

Graduate Academic Council
2008 – 2009

Minutes of the Council meeting of September 23, 2008
Approved by the Council on October 27, 2008

In attendance: J. Baronner (staff), J. Bartow (staff), F. Bolton (staff), T. Clyman, G. Denbeaux, S. Friedman, H. Horton, L. Kranich (Chair), K. Reinhold,

Unable to attend: M. Earleywine, J. McLaughlin, A. Pomerantz, M. Pryse, B. Shaw, C. Smith

1. Group introductions were made at the start of the meeting.
2. Minutes from 5/1/2008 were voted on and approved with one abstention.
3. MA Women's Studies/PhD Sociology

The Chair reported that after the Senate voted and approved the MA Women's Studies/PhD Sociology proposal, it was forwarded to the Interim President for signature. However, it was then learned that no such program exists throughout the entire SUNY system or possibly elsewhere in the country, and this information was passed on to the Interim President. The Senate Executive Committee then sent the issue back to GAC to consider whether there should be any uniform guidelines or criteria. GAC was charged with the task of preparing a briefing paper for the Interim President identifying comparable programs elsewhere, examining issues that might arise concerning such programs (when they should be permitted, how they should be structured, the extent of overlapping credits, potential problems/conflicts, etc.), and suggesting a timeline for formulating guidelines, if necessary. The current proposal will remain with the Interim President until the GAC completes its report. The issue does not concern the merits or demerits of the current proposal but rather the lack of precedent and forethought. It was pointed out that the outcome may be that no change to the current arrangement is deemed necessary. During the interim period, the departments can continue the status quo of evaluating each student's proposal on a case-by-case basis. The Chair mentioned that the target date for completing the report is approximately three weeks. The Educational Policies & Procedures Committee was assigned the task of drafting the preliminary report.

4. GAC Committee Memberships

Jon Bartow supplied a list of the initial GAC standing committee memberships for 2008-2009 to the Council. After a more detailed description of the responsibilities of the Committee on Admissions and Academic Standing, Professor Toby Clyman agreed to Chair the Committee. The Council voted and moved to accept the given names for all three committees: Admissions & Academic Standing, Curriculum & Instruction, and Educational Policies & Procedures.

5. Dean's Report – H. Horton

The Interim President informed the Senate at Monday's meeting that the budget is gloomy. Grad student support at this time is in limbo.

The Graduate Ombuds program has a reconstituted committee, and new Ombuds faculty have been recruited. There are approximately six new faculty and six new committee members. Training will be held October 15th with a morning and afternoon session. Two previous Ombuds faculty will attend the training to speak to new members. After training is completed the web page will be updated to include names of trained faculty/committee members. Previous student usage included 4-5 contacts to Elga Wulfert and two contacts with David McCaffrey. Graduate Directors will be encouraged to inform students of this service and will then direct students to the program's website. It was encouraging to witness growth from only a couple individuals on the committee to the present six faculty and six committee members.

Last year we wrote a proposal to SUNY Central for funding to establish PSM (Professional Science Masters). Although the proposal was approved, funding did not appear until late June. During the interim, a group was formed with programs ready to be launched. A meeting with a business advisory board was held this past Spring. PSM was presented at an international conference in Finland during the Summer and provided validation for what the University and SUNY Central is trying to accomplish. A major meeting will be held next Monday to include the Sloan Foundation, which is providing funding for PSM. A follow-up meeting will be held in Syracuse on Tuesday with Hayward and two other SUNY Albany faculty in attendance. The Syracuse meeting will include the local business community. The hope is to have PSM up and running by April 2009.

6. Chair's Report – L. Kranich

The Middle States Self Study will soon be underway. An implementation plan has been written. When the Chair returns from the next Senate Executive Committee meeting, he will inform GAC of the Council's upcoming responsibilities for the self study.

The Chair discussed the IRCAP amendment proposed last semester. The amendment will create a new level of review for academic proposals not originating from colleges and schools offering degree programs. There were two parallel and overlapping issues that affect GAC.

