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Academic Policy Committee Report - October 31, 2013

Graduate Council

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ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 31, 2013, 2:15 – 3:30 P.M.
111 Student Services Building

Present: Stefanie Ohnesorg (Chair), Paul Gellert, Marian Roman, Donald Hodges, Carolyn Hodges, Elizabeth Hendrickson, Martin Walker, Phuriwat Anusonti-Inthra (via speaker phone following the discussion of agenda point #1), RJ Hinde (for the 1st agenda item, curriculum proposals from Philosophy and Law School).

Remark regarding the scheduling of this meeting:

The 2nd meeting of the Academic Policy Committee during AY 2013-14 was originally scheduled for October 24, 2013 (see calendar dates for Graduate Council in AY 2013-14). The meeting was moved to October 31, 2013 because too many committee members had time conflicts on 10-24-13.

The meeting was called to order by Stefanie Ohnesorg, Chair, at 2:15 p.m.

I.) Discussion of 2 Curriculum Proposals that need APC Approval

Dr. RJ Hinde, Associate Dean for Academic Programs in the College of Arts and Sciences, was present during the discussion of these curriculum proposals:

- 1. Five-Year BA-MA Program – Philosophy Major**
- 2. Dual JD-MA Program - Philosophy**

First proposal: Five-Year BA-MA Program – Philosophy Major

The campus has adopted several Five-Year BA-MA and Five-Year BS-MS Programs over the last couple of years that allow double-counting of up to 9 credit hours towards the undergraduate and the graduate degree program (see for example Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, French, German, etc.). These programs are tailored to attract highly talented undergraduate students into master's programs offered in their academic major at UT. These programs have high entrance requirements and students need to be admitted by both, the academic unit and the Graduate School.

The proposed Five-Year BA-MA Program in Philosophy was modeled after existing Five-Year BA-MA Programs currently offered in the College of Arts and Sciences, and after a brief discussion **the following proposal was approved unanimously by APC:**

Five-Year BA-MA Program – Philosophy Major

The Department of Philosophy offers a program in which qualified students may earn both a BA and MA in Philosophy in five years. This is accomplished by applying 9 hours of approved graduate courses to both the BA and MA.

Interested students typically apply for conditional admission to the program during, or immediately following, their third year of undergraduate study. A student will be conditionally admitted to the program only if he or she:

- is a declared Philosophy major;
- has completed at least 90 hours overall with a minimum GPA of 3.25; and
- has completed at least 15 hours in Philosophy with a minimum GPA of 3.5.

Applicants must also provide three letters of recommendation. Applicants are strongly encouraged, but not required, to have completed PHIL 235 and at least one 400-level Philosophy course. The Department may consider other relevant factors, such as an applicant's work experience and potential for success in graduate school, in deciding whether to conditionally admit students to the BA/MA program.

Both, the Department of Philosophy and the Graduate School must approve all conditional admissions into the BA/MA program.

The Department will inform applicants of its decisions by the beginning of their fourth and final year of undergraduate study.

Both, the Department Head (or designee) and the Graduate School must approve any course taken for graduate credit before the student satisfies all requirements for the BA. A student conditionally admitted to the BA/MA program may complete up to 9 hours of graduate credit to count toward both the BA and MA requirements. Only graduate courses taken after conditional admission into the BA/MA program may be used to satisfy the requirements of both degrees.

Conditional admission to the BA/MA program does not guarantee acceptance into either the Graduate School or the MA program in Philosophy. Students conditionally admitted into the BA/MA program at the start of their fourth year must apply that year for admission to both the MA program and the Graduate School. Such applicants must follow standard application procedures; in particular, they must submit GRE scores and a writing sample. If the student is accepted by both the MA program and the Graduate School, they will be fully admitted to the BA/MA program; they must then complete the standard curriculum for the MA program.

Students will not be eligible for graduate assistantships until they are enrolled as graduate-level students in the Graduate School.

Second proposal: Dual JD-MA Program - Philosophy

Coordinated dual degrees programs leading to the conferral of both, the Doctor of Jurisprudence and master's degree in another discipline are currently offered by the College of Law in collaboration with Business Administration as well as with the Department of Political Science in the College of Arts and Sciences. In these programs, a student is allowed to apply a certain number of credit hours towards both degrees. The proposed Dual JD-MA Program (Philosophy) is modeled after the existing Dual JD-MPPA Program offered by the College of Law in collaboration with the Department of Political Science, and students who are admitted in this dual degree program may earn the JD and MA in about four years rather than the five years that otherwise would be required.

