Minutes of the Graduate Academic Council meeting of April 10, 2020, 10:30 AM via Zoom meeting.

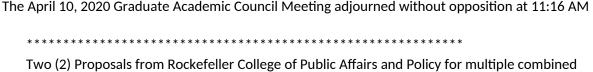Approved by the Council by vote of 10-0-0 on May 8, 2020.

In attendance: G. Berg (Chair), S. Appe, D. Card, A. Dawson, S. Faught, D. Li, O. Lunin R. Morse, K.N. Stanwicks, W. Zakrzewski, K. Williams (ex officio member), S. Kent (staff), S. Pease (staff), C. Davis (staff), J. Deden (staff)

Guests: Edmund Stazyk – Associate Professor and Chair of Public Administration and Policy
Brian Greenhill – Associate Professor and Vice Chair of Department of Political Science
Rachel French – Registrar's Office

1. Chair inquired if there were any additions to the 4/10/2020 GAC Agenda. There were not.

2. Consideration of the draft minutes of the GAC meetings of 2/24/2020 and 3/23/2020. Both previous meetings' draft minutes were approved by the Council by a vote of 10-0-0.

3. Dean's Report – Dean Williams discussed the implementation of an S/U grading basis appeal for graduate students. When originally reviewed in March, it was determined it was not possible since an S/U grading option policy does not exist at the graduate level as it does as the undergraduate level. After review of the existing Graduate Bulletin policies, it was determined that there is flexibility in the Graduate Grading policy. The form has been created and will be distributed to departments and students soon. The form outlines information that students should be aware of before they make the appeal. Specifically, that the grade of S at the graduate level is equivalent to a grade of B or better. This means that graduate students who request to changing the grading basis and receive a grade of B- or lower, will be assigned a grade of U. If the student maintains the A-E grading, the grade of C or B- will earn credits and is counted for graduation. The form requires approval from the course instructor and student's graduate program director to ensure that they know the potential consequences of such a choice.

4. Chair's Report – Chair Berg advocated for increased faculty and staff participation in the Senate and its committees in the near future and onward as the University works to rebuild after the current pandemic.

5. Proposal from Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy for multiple combined undergraduate graduate programs - E. Stazyk, Chair of Public Administration and Policy, reviewed the proposals and fielded any questions regarding the two proposals.
   a. Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, and Cybersecurity BA or BS/International Affairs MIA – Proposal was approved by the Council by a vote of 10-0-0
   b. Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, and Cybersecurity BA or BS/Public Administration MPA – Proposal was approved by the Council by a vote of 10-0-0

6. Summary of the Graduate Admissions Policy updates concerning the English Proficiency requirement – C. Davis explained the current admissions policy and reasons it needed to be

updated. Current policy is very old and of unknown origins. Upon review with other organizations, such as NAGAP and AACROA current policies, the Graduate School updated the English Proficiency requirement policy to be more in line with peer institutions.

7. Reports of the GAC Committee on Curriculum & Instruction – Sydney Faught, Chair reviewed the current proposals before the committee and the approvals. See attached.

    The GAC voted to accept Curriculum and Instruction Committee's report 10-0-0

8. New Business – A. Dawson stated that the ad hoc GRE Committee will have a rough outline of a draft of the committee's findings by May.

The April 10, 2020 Graduate Academic Council Meeting adjourned without opposition at 11:16 AM

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Two (2) Proposals from Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy for multiple combined undergraduate graduate programs:

Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, and Cybersecurity BA or BS/International Affairs MIA – This proposal seeks to establish a combined bachelor's/master's program between the Rockefeller College and the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity (BA/MIA or BS/MIA). This includes all undergraduate programs in CEHC: Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, Cybersecurity, and Informatics. The program would allow students to complete the program in 5.5 years, taking up to 12 graduate credits as undergraduate student, at the undergraduate tuition rate. This will accelerate their master's degree by 1 semester. Students apply during their junior year and take graduate course work during their senior year. Students then enroll officially as graduate students in the fall after they graduate with their bachelor's degree. The master's degree will then take 3 semesters instead of 4.

Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, and Cybersecurity BA or BS/Public Administration and Policy MPA – This proposal seeks to establish a combined bachelor's/master's program between the Rockefeller College and the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity (BA/MPA or BS/MPA). This includes all undergraduate programs in CEHC: Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, Cybersecurity, and Informatics. The program would allow students to complete the program in 5.5 years, taking up to 12 graduate credits as undergraduate student, at the undergraduate tuition rate. This will accelerate their master's degree by 1 semester. Students apply during their junior year and take graduate course work during their senior year. Students then enroll officially as graduate students in the fall after they graduate with their bachelor's degree. The master's degree will then take 3 semesters instead of 4.

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Adjustments to the Existing English Language Proficiency Policies

International students must show English language proficiency in order to attend the University at Albany and obtain immigration documents for F1 visas (i.e. Form I-20). Students typically satisfy this requirement by taking the TOEFL, IELTS, PTE or Duolingo exams. Students can also fulfill the requirement via the following options:

- Applicants who submit official transcripts showing the successful completion of a degree (B or better average) at a college or university in countries where English is the dominant language can have the English Language Proficiency score waived.
- Applicants who have at least two full-time semesters of academic courses (not including English language preparatory programs) at a college or university in countries where English is the dominant language can have the English Language Proficiency Score waived if courses were completed (B or better average) within 2 years time of application.
- Student attended a college or university in a country on a pre-established list (this is not a publicly advertised list).

Due to inconsistencies in our current policies, the Graduate School has updated the language to reflect the following:

- Reduce the number of countries eligible for a waiver if IELTS/TOEFL
  - o The list of countries was outdated and did not align with recommendations from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). The adjusted list was created in consultation with AACRAO and peer institutions (SUNY and non-SUNY).
  - o We are unsure of where this list originated from, but it does not follow current recommendations.
- Applicants who submit official transcripts showing the successful completion of a degree (B or better cumulative average) at a college or university in countries where English is the dominant language can have the English Language Proficiency score waived. NO CHANGE
- Applicants who submit official transcripts showing the successful completion of at least 4 full-time semesters within a 4-year frame time (B or better average not including English language preparatory programs) at a college or university in countries where English is the dominant language can have the English Language Proficiency score waived.
  - o Previous policy allowed for 2 semesters of fulltime study, but in consultation with AACRAO and peer institutions, this is not the current practice. The recommended study is 4 semesters.

These updates are effective with the Spring 2021 admissions cycle and moving forward.

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** Committee on Curriculum and Instruction Reports -

March 26, 2020 and April 8, 2020 via Zoom

Committee Members: Sydney Faught (chair), Billy Zakrzewski, Alec Dawson, Susan Appe (not present on 4/8/20), Dylan Card, Stephen Weinberg, Christopher Wolff

Staff: Colleen Davis

Proposals reviewed: Special Education Inclusion MS, Social Welfare PhD GRE Program Proposal, Professional Science Management AGC Forensic Biology Concentration, Environmental Health Sciences MS and PhD, Public Administration and Policy MPA, Public Sector Management CGS, Nonprofit Management CGS.

3/26/2020

Special Education Inclusion MS Program Proposal

The Division of Special Education is requesting the following changes to their Special Education Inclusion MS program:

- Remove the admissions requirements of NYS Initial Certification in Childhood Education. This would also eliminate the need for the GRE (the Governor mandated GREs for all teacher prep programs a few years ago and the GRE was added by default to all teacher prep programs at that time). The department was not using it as an admissions criteria; it required it based on NYS requirements.
- Change the program to a non-approved teacher preparation program
  - Justification is that the division would like to increase the applicant pool to include students without NYS Initial Certification in Childhood Ed. Currently, only students with this criteria can be admitted. Removing the teacher prep component allows the program to admit a larger group of students (non-teachers, out-of-state teachers, international students).
  - This program is eligible as a "related area" which means teachers who have NYS Initial Certification in Childhood Ed can still apply to this program and be eligible for Professional Certification.
  - This also allows students with other Initial Certification areas to pursue this degree for Professional Certification, since it is considered a "related area."
- Updated to the curriculum as follows:
  - Replace EPSY531/530 (Understanding & Teaching Scientific Inquiry & Basic Data Analysis; Statistical Methods I) with ESPE655 (Assessment of Students with Disabilities)
    - ESPE655 is a Special Education focused statistics course; content is similar but EPSE655 is tailored to the needs of pre-service and in-service teachers instead of educational researchers
  - Require both ESPE650 (Instructional Environments and Practices for Students with Disabilities) and ESPE655 (Assessment of students with Disabilities)
    - Previously the program required either 650 or 655, but now 655 is required in lieu of EPSY531/530, therefore both courses are now required.
  - Require ESPE653 (Managing School and Classroom-wide Student Behavior)
    - Previously the program required ESPE653 or other SPE courses as approved by the advisor; the department is eliminating the flexibility to better match the needs of special education teachers
  - Educational Psychology requirement: previously the program allowed multiple course options. They are changing this to EPSY521 (Development in Childhood)
    - This course better matches the needs of special education teachers

