

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

January 25, 2006

Approved: February 21, 2006

Present: Tom Blume, Mildred Merz, Kris Thompson, Joe Shively, Claire Rammel, Meir Shillor, Lorenzo Smith, Mohinder Parkash, Darlene Schott-Baer

Absent: David Downing, Krzystof Kobus, Lisa Hawley

Staff: Julie Delaney, Lynette Folken

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was convened at 2:07 pm by Darlene Schott-Baer.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of January 25, 2006 will be presented for approval.

III. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Darlene Schott-Baer welcomed Eilene Lohmeier as the new secretary for Graduate Council.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

MPA/JD Proposal

Dale Nesbary represented updates to the MPA/JD program proposal. In response to questions on budget, Mr. Nesbary reported no additional budget requirements are associated with the MPA/JD proposal. The department will be able to absorb the projected increase in student enrollment for the courses identified in this proposal, without any additional faculty resources. Mohinder Parkash asked what impact an imbalance between OU students attending Cooley and Cooley students attending OU would have on the budget. Mr. Nesbary felt more JD students would attend OU than OU students choosing to attend Cooley.

Joe Shively pointed out to Graduate Council that the MPA/JD proposal has a different transfer credit requirement than the MBA/JD proposal. The MBA/JD proposal requires a course grade of 3.0 or above in each Thomas M. Cooley Law School course transferred to Oakland University and the MPA/JD proposal indicates a requirement of 2.0 or above in each Cooley course transferred to OU.

Mr. Shively raised the question if this transfer credit requirement should be consistent with current OU policy. After some discussion, Graduate Council indicated that the transfer credit requirement in both proposals should be consistent with the current OU graduate transfer credit policy (3.0 or above). Mr. Nesbary concurred and will take this recommendation back to his department for inclusion in the MPA/JD proposal.

Also, Mr. Nesbary distributed copies of the proposed Joint Degree Declaration of Intent to Council members for review and noted that the transfer credit requirement would be added into the document. Explanation of the purpose of the Joint Degree Declaration of Intent was presented to Graduate Council by Mr. Nesbary. Students would sign this document after being admitted into one of the joint programs (MPA/JD or MBA/JD). The intent of the document is to secure student commitment to a joint program. Students wishing to withdraw from the joint program would be required to notify both the OU program and the Cooley program.

Graduate Council would like to see consistency in language between the MPA/JD and MBA/JD proposals. Darlene Schott-Baer will assist with the review of both proposals. Claire Rammel was asked to contact Donna Free (MBA) for a copy of their updated proposal.

In conclusion, the total number of transfer credits allowable was discussed and Council member confirmed that six (6) credits would be transferable. Also, Council members expressed concerns with the term “Joint Degree.” After discussion, it was agreed to refer to the MPA/JD and MBA/JD proposals as “concurrent programs” or “partnership programs.”

Updated proposals will be presented at the February 8, 2006 meeting of Graduate Council for the 2nd reading.

M.A. in history – Program Review

Tom Blume and Millie Merz provided the Graduate Council with a copy of their report on the program review for the M.A. in history. The report supports the concerns expressed by the outside evaluator.

One area of concern discussed by the Graduate Council was the fact that the majority of history courses are cross-listed as 300/500 level. Claire Rammel confirmed that at Oakland University, cross-list can be used for 300/500 if the courses are interdisciplinary and required for the program. As part of the review, a complete list of undergraduate and graduate history courses, including those cross-listed, was examined. Millie reported a limited number of 400-level courses were available. Colloquium (HST 610), Research Seminar (HST 680), Research Tutorials (HST 681), and Field Examination or Thesis (HST 600) represented the unique graduate courses. Given the low number of 400 level history courses available, it was suggested that some of the 300 level courses should be upgraded to 400-level. It would then be acceptable to cross-list 400 level with 500 level. It was strongly suggested that there is the need to build additional content for the 500 level (graduate) courses.

As part of the research completed by Mr. Blume and Ms. Merz, the Master of Arts in history at Oakland University was compared to history program requirements at: Central Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University, Michigan State University, Wayne State University, Western Michigan University, University of Toledo, East Tennessee State, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, and the University of Maryland-Baltimore County. With the exception of University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, none of these programs approved 300-level courses to be combined with graduate level courses. Furthermore, most of the programs placed a limitation on the number of credits earned at the 400-level and

limited the number of approved “slash courses” that could be used to satisfy degree requirements. Graduate Council agreed with the outside reviewers that the practice of combining graduate and undergraduate students in a single class should be severely limited.

Darlene Schott-Baer stated graduate policy, limiting the number of 400-level courses and restricting 300/400 level cross-listing with graduate courses, already exists at Oakland University. Ms. Merz agreed, but pointed out confusion in the Oakland University terminology regarding cross-listing. Claire Rammel agreed, the practice of cross-listing courses is not done within a department. She explained cross-listing most commonly refers to courses being sponsored by one or more departments or programs, allowing enrollment through any of the participating department rubrics. (Example: CNS 800 and PSY 800). The catalog course description for each course should include a statement specifying the cross-listing information and inform students that credits are not allowable for both courses. Most institutions require cross-listed course to be at the same level. Based on much of the research resulting from this program review, Graduate Council believes existing policy at OU should be modified to use the recognized common terminology and clarify the definition of cross-list and slash courses.

Graduate Council wanted to invite the chair of the history department for clarification of some issues. Claire Rammel did not believe this was within the scope of the charge given to the Graduate Council by the Provost for this particular program review. She indicated that she would bring this request to the attention of David Downing before the next meeting for clarification.

Darlene Schott-Baer summarized the three options: 1) restructure the history program with set parameters on slash courses and unique graduate courses; 2) discontinue the program; or 3) do nothing. Those Graduate Council members endorsed the first option. Recommendations will be finalized at the next meeting.

Ph.D. Minimum Program Requirements

Discussion deferred to February 8, 2006 meeting.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Academic Dismissal

Claire Rammel stated Graduate Education has been seeing a growing concern with graduate academic dismissal. She reminded members of the recent case Dr. Downing shared with Graduate Council regarding lack of communication and student expectations. These cases are further complicated when students have received passing numerical grades for all previous dissertation research course work, yet the dissertation chair recommends dismissal based on poor academic progress or unmet academic expectations. Ms. Rammel stated two immediate concerns: 1) the “P” grade assigned to dissertation research does not indicate “progress” as it relates to student satisfactory academic progress and 2) the absence of any documented

communication to a graduate student regarding (un)satisfactory academic progress and/or expectations.

After much discussion, Graduate Council recommended that faculty submit a “D” (Deferred) grade each term for dissertation research credit that is registered for prior to defense. It was further recommended that a doctoral student’s failure to progress should be tracked and reported. Ms. Rammel reiterated the earlier suggestion by Mr. Downing that doctoral students submit an annual report on academic progress. This has become an accepted practice at many different institutions throughout the country. It was agreed that clear policies and guidelines for satisfactory progress or dismissals for doctoral students must be outlined and enforced.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8, 2006.