Students who seek admission to this dual-degree program need to be independently accepted by the College of Law for the JD Program and by the Department of Philosophy and the Graduate School for the MA in Philosophy. In addition, they must also be accepted by the dual degree committee (the membership of which will include a program coordinator from both the College of Law and the Department of Philosophy).

A student admitted to this program as a dual-degree candidate must satisfy the requirements for both, the JD and MA (Philosophy) degrees, as well as all requirements of the dual degree program. For students admitted to this dual-degree program, the College of Law will award a maximum of 9 hours of credit toward the JD degree for successful completion of approved graduate level courses (500 or 600 level) offered in the Department of Philosophy. For students admitted to this dual-degree program, the Department of Philosophy will award a maximum of 15 hours of credit toward the MA degree for successful completion of approved courses offered in the College of Law. All courses for which such cross-credit is awarded must be approved by the JD-MA (Philosophy) program coordinators in the College of Law and in the Department of Philosophy.

After a brief discussion **the following proposal was approved by APC with 4 votes in favor and 1 abstention:**

Dual JD-MA Program – Philosophy

The College of Law and the Department of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences offer a coordinated dual degree program leading to the conferral of both the Doctor of Jurisprudence and Master of Arts (Philosophy) degrees. In this program, a student may earn the JD and MA in about four years rather than the five years that otherwise would be required.

Admission

Applicants for the JD-MA (Philosophy) program must make separate application to, and be independently accepted by, the College of Law for the JD and the Department of Philosophy and Office of Graduate Admissions for the MA (Philosophy) degree. Applicants must also be accepted by the dual degree committee (the membership of which will include a program coordinator from both the College of Law and the Department of Philosophy). Upon petition, an applicant's LSAT score may be accepted by the Department of Philosophy as a substitute for the normally required GRE score. Application to the dual degree program may be made prior to or after matriculation in either the JD or the MA (Philosophy)

program, but application must be made prior to the last 29 hours required for the JD and prior to the last 15 hours required for the MA (Philosophy).

Requirements

A dual degree candidate must satisfy the requirements for both the JD and MA (Philosophy) degrees, as well as the requirements of the dual degree program. The College of Law will award a maximum of 9 hours of credit toward the JD degree for successful completion of approved graduate level courses (500 or 600 level) offered in the Department of Philosophy. The Department of Philosophy will award a maximum of 15 hours of credit toward the MA degree for successful completion of approved courses offered in the College of Law. All courses for which such cross-credit is awarded must be approved by the JD-MA (Philosophy) program coordinators in the College of Law and Department of Philosophy. Upon admission to the dual degree program, a dual degree candidate will take, if he or she has not already taken, the required first year courses in the College of Law.

Philosophy offers both a non-thesis and thesis MA. Each requires a total of 30 hours of credit, at least 12 of which must be graduate level courses (other than PHIL 500 thesis hours) in Philosophy. For a dual degree candidate up to 15 of the 30 required hours will come from approved law school courses. For dual degree candidates, the ordinary distribution and proseminar requirements for the Philosophy MA are waived.

For a non-thesis MA student, the remaining 15 hours in Philosophy will be coursework (500 or 600 level) in Philosophy. The non-thesis MA student must, however, satisfy the non-thesis MA requirement for a "culminating academic experience" (normally the presentation of a philosophical paper at a professional meeting or departmental colloquium). The non-thesis MA student will take an MA comprehensive examination administered as if the student had a "minor" in law (so, a member of the law faculty will be on the examination committee and candidate examination questions will be solicited from the instructors of the law courses counting toward the student's MA).

A student electing to pursue the thesis MA track must take 12 hours of graduate level coursework in Philosophy as well as 6 thesis hours of PHIL 500. The thesis topic must be approved by the program coordinators and dual degree committee, and the student's thesis committee must include a faculty member from the College of Law. A student electing to pursue the thesis MA track will thus earn from Philosophy 18 hours of the required 30 hours for the MA and thus need credit from Philosophy for only 12 hours of coursework in the College of Law. Dual degree students who withdraw from the program before completion of the requirements for both degrees will not receive credit toward either the JD or the MA (Philosophy) degree for courses taken in the other program except as such courses qualify for credit without regard to the dual degree program.