- o Literacy requirement: previously the program allowed multiple course options for 6 credits. They are changing this to ESPE654 (Teaching Students with Severe and Multiple Disabilities) and ESPE656 (Teaching Written Expression to Students with Disabilities).
  - These courses better match the needs of special education teachers.
- o Replace EPSY680 (Research Project in Educational Psychology) with ESPE683 (Research in Special Education Capstone Project).
  - This is a new course. EPSY680 was geared towards researchers rather than practitioners, therefore the division is replacing it with a new special education course that is more in line with the needs of their students in their professional roles.

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

Social Welfare PhD GRE Program Proposal

The School of Social Welfare is requesting the elimination of the GRE admissions criteria for their PhD program based on the following justification:

- Recent studies show little correlation between GRE scores and success in graduate school
- They believe eliminating this requirement will allow the school to attract a wider range of students and make it easier for applicants form all backgrounds to apply for graduate study
- The doctoral committee believes that other tools for reviewing prospective students (grades, recommendation letters, research experience) are better indicators of an applicant's ability to succeed in their program

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

Professional Science Management AGC Forensic Biology Concentration Program Proposal

The Department of Biological Sciences is requesting the following changes to their Professional Science Management AGC Forensic Biology Concentration program:

- Change the name of the concentration to Forensic Science Investigation and Management. This aligns with the recent changes to the Forensic Biology MS program (currently pending approval from SUNY and NYSED).
- Reduce the available course options in the Business/Policy/Management group; the requirement continues to be 9 credits from School of Business and Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy.
  - o Eliminate specifically BMGT 513 Organizational Behavior and Managerial Skills, BMGT 514 Human Resources Management, RPAD 618 Public Personnel Administration, RPAD 622 Methods of Public Policy Analysis
  - o All of the eliminated courses, outside of RPAD622, are part of the elective requirement in the updated Forensic Biology MS program (renamed Forensic Science MS). They are

eliminated as options in the AGC since they would have taken them as part of the MS.

- o The AGC requires at minimum 9 credits in the Business/Policy/Management group. The other program requirements (6 credits of science and 3 credits of internship) can be double counted between the AGC and MS programs, if the MS requires these courses. Eliminating the other courses makes sense because the student would have potentially taken them as part of the MS requirements, and the AGC requires these 9 graduate credits above and beyond the MS requirements.

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

Environmental Health Sciences MS and PhD Program Proposals

The Department of Environmental Health Sciences is requesting the following language be added to their MS and PhD programs:

- Students are required to maintain an overall grade point average of B (3.0); however, for any core courses in which a grade of C+ or lower is received, the core course must be retaken.
- This language has been in the departmental handbook since the 1990s, but was never officially added to the graduate bulletin requirements.
- The department feels that grades less than B- can impact future coursework (i.e. a student conducting research in Environmental Toxicology will have difficulties understanding the basic principles of toxicology if they receive a grade below B- in this course).

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

4/8/2020

Public Administration and Policy MPA Program Proposal

The Department of Public Administration and Policy are requesting the following changes to the Public Administration and Policy MPA program:

- Reduce the overall credits from 45-49 to 36.
  - o The department is reducing all 4 credit courses to 3 credits. They feel this will make courses more accessible to students from outside the department. It will also allow the department to pursue new enrollment initiatives that benefit both the College and University, such as joint degree programs with other units and other SUNY schools.
  - o The reduction will also make the program more marketable to prospective students as most of their peer competitors have 36 credit MPA programs. The department did a systematic review of 38 leading MPA/MPP programs in the United States; each is a director competitor for graduate students. Of these programs, 34 have curricula structured around 3 or fewer credit hour courses.
  - o The department will not be changing the underlying content of the courses, but rather they will be reducing the amount of time spent on the concepts addressed in each

course. The scope of assignments may change proportionally, but the nature and overarching content of the assignments will remain the same.