- Three graduate level UNI courses were reviewed with one, UNI 600, being approved. Later it was determined that GAC had no authority to approve these courses. The remaining two courses were placed on hold. GAC proposed to amend the University Senate Charter to include language giving GAC and the Committee on Curriculum & Instruction authority to review new or revised graduate level University-wide courses and for GAC to take final action on such courses. The proposed charter amendment is currently before the Governance Council.
- At the May 1, 2008 meeting, Council expressed concern that if a proposal fails to be approved by IRCAP, it may not reach GAC and/or GAC may not become aware of its existence. The Council agreed to recommend that GAC be represented on the

appellate board. Chair Kranich reviewed a series of charts depicting the current and proposed steps in the peer-review process for academic proposals. The IRCAP proposal is expected to be discussed and voted upon at an upcoming Senate meeting.

The Chair mentioned that he was approached on more than one occasion with suggestions for agenda items for GAC.

1. Graduate audits via the DARS system indicating which requirements have been fulfilled and which need to be completed.
 2. The Senate Charter mentions that GAC is responsible for reviewing assessment reports pertaining to graduate programs.
 3. The Chair mentioned having learned of new combined graduate level programs via our webpage or the local *Times Union*. One example was the combined MBA/JD through Albany Law School. (Jon Bartow mentioned the degree was an articulation agreement between the University and Albany Law School. There is no curriculum change. If Albany Law School was owned by the University and involved double counting, then GAC would be required to review the proposed degree.) A second example involves the participation by the School of Public Health in the International Peace Corps Master's International Program.
 4. The question arose of whether Graduate student housing is or should be an issue before GAC. Once the expansion of undergraduate student recruitment was implemented, that created a housing crunch on campus. This led to a decision to remove Grad students from university housing. The most crucial impact is on international students. It was decided that this issue is primarily the responsibility of ULC and the Office of International Education, although GAC reserves the right to consider the issue if it is felt that there is an academic impact.
 5. The Chair requested that *major* issues brought before the Council – such as new program proposals – be discussed at an initial GAC meeting and voted upon at the next meeting. This would give Council members sufficient time to consider the proposal and to investigate all relevant background information.
7. Future Meetings
- 9/23 (Tuesday)
 - 10/27 (Monday)
 - 11/11 (Tuesday)
 - 11/24 (Monday)
 - 12/8 (Monday)

END OF GAC 9/23/2008 MINUTES

Attachment #1

**UNIVERSITY SENATE
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

Introduced by: Graduate Academic Council

Date: May 1, 2008

**PROPOSAL TO
ESTABLISH A COMBINED M.A. WOMEN'S STUDIES / PH.D. SOCIOLOGY
PROGRAM**

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That the University Senate approves the attached Proposal as approved by the College of Arts & Sciences and the Graduate Academic Council.
2. That this proposal be forwarded to the President for approval.

Proposal for a Combined M.A. in Women's Studies/PhD in Sociology Program

MA Women's Studies, SED Program Code 22135, HEGIS Code 4903

PhD Sociology, SED Program Code 03071, HEGIS Code 2208

Proposed Combined Program:

MA Women's Studies / PhD Sociology, HEGIS 4903/2208

This proposal for a combined M.A./PhD program is the outcome of a longstanding pattern of informal cooperation between the Departments of Sociology and Women's Studies, allowing Sociology PhD students with strong interests in Gender Studies and Women's Studies students with sociological interests to combine their work in these two programs. This is facilitated by the depth and strength of Sociology faculty with Joint or Affiliated appointments in Women's Studies, as well as the graduate-level cross-listed coursework taught by these faculty members. It is also facilitated by the willingness of both departments to allow requirements for one program to be included as a portion of the coursework for the other program.

Both the Sociology and the Women's Studies Departments have strong reputations nationally and on this campus. The Sociology Department has a strong record of scholarly accomplishment that has led to increasing national recognition and stature. The *U.S. News & World Report* ranking of sociology graduate programs in 2005 ranked the Department tied for 25th, with a ranking of 14 in the area of gender. An analysis in *Footnotes*, the newsletter of the American Sociological Association, in 2000 placed the Department third nationally in articles published in three leading journals of the discipline, a ranking that has extended back to the mid-1980s. National Research Council rankings place the Department in the first quartile on such measures as citations and publications per faculty. Sociology is also recognized within the University: the College of Arts and Sciences Strategic Plan cites Sociology as one of two doctoral programs that have achieved standards of excellence and are targeted for resources to sustain their reputations, and the University's Mission Review II document included Sociology among five campus graduate programs of distinction that have achieved national prominence.