Awarding of Grades

For grade recording purposes in the College of Law and Department of Philosophy, grades awarded in the other unit will be converted to either Satisfactory or No Credit and will not be computed in determining a student's GPA or class standing. The College of Law will award a grade of Satisfactory for an approved Philosophy course in which the student earns a grade of B or higher and a grade of No Credit for any lower grade. The Philosophy Department will award a grade of Satisfactory for an approved law course in which the student earns a grade of 2.3 or higher and a grade of No Credit for any lower grade. The official academic record of the student maintained by the Office of the University Registrar shall show the actual grade assigned by the instructor without conversion.

II.) Brief Update on the Graduate/Foreign Language Reading Proficiency Exam (Administration as of 2013-14)

Stefanie Ohnesorg informed APC members that the process of administering the Graduate/Foreign Language Reading Proficiency Exam has been changed as of fall 2013, and the exam is now administered 3 times a year according to the new guidelines that were developed over the course of the last academic year in collaboration with all participating departments. All participating department received the new guidelines in September 2013, and all documents related to the Graduate/Foreign Language Reading Proficiency Exam will eventually be posted on the Graduate School website. The sub-committee that designed the new process for conducting the Graduate/Foreign Language Reading Proficiency Exam recommended that APC should review whether additional criteria (for example an indication of the level of difficulty of this exam) should be added to the general guidelines for this exam. During its January 2014 meeting, APC will focus on this in the context of revising the brief passage referring to the Graduate/Foreign Language Reading Proficiency Exam in the *Graduate Catalog* so that it will reflect all newly added options that allow students to fulfill this degree requirement.

Policy Statement in the 2013-14 Graduate Catalog:

Language Requirement

Candidates for the Doctor of Philosophy may be required to demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language in which there exists a significant body of literature relevant to the major field of study. Please refer to the descriptions of individual programs. The doctoral committee will determine the specific language (or languages) required. When the student is prepared to take a language examination, he/she should complete an Application for Doctoral Language Examination (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/files/DocLangExam1011.pdf>) and submit to the Graduate School in accordance with the dates and times for the examinations published online.

Satisfactory completion (grade of B or better) of German 332 or French 302 may be substituted for a language examination.

Some programs may accept a computer language in lieu of a foreign language.

III.) Graduate Certificate Programs (Compliance with SACS Requirements)

Based on a request from Mary Albrecht (SACS Liason), APC reviewed the general catalog description describing admission to graduate certificate programs. It is a SACS requirement that students who fulfill all admission requirements can seek admission to a graduate certificate programs without being simultaneously enrolled in another graduate degree program at UT. After reviewing the 2 passages referring to graduate certificate programs in the 2013-14 *Graduate Catalog* (see below) it was determined that the current language complies with this SACS requirement. Stefanie Ohnesorg will discuss the outcome of our discussion with Mary Albrecht and will ask her to identify specific passages that in her view suggest that we currently may not be in compliance with this SACS requirement. If necessary, APC will have a follow-up discussion on this matter during its January 2014 meeting.

As a side-product of our discussion dealing with SACS compliance of graduate policy pertaining to graduate certificate programs, it was determined that current academic policy related to graduate certificate programs offered at UT may be difficult to understand. Therefore, if time permits, APC will work on re-wording existing policy during one of its meetings in 2014.

Policy Statement in the 2013-14 Graduate Catalog:

Admission for Graduate Certificate Programs

Admission to a graduate certificate program requires that a person meet the minimum admission requirements and any additional program requirements (see Admission Requirements/Policies). Refer to the appropriate department for specific requirements for admission to the certificate program.

Admission to a graduate certificate program does not constitute admission to a degree program. To receive a graduate certificate, students must be admitted to a certificate program or a degree program (see Graduate Certificate Programs).

Graduate Certificate Programs

A graduate certificate may be earned by successful completion of a series of specific courses. A candidate for a graduate certificate program must be a fully admitted graduate student who has satisfactorily completed (minimum 3.0 grade point average) the minimum requirements for a certificate as described in the Graduate Catalog. The minimum requirements for the certificate programs are listed under the academic department offering the certificate. A candidate must be a graduate student in good standing and comply with all other applicable policies. Graduate certificate programs require a minimum of 12 semester credit hours taken at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Use of credits to fulfill requirements for a graduate degree will be at the discretion of the academic department.

