

**UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL  
MINUTES**

November 19, 2020

1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

WEBEX

Council in Attendance:

Mike Wittie (Engineering)  
Christopher Livingston (Architecture)  
Brock Smith (Agriculture)  
Mark Pernarowski (Letters & Science)  
Tricia Seifert (Education)  
Dawn Tarabochia (Health & Human Development)  
Bradford Watson (Faculty Senate)  
Catherine Dunlop (Letters & Science)  
Anne Christensen (Business)  
Dennis Aig (Arts)  
Wade Hill (Nursing)  
Craig Ogilvie (Dean of The Graduate School)  
Doralyn Rossmann (Library)  
Que Vo (International Programs)  
Maureen Kessler (Student Representative)

Also in Attendance:

Lauren Cerretti (Graduate School)  
Emily Peters (Graduate School)

Absent:

Meeting started at 1:03 pm on WebEx

**November 5, 2020 minutes**

- Motion to approve by Aig, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tarabochia, unanimously passed

**Announcements**

- **Update from the Dean**
  - Admissions updates
    - Holistic admissions: inclusive criteria, reduce implicit bias
    - Progress on WRPG: quite a few master's programs now eligible (150%)
  - Overwhelming semester for graduate students: encourage reaching out and having conversations about how they're doing
  - Graduate enrollment slightly ahead compared to this time last year
  - Thanksgiving delivery dinner ran by Dean of Students—if you know graduate students in Bozeman on Thanksgiving, you can submit a form on their behalf
- **Faculty Senate update (Watson)**
  - Provost addressed ongoing questions regarding COVID:

- Funding for testing: student testing funded through CARES act is explicitly for students
- Course modality for the spring will continue as planned
- Annual reviews will continue as usual with strong emphasis around supporting faculty and acknowledging successes during these times
- Q: Why are we not revisiting course modalities, given the increase in cases since these were developed?
  - A: Overwhelming feedback from students that they are coming to MSU for the face-to-face learning; majority of students have already registered for courses

## Old Business

- **PhD in Indigenous & Rural Health, Level II program proposal:** No updates from proposers
- **Co-convening policy discussion**
  - Review feedback from national graduate dean's discussion board
    - Most had a limit of some sort
    - Some examples around 30% limit on co-convened courses
    - Colorado St trying to implement a limit on core with more flexibility on electives
    - Boise St recently added 40% co-convened policy – gave departments a year to review their curriculum and match this new policy
  - Potential impact on departments that already use a large number of these courses and on new program proposals; review data of MSU graduate co-convened courses
    - Q: Do we have idea what fraction of graduate curricula is co-convened, compared to how many faculty?
      - A: MBI is one of the largest departments
      - Most of the required courses are co-convened in the MBI program; as a graduate student, you get less out of these courses; they are undergraduate courses with a little extra busy work for the graduate students
  - Interesting comments from other schools: co-convened courses can be helpful to start a program with limited resources, but the problem is that resources don't follow; if students have already taken courses as UG, limited options as GR
  - Proposed policy from UGC in 2007 did not include limits on co-convened; before that policy, co-convened courses weren't allowed at all
  - Some schools specified the number of graduate courses, which grouped co-convened and 4xx level courses – grad students could take 1/3 co-convened and 4xx level
    - Curriculum would need to have minimum of 60% graduate only courses
  - What if more than 9 credits of 4xx level, but did away with co-convened courses, would that help departments?
    - When a student adds 4xx level courses, that's usually very individual—different than the program's set curriculum
    - Transferability of credits? If they're taking 4xx level when they could have been in 5xx level, would that disadvantage students going from a master's here to doctoral program somewhere else?
    - Need to make sure grad degrees from MSU meet standards. Having more than 1/3 4xx level may not be graduate level
    - Too many 4xx level courses would affect some programs' accreditation