There are no official rankings of Women's Studies Departments and Programs by the NRC or by the National Women's Studies Association; thus there are no comparative data for the Women's Studies Department, other than the reputation and productivity of its faculty. As one such indicator, the core and joint faculty include two Distinguished Professors, five Collins Fellows, and 8 holders of University Excellence Awards in Service, Teaching, and/or Research. In addition, the University at Albany's Women's Studies program is one of the largest and oldest in the country. The ten universities in the United States that offer a Ph.D. in Women's Studies could be considered the top tier in Women's Studies, and one of our faculty members received her Ph.D. in Women's Studies at Emory. Among the 25 universities with freestanding Master's degree programs,

University at Albany is one of the ten largest, and no others currently are located in New York State. Thus, because of our size, long history, organization around important contemporary themes, strong faculty record, and regional location, we believe the Women's Studies Department is well positioned to participate in this joint PhD program.

For many years, there has been a great deal of overlapping strength between the Departments of Sociology and Women's Studies. A large proportion (10 of 25) of Sociology faculty list Gender as a significant area of research, with 3 holding joint appointments and 5 additional faculty affiliates in Women's Studies. Many Women's Studies master's students have interests that overlap with areas of teaching and research in the Sociology Department and take Sociology courses (some of which are cross-listed), while Gender is one of the most popular areas for comprehensive examinations among PhD students in the Sociology Department.

Since the inception of the Women's Studies M.A. program, 11 Sociology PhD students have completed the Women's Studies M.A. while pursuing their PhD, and 2 Women's Studies M.A. students have been accepted into the Sociology PhD program. One additional student started both programs in Fall 2005 and is pursuing them concurrently.

We would like to formalize this option for three reasons. First, making this a formal joint program will ensure that current students are aware of this option, rather than the more informal publicity we have provided to current students in the past. Second, we will be able to advertise the joint program to prospective students through both of our departments and thus attract more students to the University who may be interested in this unique opportunity. Third, this may serve as a first step in the process through which the Women's Studies Department will eventually introduce its own PhD program.

The requirements for each program remain the same. They will be described below. Some explanatory material follows the programs. An Excel file containing a sample year-by-year schedule showing typical coursework for each separate program and the combined program is attached.

Women's Studies M.A.

Course Requirements (32 credits minimum)

WSS 510 Graduate Orientation (1-2)

WSS 565 Feminist Theory (4)

WSS 590 Research Seminar (4)

Graduate course that considers the intersections of race, class, and sexuality with sex/gender (can be met by many possible courses)

Grounding in the Disciplines (3-8 credits) Students are required to ground themselves in more than one discipline or interdisciplinary area (added to this proposal to conform to new Women's Studies proposed MA requirements)

WSS 690 Final Project (3-4). Options for the project include a research-based paper, a comprehensive exam based on a reading list, or a pedagogy or community project with a

written component.

Other courses as advised, including three that form a coherent field of study and that are chosen in consultation with the Graduate Director.

Sociology Ph.D.

Course Requirements (60 credits minimum)

Soc 509 Research Methods (3)

Soc 510 Sociological Theories 1 (3)

Soc 511 Sociological Theories 11 (3)

Soc 522 Intermediate Statistics (3)

Soc 590A Orientation to Sociology*

Soc 590B Orientation to Sociology*

Soc 609 Multivariate Analysis (3)

Teaching Tool Requirement (3)

Supporting courses as advised (42 Credits)

*Attendance is mandatory; course is 0 credits. .

Other requirements

Research Tool Requirement (This may be met by proficiency in a foreign language or through coursework; if the latter, credits do not count toward the 60 credits for the degree.)

