

Date: May 4, 2023

To: Faculty Senate

From: Amy Lubitow, Graduate Council Chair

Re: Report of the Graduate Council for the 2022-2023 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:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Years Served</b>	<b>College / School</b>
John Beer	2020-23	CLAS-AL
Robert Bremmer	2021-23	OI
Matt Chorpensing	2022-23	SSW
Kelly Doherty	2022-23	AO
Julie Hackett	2021-23	SB
Margaret Leite	2020-23	COTA
Amy Lubitow - Chair	2021-23	CLAS-SS
Natan Meir	2022-23	CLAS-AL
Jay Nadeau	2022-23	CLAS-SCI
Yangdong Pan	2020-23	CLAS-SCI
Elizabeth Pickard	2022-23	LIB
Stefanie Randol	2022-23	COE
Jill Rissi	2020-23	SPH
Billie Sandberg	2021-23	CUPA
Natalie Vasey	2021-23	CLAS-SS
Chien Wern	2022-23	MCECS
Tejaswini Modem	2022-23	Student

During this academic year the Graduate Council has worked on several initiatives to help improve the curricular proposal and review process. 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**

- Graduate Academic Forgiveness: This was approved by Faculty Senate in December 2022. The rationale is to address inequities between students who previously earned low graduate grades at PSU vs. at other institutions. The policy allows up to three terms of graduate coursework to be "forgiven": the coursework will remain on the transcript, but will be excluded from the graduate GPA calculation. All courses in the approved terms will be excluded from the GPA calculation, not just those with poor grades. There must be a three-year break in registration at PSU between the terms considered for forgiveness and the student's term of admission to their new graduate program. Forgiveness is not available to students who have previously been placed on academic probation or disqualification at PSU.
- Establishment of Professional Doctoral Degree Requirements: This was approved by Faculty Senate in April. The main differences of the professional doctoral degree path a traditional PhD are that professional doctoral students will not complete a dissertation. A professional doctoral program will then be able to define the form of the culminating activity, which may be similar to a dissertation but may also be quite different. For this reason, 606 Project rather than 603 Dissertation credits will be required. In line with current practice in the EdD program, 18 credits of 606 will be required. Because there will be no dissertation, the requirement for a proposal defense and advancement to candidacy has been eliminated. The committee requirements have been changed to reduce the required number of members (from 4 to 3), to allow NTTFs to serve as chair, and to allow members without PhDs to serve on the committee. Committee membership will not require Graduate School approval for professional doctorates; membership will be managed by the program which will retain the ability to make more stringent requirements for committee membership. Finally, although the total number of required credits remains the same (at 81), the timeline for completion of a professional doctorate has been shortened. The rationale for this is that the proposal defense has been eliminated, removing one of the timed milestones of the PhD.
- The Graduate Council was represented on the APRCA committee by Natalie Vasey.
- Elimination of Validation Process for Expired Graduate Coursework: This was approved by the Faculty Senate in May and reflected the need to move away from a process that not all students/faculty relied upon. Nearly 77% of expired courses were approved via petition in the past 5 years; thus most people are NOT using the validation process. The Graduate council believes that eliminating the validation process serves students (by reducing confusion and inequity in how credits are approved) and faculty (by reducing the challenges inherent in approving expired credits that expired many years prior such as difficulty locating a faculty expert on a topic or course that is no longer taught).
- Graduate Student Mental Health: Throughout this academic year the Graduate Council has invited guests from various offices at PSU (e.g. SHAC and DRC) and collected various books, articles and

other resources about graduate student mental health. The committee began discussions about how to normalize discussions and recognition of graduate student mental health struggles. We have drafted a “Graduate Student Mental Health Toolkit” that includes materials for faculty members and graduate program administrators. We hope to finalize these materials before the end of the academic year and begin to disseminate these in the 23-24 AY.

**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

<b>Program</b>	<b>Unit</b>
Graduate Certificate in Enterprise Analytics (pending June Faculty Senate)	SB
Graduate Certificate in School Counseling (pending June Faculty Senate)	COE
Graduate Certificate in Special Education Added Endorsement (pending June Faculty Senate)	COE
Graduate Certificate in Healthy and Efficient Buildings (pending June Faculty Senate)	MCECS

