

APPROVED Minutes

Graduate Programs Committee

Date: December 1, 2023 | 2 - 3pm | Darland 520

Approval Date: December 8, 2023

Present: Alyssa Boardman, Erik Brown, Dana Collins, Pedro Fernandez-Funez, Byron Steinman for Karen Gran, Alec Habig, Neil Hoffman, Alison Hoxie (*Chair*), Johanna Jernberg, Nathan Johnson, Josie Manning, Melissa Maurer-Jones, Stanley Sujith Nelavala, Nomi Ostrander, Catherine Reich, Michael Rother, Kathryn Schreiner, Ariuna Taivan, Rebecca Webster, Sara Zimmer ([List of programs represented](#))

Absent: Jay Austin, David Beard, Julie Ernst, Arshia Khan, Katherine Schofield, Hua Tang

Called to order at 2:00pm.

Approval of the minutes: October 6, October 20, November 3, November 17, 2023 meeting minutes

A motion to batch approve the minutes as distributed was made, seconded, and passed by a majority vote.

[Committee reports](#) (as needed, for **information** related to grad ed)

- See linked document for shared governance committee updates.
- Graduate Student Association updates - Johanna Jernberg, Josie Manning, Stanley Sujith Nelavala

A GRAD Talk will be held Monday, 12/6, 4 - 5pm, Kirby 268 (Lakeview Room)

Topics for review/discussion/action

1. Program revision proposals - ad hoc subcommittee vs fyi only

With GPAS, programs will now have to submit program revision memos/proposals regularly to keep their course lists up to date. Members were asked whether these routine proposals needed to come before the GC for a vote, or whether only the ones that needed further scrutiny should have ad hoc subcommittee review and a vote. There was no objection to administrative approval by the AVC for modest changes such as course list changes, or to these coming to the GC as fyi only.

2. Curriculum Proposals

a. Program proposal for discussion: Earth Sciences MS

Byron provided an overview of the proposed changes: A name change to align with the department name and expanded expertise in the department, adding required project credits for the plan B, addition of a plan C option, and reduction of total credits required for the degree to 30. Some interest is anticipated from UMD undergrads, who could potentially apply some pre-bacc credits not applied to the bachelor's degree. The plan C might eventually be tailored to appeal to professionals working in industry, as well. The ad hoc subcommittee members who reviewed the proposal provided feedback on some minor technical matters, but found it a sound proposal overall.

There was a question about whether there would be enough students in the program to support three plan types. Why not eliminate the plan B? Plan B and C have different audiences. Students rarely start out with a plan B, but it is available in case the plan A research does not pan out, and still has a research focus. Plan C is viewed as a terminal master's for those going into industry.

It was noted that plan C programs with a professional focus are typically DMS and have the lower DMS tuition rate, but may need to offer courses outside of business hours to appeal to working professionals.

A motion to approve the proposal was made, seconded, and passed by a majority vote. NOTE: The EVCAA declined to approve proposals requiring Board of Regents' approval at their February meeting. Instead, departments are urged to submit any proposals requiring BoR approval by April 1, 2024 for a fall 2025 effective term. This will allow the programs to be marketed for a full year before the start of the 25-26 academic year.

b. Program proposals fyi: MBA (GMAT waiver, course list changes), MSChE (course list changes), MTAG (total credit change: 38>36, course list changes), MTRES (course list changes)

3. Continued discussion of dual-listed 4xxx/5xxx courses

It was clarified that only faculty having course proposals for spring 2024 have been asked to provide syllabi due to the short timeline for getting the courses approved before registration opened. Updated proposals for summer and fall 2024 courses will be requested for those that need greater clarification of the distinctions between the 4xxx and 5xxx levels.

[DRAFT proposal form](#) for dual-listed courses. GC members are asked to **provide feedback** via comments on this document **for the December 8 meeting**. In

particular, on which items should there be distinctions between the levels? For example, can SLOs be the same, but assessment method different? Should the rationale for each level be different?

A motion to confirm that the 4xxx level of a dual-listed pair should be designated as “no grad credit,” and that a student cannot earn credit for both courses in the dual-listed pair was made, seconded, and passed by a majority vote. There was also general agreement that a 5xxx course that is required in a graduate program should not be dual-listed. Where necessary, though, a student who took a dual-listed course at the 4xxx level could be asked to take a different 5xxx course at the graduate level as a substitute for the required course, but this should not be the norm.

It was suggested that the Department Head and DGS should both be approvers on dual-listed course proposals in addition to the other levels of approval. This will be added to the draft proposal form.

4. APAA update

APAA will be one of the topics discussed next week at the campus-wide Town Hall. There will be brief mention of graduate programs. Overall they have been stable over the past 10 years. There are some small programs that may need to take action. In January graduate and undergraduate programs will receive a message from the EVCAA’s Office pointing out areas for improvement and asking them to come up with solutions. It was asked whether there would be support or resources to address deficiencies. It’s unclear what might be available beyond existing resources (help/ideas from Enrollment Management, for example). A concrete vision for which a return can be clearly articulated might be a candidate for some investment.

Will the change in administrative roles due to PEAK impact these efforts? Will there be release time? Will administrative resources be provided? These are decisions that would be made by collegiate deans. It was remarked that summer funding or course releases would help provide DGSs time to thoughtfully consider course offerings, program improvement, etc.

Erik presented a [summary spreadsheet](#) showing that graduate program enrollment has overall been stable over the past 10 years. Certain initiatives have had positive impacts on enrollment. The numbers seem to indicate that tuition adjustments (e.g., eliminating the NR portion of tuition for DMS programs) and promotional efforts have led to positive outcomes.

Updates/Announcements

1. GRAD Talk - December 4 | 4 - 5pm | Kirby 268 (Lakeview Room)

Next meeting: Friday, December 8, 2023 | Darland 520

Adjourned at 3:00pm