

Minutes of the Graduate Academic Council meeting of February 8, 2021, 9:00 AM via Zoom meeting.

Approved by the Council by vote of 10-0-0 on 3/8/2021.

In attendance: G. Berg (Chair), S. Appe, A. Dawson, S. Faught, M. Ferraino, A. Gill, O. Lunin, R. Morse, B. Taylor, C. Wolff, K. Williams (ex officio member), C. Davis (staff), S. Kent (staff), J. Deden (staff)

Guests: Celine LaValley - Administrative Manager, Dean's Office, School of Public Health
Tomoko Udo (Schaller) - Assistant Professor at Department of Health Policy, Management, and Behavior, School of Public Health
Melissa Powers - Associate Registrar, Registrar's Office
Shanise Kent - Graduate School staff
Sean Pease - Graduate School staff

1. Agenda for today's GAC meeting approved.
2. The minutes of the GAC meeting of 1/11/2021 were approved by a vote of 10-0-0.
3. HIV Studies Certificate program proposal (new program) - T. Udo Schaller reviewed the proposal of adding new HIV Studies Certificate of Graduate Studies (CGS) program. Dr. Udo Schaller answered GAC member's concerns about collaboration with NYS Dept. of Health, possible impact on the Master of Public Health initiative, whether it is a 'feeder' program or will it take resources from other programs. With minor form edits the GAC voted to accept the proposal 10-0-0.
4. Dean's Report - Dean Williams related that the Spring 2021 semester started smoothly and is looking similar to Fall 2020 on the academic front. He met with the Graduate Student Association (GSA) and fielded questions about the budget cuts and the metrics being used for the cuts, and program closures. He encouraged all to submit their thoughts and feedback on the budget and metrics, using the MyUAlbany portal.
5. Chair's Report - Chair Berg echoed Dean Williams suggestion to the GAC members to submit budget metrics feedback on MyUAlbany and follow up with each member's department to strongly encourage leadership to disperse information they receive from the Provost and help all faculty to stay updated.
6. Committee on Curriculum and Instruction Report (CC & I) - Sydney Faught reviewed the CC&I report on the Dept. of Sociology's proposal to discontinue the Communications specialization from the PhD program and proposal of the elimination of the Computer Science concentration in the Professional Science Management AGC program.
The GAC voted to accept the CC & I report by a vote of 10-0-0
7. Grade change Policy Update - Discussion on current policy and need for Graduate grade change policy to mirror Undergraduate policy as much as possible.
The GAC voted to approve the proposal by a vote of 10-0-0
1. Any Other Business - S. Faught reminded members that the start date of Advanced Registration for Fall 2021 has been pushed back to April 22. Summer 2021 Advanced registration starts March 22.
Chair Berg invited member's suggestions on a more secure voting system for the Senate meetings.

Meeting adjourned without opposition at 10 AM.

Proposed new HIV Studies CGS program

Course Description to appear in Bulletin:

The Graduate Certificate in HIV Studies offers students the opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge that will prepare them for work in HIV prevention and related issues. The competencies fulfilled by this program will be translatable to local, state, and federal government and non-governmental agencies and public health research focused on HIV, HCV, drug user health, and related issues.

The certificate is open to students currently enrolled in graduate degree programs or as a self-standing program. The HIV Studies certificate program requires the completion of minimum of 12 graduate credits, as outlined below. The required certificate core courses provide students with fundamental knowledge about HIV transmission, impact, and clinical considerations and public health approaches and implementation to addiction. Students should choose a track based on their interest and career goals. The Applied Track will provide students with the skills to work with communities, be public health leaders, and skilled managers. The Research Track will prepare students with additional methodological expertise in quantitative or qualitative research.

CCI Report

Meeting via Zoom 1/28/21 4pm

Committee Members in Attendance: Susan Appe, Haijun Chen, Sydney Faught (chair), Andrew Gill, Ilka Kressner, Jeannette Sutton, Stephen Weinberg

Staff: Colleen Davis

Program Proposals Reviewed: Sociology PhD Program, Professional Science Management AGC (Computer Science Concentration) Program

Sociology PhD Program Proposal

The Department of Sociology is requesting the removal of the Communication specialization from the PhD program. Prior to the creation of the Communication PhD program, the Department of Sociology allowed students with master's degrees in Communication pursue the Sociology PhD with a Communication specialization. They were granted advanced standing credit based on their Communication MA program. Subsequently, the PhD program in Communication was created in the 2000's, which made this specialization unnecessary. The specialization was supposed to be eliminated once the current students were out of the pipeline, but it was forgotten. At this time, Sociology is requesting that the specialization be eliminated from their PhD 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 (Computer Science concentration) Program

The Department of Computer Science is proposing the elimination of the Computer Science concentration in the Professional Science Management AGC program. This concentration is being eliminated due to non-enrollment.

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

Grade Change Policy

Based on a comparative review of the Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletins in regard to the grade change policy, we've determined that the graduate policy should mirror the undergraduate policy where applicable. Similar to other recent changes in the Graduate Bulletin, we would like to expand the language in the policy to include procedures already in place. The undergraduate policy was adopted based on SUNY guidance.

Current Policy:

An instructor may not permit students to submit additional work or be re-examined for the purpose of improving their grades once the course has been completed and final grades assigned.

Other than for conversion of grades from Incomplete (I) to an appropriate final grade, all proposed corrective graduate grade changes, with rationale provided, must be approved by the Dean of The Graduate School before the Registrar may record them.

Proposed Policy:

Requests for grade changes should begin with the instructor of record. The instructor of record has the authority and responsibility to assign, or change, a grade because of their unique position to evaluate a student's performance. The Chair of an academic department may request a grade change on the student's behalf when the instructor of record is not available to do so in exceptional circumstances involving administrative review of a grade. The request must be fully explained and justified.

Examples of appropriate reasons for grade corrections or changes include, but are not limited to:

- Demonstrable arithmetic, editing, or factual error in calculating the grade
- Omission of assignments or parts of assignments in calculating the grade
- A grade demonstrably based on impermissible factors unrelated to student performance, such as discrimination, bias, retaliation or retribution

Examples of inappropriate reasons for grade changes include, but are not limited to:

- Submission of additional work to be reexamined for the purpose of improving grades after the course has been completed
- Saving a student from some academic penalty such as dismissal, probation, warning, or academic integrity problem

- Enabling a student to graduate
- Enabling a student to maintain academic eligibility for financial aid
- Personal issues unrelated to academics
- Enabling a student to maintain academic eligibility for athletics or any other co- curricular activity
- Managing enrollment levels in order to preserve programs or revenue, or to increase retention rates

The Registrar's Office is responsible for processing all grade changes. Other than for conversion of grades from Incomplete (*I*) to an appropriate final grade, all proposed corrective graduate grade changes, with rationale provided, must be approved by the Dean of The Graduate School (or designee) before the Registrar (or designee) may record them. Grade changes can be viewed by students via MyUAlbany once they have been processed.