

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes
May 14, 2014

Present: T. Albrecht, J. Alm, H. Frost, S. Grayson, M. Mislove, B. Mitchell, G. Morris, S. Overstreet, F. Rabito, E. Svendsen

Absent: H. Ashbaugh, B. Deskin, H. Flora, F. Falaky, M. Macpherson, G. Oldham.

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 AM by Brian Mitchell, Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research and Acting Chair of the Graduate Council.

1. Approval of April Meeting Minutes

G. Morris moves to approve; E. Svendsen seconds. All approve. No abstentions.

2. Spanish and Portuguese Name Change Request

J. Dangler has withdrawn the request for three separate PhD degree programs within the department of Spanish and Portuguese and agrees to have “tracks” within the Spanish and Portuguese major. OGPS will work with university units and publications to ensure that the program’s name is consistently represented.

3. New Master’s Program Requests

The MS in Medical Physiology: G. Morris moves to approve, and M. Mislove seconds the motion. This program has been approved by the BMS Curriculum Steering Committee.

The Graduate Council requests the department clarify the third paragraph: the required course and elective work needed in order to meet the minimum graduation requirements. The Graduate Council would also like clarification as to what a “non-research based thesis” is – this indicates that the work is not research based (which all research is), as opposed to non-lab based research.

All in favor; no opposed, no abstentions.

The MS in Anatomy (Research) Program: G. Morris moves to approve; E. Svendsen seconds the motion to approve.

The Graduate Council discussed the number of Anatomy-related Master’s programs and the confusion this can create for potential applicants. The MS in Clinical Anatomy is geared towards students who want to be Anatomy educators. The 4+1 Program is a course-work driven Master’s that acts as a precursor to medical school. The proposed Anatomy (Research) program will share the same course work in year one as the Clinical Anatomy Master’s students, but will have the students focus on research, not teaching, in their second year.

All in favor; no opposed, no abstentions.

M. Mislove moves to approve the MA in Computational Linguistics. This is collaboration between Linguistics and the Computer Science program, led by Dr. K. Brent Venable. Many of the necessary courses are on the books for this program, although some special interest courses may need to be added. For students coming in with an Anthropology or Linguistics background, they would need to build up their mathematics background. This Master's program does not require a math degree, but students must have a certain level of mathematical skill.

M. Mislove shared that program operations will be supported by the Computer Science program and staff, as well as the Linguistics chair (as Linguistics does not have a support staff).

This program is designed as a 4+1 Program, as well as a Master's for non-Tulane students. Those who are coming in with a Bachelor's from another program could potentially need to take three or four semesters to complete the requirements based on the available class schedule.

Why an MA instead of an MS? This is because primarily it was developed out of the Linguistics department and subsequently approved by the SLA Graduate Studies Committee.

All in favor; no opposed, no abstentions.

4. Master's Review Programs

Currently, all PhD programs are set to be reviewed every 7 years. There are enough programs to be reviewed every 5 years, with two years' time off to allow for new programs. B. Mitchell suggested that within that two-year of down time, non-professional master's programs should be reviewed internally. The purpose of these reviews would be to evaluate economic and academic goals of the programs and to ensure that they are achieving their stated outcomes.

Programs could be potentially reviewed for:

- How many degrees have been awarded? What is the time to completion?
- Where do Master's students go after graduation? What percentage move on to other programs?
- How many students have enrolled?
- Do we have the faculty to support these programs?

This would be for MS, MA, and MFA programs; it would not include professional programs as they receive review and oversight from accrediting bodies. Do we need to distinguish between terminal Master's programs and those who receive Master's on the way to a PhD?

There was general agreement from the Graduate Council members that such internal reviews are in order. B. Mitchell will make a recommendation to the Provost who will charge the Graduate Council with conducting master's degree program reviews at the appropriate time.

5. PhD Program Reviews

M. Mislove will be the Graduate Council's point of contact for summarizing the Council's opinions on the program reviews. After reviewing the documents, please send comments to M. Mislove by May 28th (mislove@tulane.edu). This report with recommendations will go to Dean Haber and Provost Bernstein.

B. Mitchell advised the Graduate Council not to focus on resource-driven issues only in its report, but to frame resource issues in a strategic context. For example, Tulane's perception and reputation are impacted by the number and quality of graduate students it attracts. Tulane can only be a leading research institution with exceptional doctoral students and programs. Putting an emphasis on graduate education will help increase the university's stature and position as a research intensive university.

6. Thank you

Thank you to those members who are moving out of the Graduate Council this year. We appreciate your support and participation these past few years.