

MINUTES

The Graduate Council

September 26, 2022
Zoom

Members Present: Ron Bramhall (*ex officio*), Krista Chronister (*ex officio*), Katherine Donaldson (*ex officio*), Aaron Gullickson, Bonnie Gutierrez (*ex officio*), Satomi Ladd (*ex officio*), Beth Harn, Martin Klebes, Gyoung-ah Lee, Rebecca Lewis, Barbara Muraca, Raghuvveer Parthasarathy, Keya Saxena, Leslie Straka, Frances White (*ex officio*), Annie Zemper

Members Absent: Christopher Chavez, Erik Girvan, Jaewoo Kim

Division of Graduate Studies Staff in Attendance: Tara Kaiser, Jered Nagel

The meeting was called to order at 10:02AM.

Vice Provost for Graduate Studies, Krista Chronister, opened the meeting by thanking members for their service on this year's Graduate Council, and she looks forward to their advisement, ideas, and perspectives on all topics related to graduate education.

Graduate Council Charge and Responsibilities

The Graduate Council Charge and Responsibilities was shared with all members prior to the meeting. The Charge had undergone revision last year, which cleaned up the language and eliminated outdated tasks that were no longer applicable.

Nomination & Election of Officers

Assistant Vice Provost for Graduate Studies, Jered Nagel, asked for nominations or volunteers for Graduate Council Chair. The chair works closely with Krista and Jered to set agenda items and submit approved proposals to Senate for review. The chair also serves on Academic Council. Professor Aaron Gullickson volunteered to be chair, and the Council voted in approval.

Jered also asked for nominations or volunteers for Graduate Council Secretary, which approves the meeting minutes. Professor Leslie Straka volunteered as secretary, and the Council voted in approval.

Graduate Council Committees

A description of all Graduate Council Committees was shared with members prior to the meeting. Voting members are required to serve on one committee for the academic year. Members were asked to submit their committee preference by Thursday, September 29, 2022.

What to look for in proposals

Guidelines on the proposal review process were distributed to the Council for review. Jered clarified that proposals that come to the Graduate Council for review will have already been reviewed by the submitting program, College, and Division of Graduate Studies to ensure that all requirements are met. UOCC works with the programs to ensure that courses are meeting required accreditation policies.

Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Ron Bramhall, emphasized the importance of reviewing proposals from the perspective of the submitting program, which may be organized or structured differently than one's own program.

Professional Certificate – New Credential Type

The proposed Professional Certificate is a standalone credential that requires a minimum of 12 graduate credits. Students pursuing this certificate would be classified as “admitted non-degree seeking,” but have the option to transfer these credits to a graduate program later if desired. The certificate would primarily benefit those who are not able or willing to commit to a full graduate program, and those who are seeking additional training related to their work. This proposal was discussed last year using the term “micro-credential,” and would generally consist of a 3-4 course sequence. Students admitted into this type of program must meet the minimum graduate admission requirements set by the Division of Graduate studies, and programs are welcome to expand upon those requirements if they choose.

Examples:

- Ballmer Institute aims to create a Professional Certificate program for working professionals to expand their expertise in areas such as classroom behavior management and skill development.
- Local law enforcement has shown interest in a forensics sequence within Anthropology.

Several Council members voiced concern with calling it a “Professional Certificate” because it implies more rigorous training than just 3-4 courses and may also be confused with other graduate certificate programs across campus. They also emphasized the need for guardrails to be put in place as well clearly stating the basic requirements and restrictions within the policy. The Division of Graduate Studies must also be mindful of the administrative work involved in creating a quality program and tracking student success.

Krista and Jered will discuss the above concerns then call for a vote.

Dismissal Appeals and Academic Grievances

If a student fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress, programs are expected to work with the student and develop a plan to keep them on track. However, if the student does not meet the agreed-upon expectations within a decided period, the program may submit a dismissal recommendation to the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies. If the Vice Provost agrees and dismisses the student, the student may appeal within 30 days. The Grievance Committee then reviews the appeal to possibly overturn the decision.

In Krista’s recent experience, students facing dismissal often provide new information in the appeals process which could have swayed the original decision. She would like the Council’s feedback on revising the process so that students may better make their case prior to formal dismissal, rather than relying solely on the department’s recommendation. One possibility could be to notify the student that they have been recommended for dismissal, then give them 30 days to provide more information, which can then be presented back to the department for reevaluation.

Some members of the Council believe that it should be the department’s responsibility to handle dismissals, and that the Vice Provost’s involvement should be minimal. However, keeping the Vice Provost involved would help provide insight on which departments may need improvement on their processes.

Krista will consult with Jered and report back with a new process to be voted on.

MA Language Policy Implementation

Last year, the Graduate Council approved a change to the MA language requirement, where rather than requiring second-year proficiency in a language other than English, departments may set their own language requirements. Programs may either (1) keep the current language requirement, (2) change the requirement, or (3) eliminate the language requirement. Any changes, however, must still undergo college-level review. The department must also be responsible for monitoring and enforcing the requirement.

Jered proposes that rather than having a full Graduate Council review for any program that wishes to change their language policy, the program must instead submit a plan and rationale to the Division of Graduate Studies. The Division would then work with Registrar to reflect those changes in the catalog. The revisions must also be entered into Course Leaf.

Professor Frances White voiced some concern over the lack of shared governance in Jered's proposal, and suggested forming a small Administrative Action Committee that reviews the proposed changes.

Jered will revise this proposal based on feedback and present it back to the Council.

The Council adjourned at 11:45am.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Straka
Graduate Council Secretary