

Date: May 4, 2021

To: Faculty Senate

From: Paul Loikith, Graduate Council Chair

Re: Report of the Graduate Council for the 2020-2021 Academic Year

Per the Faculty Governance Guide, the Graduate Council's charge is to:

- (1) Develop and recommend University policies and establish procedures and regulations for graduate studies, and adjudicate petitions regarding graduate regulations.
- (2) Recommend to the Faculty Senate or to its appropriate committees and to the Dean of Graduate Studies suitable policies and standards for graduate courses and programs.
- (3) Coordinate with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee to bring forward recommendations to the Senate regarding new proposals for and changes to 400/500-level courses so that decisions regarding both undergraduate and graduate credits can be made at the same Senate meeting.
- (4) Review, at its own initiative or at the request of appropriate individuals or faculty committees, existing graduate programs and courses with regard to quality and emphasis. Suggest needed graduate program and course changes to the various divisions and departments.
- (5) Advise the Senate concerning credit values of graduate courses.
- (6) Act in liaison with appropriate committees.
- (7) Report at least once a year to the Senate, including a list of programs and courses reviewed and approved.

The Graduate Council has been composed of the following members during the past year:

Member	Years Served	College / School
John Beer	2020-21	CLAS-AL
Phoebe Daurio	2020-21	IELP
Amy Donaldson	2018-21	CLAS-SS
John Eckroth	2018-21	SB
Emily Ford	2019-21	LIB
G.L.A. Harris	2019-20	CUPA
Margaret Leite	2020-21	COTA
Feng Liu	2020-21	MECECS
Paul Loikith - Chair	2016-21	CLAS-SS
Christina Luther	2019-21	AO
John Nimmo	2019-21	COE
Yangdong Pan	2020-21	CLAS-SCI
Sarah Read	2019-21	CLAS-AL
Jill Rissi	2020-21	SPH
Wayne Wakeland	2019-21	CLAS-SCI

We would also like to acknowledge the ongoing assistance provided by the Council's consultants from the Graduate School and Academic Affairs: Rossitza Wooster, Mark Woods, Andreen Morris, Courtney Ann Hanson, Beth Holmes, and Roxanne Treece.

The Graduate Council has met approximately twice per month during the academic year to address graduate policy issues, and to review proposals for new graduate programs, program changes, new courses, and course changes. Teams of Council members have also read and recommended on the disposition of graduate petitions.

I. Graduate Policy and Procedures

During this academic year the Graduate Council has considered a significant number of proposals, policies and issues that relate to graduate education on campus.

- Throughout the academic year, the Graduate Council had several discussions about diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in graduate education and training at Portland State University. Additionally, the council made efforts to keep this theme at the forefront of other business including approving proposals for new courses and programs as well as course and program changes. The Graduate Council recognized that progress towards a more equitable and inclusive graduate education experience for all PSU students requires continuous effort and that there are no easy solutions to many of the systemic problems. However, the Graduate Council did identify where policy changes or recommendations could productively reduce barriers to students from underrepresented groups and advance PSU towards a more just and equitable university.
- It was recognized early in the quarter that consideration of diversity, equity, and inclusion in new course and program proposals was sometimes lacking and that some of these deficiencies could be remedied through better education and training resources for proposing faculty. Towards this goal, the Graduate Council proposed developing a PSU-specific training module to provide proposers with the resources and understanding needed to better address diversity, equity, and inclusion in their courses and programs. This would serve the dual benefit of improving graduate education at PSU while making the review process for the Graduate Council smoother since, presumably, fewer proposals would require revisions for the diversity components. The Graduate Council began collaborating with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and will work with the office of Global Diversity and Inclusion to develop this module.
- A GC-UCC joint memo to all department and program chairs and curriculum committees was distributed to remind proposers of new courses and programs of the importance of considering diversity, equity, and inclusion in course and program design. This memo also provided information on resources to help proposing faculty with addressing the related questions in the OCMS.
- The Graduate Council developed a memo to Faculty Senate, strongly encouraging all graduate programs to no longer include the GRE as a component of graduate admissions criteria. Consideration of the GRE in admissions decisions carries numerous diversity, equity, and inclusion issues while it has been shown to generally be a poor predictor of student success. This memo was passed by the Faculty Senate.