**Table 2. Program Changes**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Unit</b>
MA in Applied Linguistics	Change in grade mode for culminating experience	CLAS
MSW in Social Work, Advanced Standing option	Revise Advanced Standing core	SSW
PSM in Applied Geoscience	Correct certificate credits (36 to 32), increase Professional Development credits from 4 to 5, reduce total credits from 48 to 45	CLAS
Graduate Certificate in Business Blockchain	Revise core, reduce total credits from 18 to 16	SB
Graduate Certificate in Real Estate Investment and Finance	Revise core courses, increase total credits from 18 to 19	SB
MBA in Business Administration (pending June Faculty Senate)	Revise core and electives courses, reduce total credits from 62 to 60, revise BAFN option coursework, add new course to waiver policy list	SB
MA/MS in Psychology (pending June Faculty Senate)	Add non-thesis option	CLAS
Graduate Certificate in Mathematics for Middle School Teachers (pending June Faculty Senate)	Eliminate program	CLAS
MEng in Engineering Management: Technology Management (pending June Faculty Senate)	Eliminate program	MCECS
MEng in Engineering Management: Project Management (pending June Faculty Senate)	Eliminate program	MCECS
MS in Applied Data Science for Business (pending June Faculty Senate)	Remove Human Resources Analytics certificate, add new Enterprise Analytics certificate, add capstone requirement	SB
Graduate Certificate in Business Intelligence and Analytics (pending June Faculty Senate)	Revise core, reduce total credits to 17	SB
MS in Finance (pending June Faculty Senate)	Add new certificate to stackable certificate list	SB
MS in Criminology and Criminal Justice (pending June Faculty Senate)	Reduce core credits, move core course to elective list	CUPA
PSM in Environmental Science and Management (pending June Faculty Senate)	Redesign program to make it stackable (two certificates required)	CLAS
MA/MS in Education: Counselor Education (pending June Faculty Senate)	Revise School Counseling specialization	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 26 new course proposals were reviewed and recommended to the Senate for approval, along with 58 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

<b>Unit</b>	<b>New Courses</b>	<b>Course Changes</b>
CLAS	3	30
COE	4	5
SB	8	2
COTA	2	8
SSW	1	0
MCECS	4	7
CUPA	0	1
SPH	4	5

### **IV. Petitions**

Teams of three Council members reviewed 90 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.

**Table 4.** Petition Decisions, May 2022 through April 2023

Code	Petition Category	Total	Approved	Denied	% Total Petitions	% Approved
<b>A</b>	<b>INCOMPLETES</b>					
A1	Waive one-year deadline for Incompletes	16†	16	0	17	100
<b>B</b>	<b>SEVEN YEAR LIMIT ON COURSEWORK</b>					
B1	Waive seven-year limit on coursework	9†	9*	0	10	100
B2	Waive seven-year limit on transfer coursework	1	1	0	1	100
B3	Allow excess validation	3†	3	0	3	100
<b>D</b>	<b>DISQUALIFICATION</b>					
D2	Extend probation	9	9	0	10	100
D3	Readmission one year after disqualification	1	1	0	1	100
<b>F</b>	<b>TRANSFER CREDITS</b>					
F1	Accept more transfer or pre-admission credits than allowed	5	5	0	5	100
F4	Accept non-graded transfer credits	1	1	0	1	100
F7	Unusual transfer case	1	1	0	1	100
F8	Waive bachelors+masters limits	7	7	0	7	100
<b>J</b>	<b>PhD &amp; DISSERTATION PROBLEMS</b>					
J4	Extend 5 years from admission to comps	6	6	0	6	100
J5	Extend 3 years from comps to advancement	21	21	0	22	100
J6	Extend 5 years from advancement to graduation	11	11	0	11	100
J7	Waive residency requirement	1	1	0	1	100
<b>K</b>	<b>UNIVERSITY LIMITS ON COURSE TYPES</b>					
K8	Allow use of 5xx course after 4xx section taken	3	3	0	3	100
<b>M</b>	<b>MASTER'S EXAM</b>					
M1	Waive three-month waiting period to re-take exams	1	1	0	1	100
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>100</b>
	* includes partial approvals					
	† indicates more than one request category on a single petition; total reflects 96 decisions on 90 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.

The total number of petitions is similar to previous years. 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
2022-23	90	100%	[n.a.]
2021-22	94	97%	1569
2020-21	82	98%	1595
2019-20	67	95%	1594
2018-19	62	94%	1710
2017-18	81	90%	1756
2016-17	93	92%	1672
2015-16	108	95%	1596
2014-15	97	97%	1677
2013-14	106	95%	1627
2012-13	69	90%	1820

**V. Program Proposals in Progress**

- Graduate Certificate in Early Intervention Special Education – new program
- Graduate Certificate in Added Elementary Endorsement – new program
- MS in Emergency Management and Community Resilience – program change
- Graduate Certificate in Emergency Management and Community Resilience – program change
- Graduate Certificate in Athletic and Outdoor Industry – program change
- MURP in Urban and Regional Planning – program change
- MRED in Real Estate Development – name change

**VI. Future Graduate Policy**

- In the 23-24 AY the Graduate Council plans to continue moving forward with discussions about graduate student mental health.
- During many of our discussions about various proposals this year, we have emphasized the lack of consistency in curricular DEI statements and we hope to continue systematically advising curricular changes to take seriously these statements.
- This year there was a 100% approval rate of Graduate petitions, which has not occurred in many years. We hope to continue to pay attention to this data point next year given how infrequently this has occurred in the past.