Methods Comprehensive Examination (contingent on grades)

Comprehensive Examinations in two subject areas

Dissertation

Notes

The total number of credits for each degree will remain the same: 32 for the M.A. and 60 (plus Research Tool) for the PhD. Because of overlap, the combined total is 64 credits (including the Research Tool). The 32 credits of Women's Studies Department courses will overlap with 28 credits of the Sociology PhD, plus the 4 credits of WSS590 which counts as the PhD Research Tool (see below). It is assumed that the courses taken to meet the new Women's Studies Grounding in the Disciplines requirement will be likely to count toward the PhD, given that the PhD program allows much flexibility in taking courses outside the Department.

This implies that a significant body of courses, designated Soc/WSSxxx elective on the attached spreadsheet, will count toward both degrees simultaneously. (This designation is meant to indicate an elective course that is allowed to count toward both programs, as advised by both the Sociology and the Women's Studies Graduate Directors. This may or may not be an officially cross-listed course, and may be in a department other than Sociology or Women's Studies.) This should not be a problem, given the willingness of

the Graduate Directors to be flexible about electives. Currently there are four courses that are formally cross listed between the two departments, and many others have been counted toward both degrees in the past.

It is assumed that the two departments and their respective Graduate Directors will cooperate on both admissions and advisement, and that the Graduate Directors will communicate as needed about students in the joint program. Applicants will be reviewed by both Graduate Committees concurrently, so as to avoid delays. Among those students who are deemed acceptable for admission by both departments, the Graduate Directors will consult with each other about the students to be offered the line(s) assigned to the joint program, with the Women's Studies Graduate Committee making the final decision. The deadline for applications for the joint program (with funding) will be the current deadline for such applications in Sociology, January 15th.

The Sociology comprehensive exam in Gender (and others such as Sexualities if approved) will count as the Women's Studies Master's project. This is the current practice.

WSS590 (Research Seminar) is among the courses that count toward the Research Tool requirement for Sociology.

Soc PhD				WS M.A.				Combined							
Fall Year 1		Spring Year 1		Fall Year 1		Spring Year 1		Fall Year 1		Spring Year 1					
Soc509	Methods (3)	Soc522	Statistics (3)	WSS510	Orientation (1-2)	WSS590	Res. sem. (4)	Soc509	Methods (3)	Soc522	Statistics (3)				
Soc510	Theory I (3)	Soc511	Theory II (3)	WSS565	theory (4)	WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	WSS510	Orientation (2)	Soc590B	Orientation(0)				
Soc590A	Orientation (0)	Soc590B	Orientation(0)	WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	Soc590A	Orientation (0)	Soc/WSSxxx	elective (3-4)				
Socxxx	elective (3)	Socxxx	elective (3)					WSS565	Theory (4)	Soc/WSSxxx	elective (3-4)				
Fall Year 2				Spring Year 2				Fall year 2				Spring Year 2			
Soc609	Adv.Meth(3)	Soc606	Co teaching(3)	WSS689	Prop. Prep. (3-4)	WSS690	Mast. Proj (3-4)	Soc510	Theory(3)	Soc511	Theory(3)				
Socxxx	elective (3)	Socxxx	elective(3)	WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	Soc609	Adv. Meth(3)	WSS590	Res. sem.(4)				
Socxxx	elective (3)	Socxxx	elective(3)	WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	if needed		Soc/WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	Soc606	Co teach.(3)				
methods comprehensive exam if needed				if needed				methods comprehensive exam if needed							
Fall Year 3				Spring Year 3				Fall Year 3				Spring Year 3			
Soc 693	Comp prep (3)	Take first Comp exam				WSS690	Mast. Proj.(3-4)	WSS690	Mast. Proj.(3-4)	Take Comp exam on Gender					
Socxxx	elective (3)	Soc 793	Comp prep (3)			Soc/WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	Soc/WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	Soc793	Comp prep(3)				
Socxxx	elective (3)	Socxxx	elective(3)			Soc/WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	Soc/WSSxxx	elective (3-4)	Soc/WSSxxx	elective (3)				
												Socxxx elective (3)			
												Receive WS M.A. end of year			
Fall Year 4				Spring Year 4				Fall Year 4				Spring Year 4			
Take second Comp exam				ABD status				Take second Comp exam				ABD status			
Socxxx	elective (3)	Submit and defend				Socxxx	elective (3)	Socxxx	elective (3)	Submit and defend					
Socxxx	elective (3)	proposal				Socxxx	elective (3)	Socxxx	elective (3)	proposal					
research tool course								Socxxx elective (3)							
if still needed															

Please see note on proposal text regarding Soc/WSSxxx designation.

