remove the logic requirement
 - Add more course options to the three distribution areas:
 - Metaphysics and Epistemology; add the following:
 - Phi542 Phenomenology
 - Value-Theory; add the following:
 - Phi517 Bioethics and
 - Phi580 Metaethics
 - History-of-Philosophy; add the following:
 - Phi 523 Ancient Ethical Theory
 - Phi 524 17th-19th Century Ethical Theory
 - Phi 556 Pragmatism
 - Phi 557 Greek Philosophy After Aristotle
 - Phi 572 History of Political Philosophy
 - Phi 624 Topics in the History of Philosophy
 - Add a new capstone requirement: A Master's Talk (2 credits)
 - The student will prepare and give a talk based on either (i) the Master's Thesis or (ii) a revision of a research paper done for a Philosophy graduate course. The Master's Talk will ordinarily be taken as an Independent Study (Phi 697) with the faculty member who supervised the thesis or research paper; alternative arrangements are subject to the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee.
- Thesis track: 30 credits
 - Reduce the overall thesis credits from 6 to 4
 - Remove the logic requirement
 - Add more course options to the three distribution areas:
 - Metaphysics and Epistemology; add the following:
 - Phi542 Phenomenology
 - Value-Theory; add the following:
 - Phi517 Bioethics and

- Phi580 Metaethics
- History-of-Philosophy; add the following:
 - Phi 523 Ancient Ethical Theory
 - Phi 524 17th-19th Century Ethical Theory
 - Phi 556 Pragmatism
 - Phi 557 Greek Philosophy After Aristotle
 - Phi 572 History of Political Philosophy
 - Phi 624 Topics in the History of Philosophy
- o Add a new capstone requirement: A Master's Talk (2 credits)
 - The student will prepare and give a talk based on either (i) the Master's Thesis or (ii) a revision of a research paper done for a Philosophy graduate course. The Master's Talk will ordinarily be taken as an Independent Study (Phi 697) with the faculty member who supervised the thesis or research paper; alternative arrangements are subject to the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee.

The department provided the following justification:

- The department is not able to offer Phi532 on a consistent enough basis for master's students to take the course (this is where the logic requirement was covered). After further review, the department does not believe the logic requirement is essential to the MA in the way that it is to the PhD. The logical skills relevant to the MA-level work are taught across the MA curriculum. MA students who go on to seek a PhD will typically receive that preparation in their PhD program. And this aspect of the proposal is in line with the practice of a number of peer institutions who have a logic requirement for the PhD in Philosophy but not for the MA: for example, the University at Buffalo (SUNY), Stony Brook University (SUNY), the University of Minnesota, the University of Georgia, and Wayne State University.
- In establishing the Master's Talk as the capstone for MA students who pursue both the thesis and non-thesis paths, the department referenced the Philosophy MA program at the University of Buffalo (SUNY), who require as their capstone experience a "Master's Project" that "will typically consist of a rewritten version of a seminar paper" under faculty guidance. The department envision this as being a process analogous to revising and preparing a paper for publication (with the course instructor taking the part of a critical peer reviewer), which is a valuable (and transferable) professional skill. They also envision the talk itself as a distinct test of the student's ability to articulate and defend an original philosophical position; candidates will need to respond to questions from faculty and fellow-students in attendance, which is appropriate preparation for future professional presentations.
- The proposed course additions to the three distribution areas were adjusted based on recent course offerings and their current faculty's expertise.

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

Atmospheric Science MS Program Proposal:

The Department of Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences is proposing the following admission requirement changes to their MS and PhD programs:

MS: Add the following (no current admissions requirements to replace)

- An applicant's undergraduate preparation should include: (1) three semesters of a college calculus sequence for science/engineering majors, with a course in differential equations; (2) two calculus-based, college physics courses or related physics and math-based engineering or natural sciences courses; (3) at least one college-level chemistry or geochemistry course.
- A student who is deficient in these subjects will be expected to make up the deficiencies during the first year of graduate study, in consultation with their faculty advisor(s).
- Alternative courses, research, or work experience that demonstrate a strong background in math and physics can provide equivalent preparation.
- With the increasing demand for data analysis skills in professional positions, incoming students are expected to have basic skills in at least one computer coding language.

PhD: Eliminate the existing admission requirements (12 credits in physics, 12 credits in mathematics, including differential equations, and 6 credits in chemistry) and replace it with the bullets below.

- An applicant's undergraduate preparation should include: (1) three semesters of a college calculus sequence for science/engineering majors, with a course in differential equations; (2) two calculus-based, college physics courses or related physics and math-based engineering or natural sciences courses; (3) at least one college-level chemistry or geochemistry course.
- A student who is deficient in these subjects will be expected to make up the deficiencies during the first year of graduate study, in consultation with their faculty advisor(s).
- Alternative courses, research, or work experience that demonstrate a strong background in math and physics can provide equivalent preparation.
- With the increasing demand for data analysis skills in professional positions, incoming students are expected to have basic skills in at least one computer coding language.
- We note that a BSc degree in meteorology or atmospheric sciences (or related programs) is sufficient to apply for admission to the PhD program.

The department provided the following justification:

- This updated text reflects a more diverse spectrum of students that enter ATM programs, and it will give prospective students more guidance how they can prepare for our ATM program. Furthermore, with our broad range of research opportunities in climate-related disciplines, the language used is more inclusive for students with interest in Earth sciences and climate sciences.

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

Computer Science PhD Program Proposal:

The Department of Computer Science is proposing edits to their PhD program as follows:

- Reduce the core course requirement from 14 credits to 13 credits due to the reduction of credits in ICSI500
- ICSI500 is being reduced from 4 to 3 credits

The department is eliminating the lab in ICSI500. Based on the department's justification, the committee voted to approve the changes above (6 approved, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

Higher Education MS Program Proposal:

The Department of Educational Policy and Leadership is proposing edits to their Higher Education MS program as follows:

- Add EPL 612 Career Development (3 credits) to the list available courses for the concentration requirement

This is a new course that the department has created. Based on the department's justification, the committee voted to approve the changes above (6 approved, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).