- The Graduate School consulted the Graduate Council about an issue related to Joint Campus credits. The question was whether a student of one of the partnering institutions (UO, OHSU) took at PSU course for Joint Campus credit and then subsequently enrolled in a PSU graduate program would need to consider the Joint Campus credits as transfer credits. The Graduate Council agreed that in such a case the Joint Campus credits should not be considered transfer credits such that they would be excluded from transfer credit limits.
- The Graduate Council instituted a new approach to selecting the next chair for the council this year. Previously, the current chair would typically choose the next chair from the current council members and then ask the council to vote to approve that person as the next chair. This year a different process was instituted in which the council members were asked to anonymously nominate current council members to be considered for the next chair position. If a council member was nominated, they would then need to confirm their interest in running for chair. This process resulted in two agreeable nominees and the council then voted, anonymously, for one of the two. This process was intended to reduce the influence of the current chair which could introduce bias and be at odds with the council's efforts to be more inclusive and equitable.
- The Graduate Council approved a change to existing transcript policies to eliminate the requirement to provide official transcripts from all institutions that an applicant received course credit for prior to application. The new policy only requires transcripts from the bachelor's degree granting institution.
- An elimination of the reserved credits category to reduce confusion regarding different categories of transfer credits was approved. This policy change did not effectively change anything as credits previously considered reserved credits are also considered as pre-admission credits.
- A policy change was approved to allow the use of PSU pre-admission courses graded Pass with departmental approval. Previously a student would have to petition to have a course graded as pass count towards pre-admission credits and all requests were granted. This system ended up being unfair as students who didn't know they could request exemptions did not receive the benefits that student who did make a request received.
- The Graduate Council had several discussions about graduate student mentoring. The council was generally enthusiastic about improving graduate mentoring at PSU, although the discussion did not as of yet lead to any policy changes or recommendations. One challenge that was identified is that the diversity of graduate programs, including research-oriented versus profession graduate degrees, leads graduate mentoring to mean different things depending on the program of study.
- The Graduate Council supported a change to the OCSM software that would help streamline review of proposals by only displaying the sections that relate to the changes being made to the course or program.
- The Graduate Council provided a letter of support to the office of President Percy on behalf of the Asian American Pacific Islander faculty, staff, and students at PSU. This was motivated by a Presidential Fellows Report that recommended three priority areas related to improving experiences and conditions for Asian American and Pacific Islander students, faculty, and staff at PSU. This letter was written in collaboration across the council and was approved via a vote.
- A long-standing policy of allowing departments to make changes to program electives was discussed. The Graduate Council agreed that the current policy is preferable to a new policy

that would give Faculty Senate and Graduate Council oversight of changes to program electives. Some additional discussion was had around how to review new program proposals that include electives from a range of academic units and it was agreed that this topic, while related but separate, should be subject to future discussion.

II. New Programs and Program Changes

Tables 1 and 2 summarize the proposals for new programs and program changes recommended for approval by the Council and subsequently approved by the Faculty Senate (except where noted). Many of these proposals were returned to the proposing unit for modifications during the review process. Proposals that are still under review are noted later in this report.

Table 1. New Programs

Program	Unit
MS in Geographic Information Science	CLAS
Graduate Certificate in Real Estate Investment and Finance	SB
Graduate Certificate in Semiconductor Materials & Manufacturing	MCECS
Graduate Certificate in Holocaust and Genocide/Atrocity Prevention	CLAS
Graduate Certificate in Futures Thinking and Foresight Practice (pending June FS)	IST
Graduate Certificate in Orientation and Mobility for Children, Youth, and Adults (pending June FS)	COE
Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis (pending June FS)	COE

Table 2. Program Changes

Program	Change	Unit
MS in Criminology and Criminal Justice	Revise core requirements, increase required thesis/project coursework	CUPA
MA/MS in Theater Arts	Eliminate degree program	COTA
MBA in Healthcare Management (joint with OHSU)	Change total credits from 72 to 63, revise coursework	SB
MS in Emergency Management and Community Resilience	Increase total credits from 50 to 53	CUPA

MAT/MST in General Social Science (pending June FS)	Eliminate degree program	CLAS
MAT/MST in General Arts and Letters (pending June FS)	Eliminate degree program	CLAS
MAT/MST in Science: General (pending June FS)	Eliminate degree program	CLAS
MS in Global Supply Chain Management (pending June FS)	Revise core/elective credits	SB
MS in Applied Data Science for Business (pending June FS)	Add OHSU certificate to the list of grad certificates that can count toward this degree program (stackable degree program)	SB
MSW in Social Work (pending June FS)	Slight revision to core courses	SSW
MA/MS in Health Studies (pending June FS)	Eliminate degree program	SPH
MS in Biostatistics (pending June FS)	Update core course	SPH
MA/MS in Early Childhood: Inclusive Education and Curriculum and Instruction	Change major name to Early Childhood: Inclusive Education	COE

III. Course Proposals

Table 3 summarizes information on the new course and course change proposals submitted by the various units. Through late April, a total of 46 new course proposals were reviewed and recommended to the Senate for approval, along with 129 proposals for changes to existing courses. Many course proposals were returned to the proposing unit for modifications as part of the review process, most of which in turn were received back and processed during the year.