Attachment #2

MEMORANDUM

TO: Graduate Academic Council

FROM: Prof. Myrna Friedlander (Educational and Counseling Psychology) and Prof. Janine Jurkowski (Public Health)

DATE: October 17, 2008

RE: Addendum to proposed Health Disparities Certificate proposal

At the recommendation of the University Policy and Planning Committee, which unanimously approved our proposal yesterday, we are submitting the following information about the anticipated marketability of the proposed Health Disparities Certificate.

As you have read in the proposal, this Certificate is interdisciplinary and involves coursework in three Schools within the University: Public Health, Education, and Social Welfare. The program is designed as a specialization for current graduate students in master's and doctoral programs in the three Schools as well as for local individuals (college graduates) working in public health, social work, or counseling who desire to gain expertise in this critically needed area of health care.

As noted by the three Deans (Nasca, Briar-Lawson, and Bangert-Drowns), reducing minority health disparities is on the national agenda in each field. Having the Certificate would give specialized skills to our graduate students which will aid them in their respective professions and help them be more marketable upon graduation. As an example, five currently open searches for Assistant Professors in psychology at the University of North Dakota, Boston College, Lehigh University, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and the University of Missouri-Columbia are specifically requesting applicants with "expertise in multiculturalism and a commitment to diversity and social justice." Further, in public health, there are professor positions postings asking for research across the disciplines but with an "emphasis on health disparities" and community health. The most recent examples include openings at the Northwestern University, Duke, UMass Amherst, Toro College and Mt Sinai School of Medicine in NYC, and University of Illinois at Chicago. There are also non-academic positions such as the Merwyn (Mitch) R. Greenlick Endowed Scientist for Health Disparities position at the Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research. More indication of the demand is that the National Cancer Institute's Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities recently had two new health scientist administrator positions available in Statistics, Research, and Evaluation.

An internet search for similar Certificate programs found that they are being offered only at a few institutions: Teacher's College, Columbia; University of South Florida, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Pittsburgh-Greensburg. Another health disparities certificate is offered by the Michigan Public Health Training Center.

Many schools of public health around the nation have a focus on reducing minority health disparities, without a specific degree in the specializations. The UAlbany School of Public Health provides general education about various areas of public health, but with no specialization in health disparities. No doubt there will be many individuals from the State Department of Health and HRI interested in this Certificate, who might then apply to the master's program in public health since the CDC and NIH are emphasizing the need to address health disparities more and more in the request for applications. For example, there was a recent announcement for a request for applications with the title: Elimination of Health Disparities through Translation Research: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-CD-08-001.html>.

Similarly, there may be many bachelor's level practitioners in social work or counseling who may be attracted to the Certificate program as a way to assess their interest and readiness for graduate work at the University at Albany. The counseling psychology PhD program, accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) and highly ranked nationally, receives over 100 applications annually for the PhD, and possibly 75% of applicants are attracted to that program because of its emphasis on diversity and social justice (several faculty are doing research in this area, and one recently hired assistant professor has a research agenda in mental health disparities). The Certificate program will also be open to students in the APA-accredited PhD program in clinical psychology (Arts & Sciences), which also has faculty interested in multicultural issues. Thus, having the Certificate will increase our visibility in these doctoral-level mental health graduate programs, likely attracting more students (and faculty) of color.

Thank you in advance for considering this proposal.

Attachment #3

“CGS in Health Disparities” is in a PDF format.

Attachment #4

Microsoft Power Point format showing current and proposed steps in Peer-Review Process for Academic Proposals.

Attachment #5

“CC&I Report_Eight items of business.pdf” is an April 29, 2008 memo to Graduate Academic Council.