

12/10/2018 GAC Minutes

Minutes of the Graduate Academic Council meeting of December 10, 2018, 12:40 PM, MSC 102A
Approved by the Council on, February 1, 2019 by vote of 7-0-0.

In attendance: S. Faight, C. Lawson, A. Morse, S. Rafferty, KN. Stanwicks, T. Williams-Hart, W. Zakrzewski, J. Bartow (staff), C. Davis (staff), S. Kent (staff), S. Pease (staff), J. Deden (staff)

Guests: Baris Goldfarb, Graduate Director, Mathematics and Statistics
Michael Stessin, Chair, Mathematics and Statistics
Dan Mahar, Registrar's Office

1. Membership update. Prof. De Jesus has resigned from the Council. An updated membership roster was distributed.
2. The draft of the GAC minutes from 11/19/18 were approved by a vote of 5-0-0.
3. Dean's Report – No report
4. Chair's Report – Chair Rafferty encouraged Council members who are senators to attend the Senate meeting(s) so that quorum is reached.
5. Proposal – BS/MS Math-Data Science Program Pathway proposal. After a brief presentation by Prof. Baris Goldfarb and discussion, the Council voted to approve the proposal by a vote of 6-0-0.
6. GAC Committee on Curriculum & Instruction – The proposal to amend the master's curriculum in Mathematics, including removal of the Special Field Exam, was brought back to active discussion and, with slightly amended language to clarify the on-going culminating requirement language, was approved by the Council as recommended by CC&I by a vote of 6-0-0
7. Jon Bartow presented a proposed editorial change to Grad Bulletin policy language pertaining to State required culminating master's curricular requirements. After a brief discussion, the Council voted to approve the implementation of the updated language by a vote of 6-0-0

Meeting was adjourned without opposition, at 12:50 PM.

End of 12/10/2018 GAC Minutes

University at Albany, SUNY

Graduate Academic Council 2018-19

Membership Roster (as of 11/20/18)

Susan Appe, Public Administration & Policy, Rockefeller College

Kristie Asaro-Saddler, Educational Psychology and Methodology, School of Education (Spring 2019 only)

George Berg, College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security & Cybersecurity

Alexander (Alec) Dawson, History, College of Arts & Sciences (Fall 2018 only)

Sydney Faught, Ph.D. Student, Philosophy, College of Arts & Sciences

Andrea Kordzek, School of Criminal Justice

Catherine (Kate) Lawson, Geography and Planning, College of Arts & Sciences

Alexander (Alex) Morse, M.P.A Student, Public Administration & Policy, Rockefeller College

Sean Rafferty, Anthropology, College of Arts & Sciences (CHAIR)

Kabel Nathan Stanwicks, University Libraries

Tiffany Williams-Hart, College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security & Cybersecurity

Kevin Williams, Dean of Graduate Studies, Ex Officio and non-voting

William (Billy) Zakrzewski, Ph.D. Student, School of Criminal Justice

To: Graduate Academic Council

From: Jon Bartow

Vice Dean for Graduate Education

Date: December 2018

Subj: Culminating/Capstone Requirement for a Master's Degree

In preparation for the upcoming Middle States review, some of our academic policy language has been reviewed and determined to be out-of-date. We proposed to correct for this with certain editorial changes in the *Graduate Bulletin* and wish to consult with the GAC accordingly.

Background:

New York State Education Commissioner's Regulations specify the following regarding master's degree programs (highlighting added):

(8) Master's degree programs shall normally require a minimum of one academic year of full-time graduate level study, or its equivalent in part-time study, with an accumulation of not less than 30 semester hours. Research or a comparable occupational or professional experience shall be a component of each master's degree program. The requirements for a master's degree shall normally include at least one of the following: passing a comprehensive test, writing a thesis based on independent research or completing an appropriate special project.

The culminating/capstone requirement for UAlbany master's programs has been listed for years in the *Graduate Bulletin* as follows:

https://www.albany.edu/graduatebulletin/requirements_governing_masters_degree.htm

Seminar and Thesis Requirement

Candidates for a master's degree must complete satisfactorily at this University a graduate research seminar or an acceptable thesis in their field of specialization for at least 2 credits, except for candidates in the reading, mental health counseling, or special education programs in education or in programs leading to the M.B.A., M.P.A., M.P.H., MSIS, or M.S.W. degrees. Candidates in those programs must satisfactorily complete at this University appropriate field courses, internships, or practicums.

Special Field Examination

Some programs require the satisfactory completion of a comprehensive examination in the field of specialization.

Students must take the major field examination within one calendar year of completion of coursework in their program of studies.

Students who fail a special field examination may, on the recommendation of their advisor and with the approval of the department chair or dean, take a second examination in an attempt to qualify. The second examination may not be taken before that given in the following session and must be taken within a calendar year of the attempt to pass the examination. A student may not take a third examination to qualify.

I propose to collapse the above sections into this:

Master's Capstone Requirement

Each master's degree program at the University concludes with a required comprehensive exam, thesis based on independent research, or a culminating special project that may involve field work or otherwise assess the comprehensive integration of study across the discipline in the program. The special and/or field project may include and be evidenced via participation in a research seminar, but in all cases shall require demonstration of integrative expertise in the academic field of specialization. Determination of successful completion of the master's capstone requirement rests with the faculty of the academic program and shall be governed by program procedural requirements.