- Taking 4xx level would be the same experience as a co-convened course, still not graduate level
  - Example from University of Colorado: core courses 5xx level or minimal co-convened; electives have flexibility
    - Program could abuse this by having 1 core course in their curriculum
  - Limit 9 credit of 4xx level and that includes co-convened; 1/3 limit for certificates
    - Co-convened courses currently aren't designated; shows the same as 5xx level
    - Could create a special section number for co-convened courses (ex. online, snowmester, letters at the end of rubrics to designate core course)
    - Students could take the 4xx level courses instead of the 5xx level to do less work; may need separate limits for co-convened and 4xx level
    - If courses were tagged, could built rules in DW for this
  - A course might only be offered at the grad level every other year – potential solutions for existing programs that exceed new policy limit
  - The language from the 2007 policy is helpful – course syllabus must clearly define expectations – hold to higher levels on the departmental level that there is a clear difference
    - Require 2 different syllabi
    - Problem is with enforcement
    - Not enough faculty to cover
  - New policy may slow down growth of new programs, but better quality
  - Can find 5xx level courses from other departments without having to go to the 4xx level; encourage interdisciplinary work
  - Grad School strategic plan could reflect this cap or a goal of cap on 4xx level, departments could then refer specifically to strategic plan to argue for resources
  - 1/3 is appropriate because there is a real concern about the rigor of programs if more than 1/3 is 4xx level
  - How badly will this affect some graduate programs?
    - Likely 3 of our current programs, will affect new programs coming forward
    - For programs with changes, they could alternate 4xx level and 5xx level alternating years
    - Material Sciences enrolls students from multiple campuses
  - Bring up at Deans and Directors meeting?
    - UGC present a suggestion for feedback and discussion
  - Dean Ogilvie will summarize the policy suggestions and send to policy subcommittee for review
- **Certificates in Crop Breeding & Biotechnology and Plant Disease**
  - Review proposer's responses to UGC's questions
  - Dean Ogilvie will have a discussion with the proposers about the co-convening policy discussions and review alternatives

## **New Business**

- **UGC role description for CiM:**
  - Ensure quality of graduate degrees
    - Meets policies
    - Graduate level learning outcomes and curricula

- Advising and Mentoring
    - Prepares students for careers
    - Reasonable requirements, expectations of students
  - With the breadth of experience on the council, it is also beneficial to the proposers that the Graduate Council provides feedback to help the proposal succeed down the line
    - Student demand
    - Placement
    - Budget
    - Infrastructure
    - Faculty and department capacity
  - Suggestion: With the Carnegie ranking, what are the expectations? How those expectations align with these goals has not been explicitly written out; alignment with strategic plan
  - Dean Ogilvie will add this language to the instructions to faculty in CiM
- **Accelerated Certificates:**
    - Grad Council defined process at proposal level for accelerated master's: grad school, registrar, financial aid sorted out internal processes
    - Council did not discuss an accelerated path to graduate certificate
    - Provided language for accelerated master's with edits to an accelerated certificate
    - Student could potentially finish an undergraduate degree and have taken enough credits to finish a graduate certificate
      - Software limitations: would have to get UG degree awarded first, flipped to a graduate student for the next semester and officially have certificate awarded the following semester
    - Council was okay with 12 credits reserved for master's, is council okay with 12 credits reserved for certificates?
      - Could be appealing to students
      - No graduate level experience?
      - Curriculum would be graduate level – taking GR courses while an undergrad
    - What does this mean for flat spot of tuition? Students could complete the 4+1 at the flat spot of tuition, is that a desirable outcome?
      - Will not earn the university any money, but it is beneficial for students
      - Would advise students to take courses in this flat spot – they can't receive financial aid for these reserved credits
      - How do we communicate all of this to students and advisors?
        - Hands on advising will be very important
    - “Accelerated Certificate”
    - Revisit at next meeting for potential vote

Adjourned at 2:29 pm

Next scheduled meeting – TBD