- Add RPAD502 (Fundamentals of Human Resources Management) as a core course.
    - o   Recent market analyses suggest human resource management positions are and will continue to be in high demand. Many of our students eventually assume management roles in their jobs and therefore familiarity with the human resource management functionality is a core management skill.
- Combine RPAD507 (Professional Applications I, 2 credits), RPAD508 (Professional Applications II, 2 credits), and RPAD509 (Public Service Intern Seminar, 1 credit) into one course, RPAD507 (Professional Applications) for 3 credits.
    - o   The new course will maintain the capstone portfolio project of RPAD509 and incorporate professional development content from 507 and 508.
    - o   Merging the content of these three courses will allow students to learn and apply professional development skills directly to the capstone project, and will provide students with a polished, professional learning artifact that could be shared with potential employers.
- Reduce the cluster (concentration) course requirement from 5 to 4 courses.
    - o   This is to accommodate the new course RPAD502 without increasing the overall requirements.

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

Public Sector Management CGS Program Proposal

Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy are requesting the following changes to the Public Sector Management CGS program:

- Reduce the overall required credits from 20 to 15 (course changing from 4 to 3 credits)
- Add distance learning mode of delivery
- In the Public Management Concentration:
    - o   Remove RPAD500 from the core course requirement. Replace with RPAD610
    - o   Add the following courses to the elective requirement (2 courses required): RPAD500, RPAD529, RPAD532, RPAD541, and RPAD645
- In the Public Economics and Finance Concentration:
    - o   Eliminate the following courses in the elective requirement (3 courses): RPAD540, RPAD631, RPAD654, RPAD5659
    - o   Add the following courses in the elective requirement (3 courses): RPAD648, RPAD659 (new topic title).
- In the Local Government Management Concentration:
    - o   Remove RPAD684 from the core course requirement. Replace with RPAD501
    - o   Eliminate the following courses in the elective requirement (2 courses): RPAD631, RPAD651
    - o   Add RPAD641 to the elective requirement
- In the Public Policy Concentration:

- o Eliminate RPAD540 in the core course requirement. Replace with several options:
    - RPAD522
    - RPAD529
    - RPAD626
    - RPAD643
- o Add RPAD538 to the elective requirement (1 course).

The department is updating the course listings based on currently offered courses. This program was originally registered in 1990 and was very vague. Based on the department's justification above, the committee voted to approve the proposed program changes (6 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

<u>Nonprofit Management and Leadership CGS Program Proposal</u>

Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy are requesting the following changes to the Public Sector Management CGS program:

- Reduce the overall required credits from 20 to 15 (course changing from 4 to 3 credits)
- Add distance learning mode of delivery
- In the core course requirements, eliminate RPAD614 and CIST614 as options. Add RPAD610. This requirement needs one course and the student can choose from a list.
- The student can choose three courses in a list of concentration areas. The department is eliminating and adding courses to each of the concentration areas:
    - o Managing Organizations
        - Eliminate: RPAD524, RPAD615, RPAD633, RSSW628
        - Add: RPAD527, RPAD541, RPAD618
    - o Information Management
        - Eliminate: CIST523, CIST546
        - Add: RPAD550, RPAD570, RPAD 650, RPAD 652, RPAD655, BITM604
    - o Financial Management
        - Eliminate: RPAD631, RPAD646
        - Add: RPAD532, RPAD659, RSSW795
    - o Public Policy
        - Eliminate: RPAD612, RPAD675, RSSW600
        - Add: RPAD522, RPAD529, RPAD645
    - o General Electives
        - Eliminate: RPAD511, RPAD512, RPAD521, RSSW705, RSSW795

The department is updating the course listings based on currently offered courses. This program was last registered in 2001 and course availability has changed. Based on the department's justification above, the committee voted to approve the proposed program changes (6 approve, 0 disapprove, 0 abstain).

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