

UNL Graduate Council Minutes
May 7, 2020
Via Zoom
2:30 p.m.

Present: Jennifer Clarke, Christina Falci, Geoffrey Friesen, Rhonda Fuelberth, Adam Houston, Laurie Lee, Yusong Li, Eric Rodene, Luz Sotelo, Kara Viesca. Dean Tim Carr, presiding.

Minutes from April 2, 2020

Motion to approve minutes from April Graduate Council meeting. Motion passed.

New course proposals

1. Revised syllabi

CHEM 437/837 (2 credit lab) – Syllabus has graduate expectations listed in it, with an extra assignment of 400 words as a requirement. The level of graduate engagement, other than a 400 word assignment, was not clear. What does a quality project look like? How is graduate student performance evaluated? Motion made to ask the department for specific information on performance expectations and description of assignments at different levels. Final approval is designated to Dean Carr. Motion passed.

2. First-time proposals

AGRO 462/862 (2 credit online) – Jennifer Clarke had reviewed for CASNR so she led the discussion. Dr. Clarke worked with Ellen Paporozzi to differentiate between levels. The syllabus is generally well written, although it could benefit from having more definition/organization in the course schedule. Motion to request revised course schedule. Final approval is designated to Dean Carr. Motion passed.

ALEC 811 – Discussion led by Geoff Friesen and Rhonda Fuelberth. The syllabus has all requirements for graduate level course. Motion to approve. Motion passed.

ANTH 411/811 – Discussion led by Christina Falci and Laurie Lee. The grading for graduate students is unclear. The grading needs to account for the extra assignment leading the in-class discussion. The take home essay and final project are longer, but the performance expectations and grading needs to be included. Motion to request revised syllabus. Final approval is designated to Dean Carr. Motion passed.

MECH 472/872 – Discussion led by Yusong Li and Adam Houston. They were not able to find differentiation between graduate and undergraduate levels. All points need clarification. Luz Sotelo had taken the course. It is research-based course. The difference as she experienced is that graduate students act as mentors for undergraduates. This experience was invaluable. Mentorship should be included in the assessment. Motion to request revised syllabus. Final approval is designated to Dean Carr. Motion passed.

Proposed new certificate in Mathematics Education

Kara Viesca spoke about the need to have elementary and secondary math teachers learn more about math teaching. The certificate is for practicing teachers. The certificate would be available to PK-16. Licensure requires math background. There was some concern expressed

that the credits for math/statistics was limited to just 3 credits. The Math Dept. recognizes the need for the 3 credit course but, in their memo, thought a prereq was needed. What are the expectations about students' math background? Perhaps the expectation needs to be further explained. Elementary math teachers are shying away from this due to college level math.

There is an existing graduate certificate in K-3 Mathematics Specialist. The two certificates seem to be aimed at the same groups. The proposal should clarify how the proposed certificate is different than the K-3 Mathematics Specialist certificate.

What is the added value of the proposed certificate over that of existing teacher endorsements? Need to clarify this point.

An explanation of the admission standards would be helpful. Describe prerequisites minimum requirements. How will an applicant's teaching level and math content knowledge affect their application?

Motion was made to table pending revisions. Motion approved.

Proposed new certificate in Personal Leadership

Certificate provides an option for individuals who wish to receive personal leadership development, with a focus on how to be a better supervisor. (Another certificate proposal is being developed that focuses on how to train supervisors.) The department reached out to the College of Business to determine any overlap. There was none. The certificate will complement the student affairs program in CEHS. The certificate courses are almost all offered online. The certificate will replace the practice of having students take an ALEC minor to receive this content. The certificate would be more widely available and not restricted to current students.

Masters students already earning an ALEC degree are not allowed to get the certificate. The department wants to keep the credential separate and available to students outside of the department. Motion was made to approve. Motion passed.

Proposed modification to certificate in Reading Intervention

Current certificate has been available for several years. The original courses for certificate have evolved, been discontinued or replaced. The proposed course changes in the certificate represent the most relevant and valuable courses. Motion was made to approve. Motion passed.

Proposed new specialization in Professional Studies in Dietetics

The specialization is to be offered in the M.S. degree program in Nutrition and Health Sciences. The accrediting body in the dietetics profession has changed the requirements for individuals to sit for licensing exam, which includes having a master's degree. The specialization is necessary for marketing/recruiting into dietetics program at UNL. The specialization courses are appropriate for accreditation. Motion was made to approve. Motion passed.

Proposed new specialization in STEM Education Research

The specialization is to be offered in the unified Ph.D. in Engineering. The consensus of the Graduate Council was that the proposal is premature. The Graduate Council recommends a major revision that addresses the following points:

- Courses are not yet in place. Special Topics courses need to be established as permanent courses.
- STEM Education Research is too broad. Should not include all STEM; should focus on Engineering Education Research.
- STEM education research, broadly defined, must include collaboration with other disciplines, most notably the department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education.
- Purpose of the specialization will need restating in the context of Engineering Education Research.
- The proposal is unnecessarily detailed. Some of the information would be needed only for new degrees and certificates. Specializations are simply defined as “a focused collection of courses within one or more major/degree programs. Specializations must account for a minimum of 9 credit hours of the degree requirement.”
- Section C.1. “The courses that will be required by the proposed degree are being offered or in development.” However, this is a specialization proposal, not new degree proposal. Moreover, courses need to be established (not in development).
- The EDPS methods courses were thought to be well below the level of engineering graduate students. Are there STAT courses that are more appropriate?
- Future revision should include support letters from all department collaborators.

Motion was made to table and send back for major revisions. Motion passed.

Graduate Student Assembly Report

Eric Rodene reported that GSA members on ASUN are voting on the proposed changes to the student code of conduct.

Announcements

Dean Carr thanked Christina Falci for her years of service on the Council.

Meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Eva Bachman, Ph.D.