Table 3. Proposals by College and School

Unit	New Courses	Course Changes
CLAS	16	69
COE	3	17
SB	3	4
COTA	0	2
SSW	1	9
MCECS	10	4

CUPA	7	13
SPH	3	10
IST	3	1

IV. Petitions

The Graduate Council reviewed 77 petitions for exceptions to PSU policies pertaining to graduate studies and issued decisions. The distribution of these petitions among the various categories is presented in Table 4. Due to the closure of all in-person activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, Graduate Council chair Paul Loikith was the sole reviewer of petitions this academic year.

Table 4. Petition Decisions, May 2020 through April 2021

Code	Petition Category	Total	Approved	Denied	% Total Petitions	% Approved
A	INCOMPLETES					
A1	Waive one-year deadline for Incompletes	19†	18	1	23.4	95
B	SEVEN YEAR LIMIT ON COURSEWORK					
B1	Waive seven-year limit on coursework	7†	7	0	8.6	100
B	Allow Excess Validation	2†	2	0	2.4	100
D	DISQUALIFICATION					
D2	Extend probation	1	1	0	1.2	100
D3	Readmission one year after disqualification	1	1	0	1.2	100
F	TRANSFER CREDITS					
F1	Accept more transfer or pre-admission credit than allowed	6	6	0	7.4	100
F4	Accept non-graded transfer or pre-admission credits	2	2	0	2.4	100
F5	Accept miscellaneous transfer credits	3†	3	0	3.7	100
F8	Waive bachelors+masters limits	6	6	0	7.4	100
J	PhD & DISSERTATION PROBLEMS					
J4	Extend 5 years from admission to comps	3	3	0	3.7	100
J5	Extend 3 years from comps to advancement	20	20	0	24.6	100

J6	Extend 5 years from advancement to graduation	6	6	0	7.4	100
J7	Waive residency requirement	1	1	0	1.2	100
J8	Waive continuous enrollment	1	1	0	1.2	100
K	UNIVERSITY LIMITS ON COURSE TYPES					
K1	Waive limit on 501 & 505 credits	1	1	0	1.2	100
K9	Allow omnibus course for CRTGR core course	1	0	1	1.2	0
M	MASTER'S EXAM					
M1	Waive three-month waiting period to re-take exams	1	1	0	1.2	100
TOTAL		81	79	2		98
† indicates more than one request category on a single petition; total reflects 81 decisions on 77 petitions						

Almost forty percent of all graduate petitions were for doctoral time limit issues. Since these policies have become fully implemented, a high volume of petitions for these issues has become the new normal. The Council hopes that doctoral programs will increase efforts to mentor their students through the degree process in a timely fashion.

Excluding doctoral time limit petitions, the total number of petitions is similar to previous years. It is noteworthy that the total number of petitions was not higher given the pandemic and the extraordinary extenuating circumstances it created for students. The Council interprets this as a sign of careful graduate advising in the respective academic units as well as close scrutiny of petitions by departments before they are forwarded to Graduate Council.

Table 5. Historical Overview: Petitions, Approvals, and Degrees

Academic Year	Total Petitions	Percent Approved	Grad Degrees Awarded
2020-21	82	98%	[n.a.]
2019-20	67	95%	1594
2018-19	62	94%	1709
2017-18	81	90%	1756
2016-17	93	92%	1673
2015-16	108	95%	1546
2014-15	97	97%	1677
2013-14	106	95%	1627
2012-13	69	90%	1820

2011-12	56	91%	1642
2010-11	43	93%	1812

V. Program Proposals in Progress

- There are no program proposals pending at this time.

VI. Future Graduate Policy

- The Graduate Council, under the leadership of Sarah Read, will continue efforts towards a more just, equitable, and inclusive graduate education experience at PSU.
- The Graduate Council will continue to work with the office of Global Diversity and Inclusion on a DEI training module to assist faculty in preparing and offering equitable and inclusive courses and programs.