To receive the certificate, students must submit a Completion of Certificate Program Form endorsed by the academic department to the Graduate School. Only those certificate programs that are officially approved by the Graduate Council will be posted on student transcripts. To receive a graduate certificate, students must be admitted to a certificate program or a degree program (see Admission for Graduate Certificate Students).

IV.) Request to Allow Undergraduate Students to Enroll in 600-level Seminars

Taylor K. Odle, Undergraduate Council Student Representative, had presented the request pasted below to Dean Hodges for consideration earlier this semester. Dean Hodges forwarded Mr. Odle's request to the Academic Policy Committee in order to consider the proposal.

In a discussion that focused on the pros and cons of opening 600-level seminars to undergraduate students as specified in Mr. Odle's proposal, APC committee members voted on this proposal. The outcome of this vote was unanimous in favor of rejecting this proposal for the following reasons:

It was determined that it will be important to restrict enrollment in 600-level courses to graduate students as is currently the case. Committee members pointed at the possibility that undergraduate students already have the option of requesting that instructors of 600-level seminars allow them to join a seminar under a 500-level directed reading course number. Any such request needs to be approved on an individual basis, and the decision of granting undergraduate students to join a seminar by registering for a 500-level directed reading course rests exclusively with the instructor of the seminar.

Course of action following this vote:

1. Dean Hodges will inform Mr. Odle of the outcome of the discussion.
2. APC will bring this item to Graduate Council as an informational item.

Proposal presented by Mr. Odle:

Graduate Coursework – New Academic Policy (to be added under Opportunities for High-Achieving Students)

Subject to approval from the instructor and Department Head, students in junior (60 hours at UT) or senior (90 hours at UT) standing with a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or higher and who are pursuing their first bachelor's degree at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville may enroll in graduate coursework for credit applied toward their undergraduate major/minor.

Further criteria include:

- Total undergraduate and graduate credit in the semester may not exceed 15 credit hours.
- A maximum of 9 hours of graduate credit at the 500- and 600-level can be obtained in this status.
- Restriction of one 500-level or one 600-level course per semester.
- Courses taken for graduate credit may not be used for both the baccalaureate and a graduate degree program except in the case of approved dual bachelor's/master's programs.

Rationale: Students within specialized honors programs (Haslam Scholars, College Scholars, Baker Scholars, Global Leadership Scholars, Departmental Honors, etc. – though this policy should not be restricted to students in honors programs) currently may only enroll in graduate coursework for undergraduate credit (500-level) if a particular course is cataloged as open to undergraduates. Many students at the University have specialized academic programs (some of which may only be available at the graduate level) and require advanced coursework to fulfill a program of adequate rigor. Previous versions of this policy may be outdated due to the increased academic standing of our undergraduate students. Undergraduate students are currently not permitted to enroll in 600-level courses unless they have already obtained a degree and are classified as non-degree students. The petitioning process may provide a solution for previous policies but may not serve as a panacea for all academically talented students. This policy proposal provides undergraduate credit for undergraduate students and should not affect the Senior Standing Policy, currently in place with the Graduate School. This policy is not meant to solicit an open enrollment of undergraduates to masters and doctoral courses; it should simply provide an avenue for select, qualified individuals to further their academic knowledge. Finally, this policy still requires approval of the instructor and the department head for enrollment, providing a department-by-department "check" to ensure undergraduate students are capable of excelling in both 500- and 600-level courses.

Submitted by Taylor K. Odle, Undergraduate Council Student Representative.

V.) Leave of Absence Policy (Continuation of Discussion)

APC had presented a draft for a “Continuous Enrollment Policy” during the last Graduate Council meeting, seeking input with regard to this draft from members of Graduate Council. APC still needs to draft a “Leave of Absence Policy” before these 2 intertwined policies will be presented to Graduate Council for a vote.

Because of other urgent matters that needed the attention of APC during its October 31, 2013 meeting there was not enough time to work on this policy. The members of APC therefore agreed to hold an additional meeting on November 21, 2013 to ensure that a draft can be presented to Graduate Council during its first meeting in 2014. The entire November 21, 2013 APC meeting will be devoted to drafting a “Leave of Absence Policy.”

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.