Draft

University Committee on Graduate Studies

September 18, 2023

3:00pm-5:00pm

In-Person and Via Zoom

Attendees: Kyonghee Kim, Trixie Smith, Melissa Del Rio, Kate Metz, Pero Dagbovie, Jeremy Francis, Andre Lee, Alfred (AJ) Robison, Aakash Khandelwal, Kyoo Kim, Beau Zhang, Teresa Dunn, Rob Fowkes, Rita Strakousky, Gregory Fink, Samara Chamoun, Maria Cinzori, Beth Herbel-Eisenmann, G. Tomas Hult, Lorraine Robbins, Tom Sharkey, Maria Claudia Lopez, Rebecca Jacobson, Cholani Weebadde, Claire Vallotton, David Douches, Karen Renner, Richard Saouma, Liz Mittman

Meeting was called to order at 3:03pm

1. **Agenda Approval:**
   a. Trixie asked for a motion to approve:
      ▪ Lorraine Robbins moved to approve.
      ▪ Jeremy Francis seconded.
      ▪ All in favor, no one opposed, no one abstained.
      ▪ Agenda was approved as is.

2. **Minutes from April 17, 2023, were approved as is.**
   a. It was noted that the date in the Agenda should have read April 17, 2023 not 2022.
   b. Trixie asked for a motion to approve:
      ▪ Jeremy Francis moved to approve.
      ▪ Kyonghee Kim seconded.
      ▪ All in favor, no one opposed, no one abstained.
      ▪ Minutes were approved as is.

3. **Remarks from the Chairperson (Trixie Smith)**
   a) All meetings will be held in-person, but will have a Zoom link option.
   b) There is no report from Faculty Senate since their first meeting is on 9/19/2023.
   c) During this meeting, we are hoping to elect a new secretary and sub-committee chairs as well as have everyone sign up for sub-committees (all members must serve on sub-committees). There are materials in D2L with descriptions of the positions.
   d) Everyone agrees to keep their remarks brief and to the point so we make sure there is enough time to get through all agenda items.

4. **Remarks from the Dean of the Graduate School (Pero Dagbovie)**
   a. Welcome and thank you Trixie for taking on the leadership of UCGS.

b. If you are unfamiliar with what UCGS does, please look at the MSU academics governance to see the purpose and function of this committee.
c. Thank you to all serving on this important committee that deals with program changes and graduate education. This committee is important for graduate student success.
d. This committee serves as a checks & balances committee for how graduate student education functions.

5. **Remarks from the COGS Vice President for Internal Affairs (Samara Chamoun)**
   a. COGS eBoard had their first meeting last Wednesday (September 13th).
      ▪ Full council meeting is Wednesday September 19th. At that meeting they will discuss the following:
         • Advertising for listening sessions related to the Mel Tucker scandal.
         • Legislation: approval of COGS budget and approval of committee appointments
         • Discuss support for sister survivors and POSSE

6. **Introductions from Committee Members (All participants)**
   a. Introductions were done around the room and online.

7. **UCGS Opening Business (Trixie Smith)**
   a. Review of UCGS function-by-mode and program review guidelines (See D2L):
      ▪ There are lots of documents in D2L that go over what the committee does and how it does it. For those new to the committee (or those wanting a refresher) please review the D2L documents.
   b. Review & adoption of UCGS procedures (See D2L):
      ▪ Procedures are set for by University Curriculum and Catalog (UCC).
   c. Elect a new secretary for the committee:
      ▪ This committee needs a new secretary as the last secretary has retired. No one volunteered and no one was nominated. Trixie will send out an email with information related to the secretary (position description and functions) out to everyone this week to find a new secretary.
   d. Sub-committee chairs election:
      ▪ Tom Sharkey will continue his position as chair of
      ▪ Tomas Hult is the current chair for the Academic Research Policy committee and is willing to stay on a co-chair if someone else wants to help co-chair or he will step down as chair if someone wants to step fully into the role.
         • Lorraine Robbins volunteered to be co-chair with Tomas.
      ▪ Graduate Instruction, Employment, and Mentoring needs a new chair. Current chair, Beth Herbel-Eisenmann, will still serve on the committee.
   e. Sub-committee sign-ups:
      ▪ Everyone needs to sign up to serve on at least one committee. There was a hard copy sign up sheet passed around and those online were asked to indicate in the chat what committee they wished to serve on.

- Trixie will work within the membership of each sub-committee to find the needed chairs.
  f. Proxies for UCGS for University Council and Faculty Senate meetings:
     - Kyonghee Kim has served as proxie for meetings. Anyone else interesting in serving as a proxie should contact Trixie Smith (smit1254@msu.edu).
  g. Spring Semester Ad-Hoc Committee – 3 representative (1-2 meeting with UCUE)
     - Dean Dagbovie spoke on this. This will be a Fall (not Spring) committee. Asked for participants.
     - The Ad-Hoc committee will consist of 3 members of UCUE and 3 members of UCGS to discuss the starting dates of spring semester as well as determine what holidays will be class-free holidays.
     - There were 2 volunteers (Andre Lee and Rebecca Jacobson). Dean Dagbovie will reach out to everyone via email to secure a third committee member.

8. Request to establish a Master of Science degree in Global Plant Breeding in the Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences (Cholani Weebadde, Dave Douches, and Karen Renner)
   a. There was a PowerPoint presentation by Cholani Weebadde indicating the international and domestic interest in an online global plant breeding Master's program.
   b. Cholani's drive to establish this program came out of the pandemic where there has been lots of demand from the international community as well as the private sector for an online program in this field.
   c. The PowerPoint highlighted the decline of "traditional" education and the need for flexibility, affordability, and access to programs.
   d. There are 8 new courses that would be developed for this program.
   e. Several slides of support were presented from various local, university, and company entities.
   f. There is increased interest in this online program for those wishing to advance their education while already in the workforce.
   g. The PowerPoint included a short video on what an online course would look like.
   h. The topic was opened for questions:
      - Tom Sharkey: For the defense/capstone of the program, will there be a written portion?
        - All courses for this program will have a final project which will culminate into the capstone project for the program.
      - Lorraine Robbins: what if they can't find a mentor?
        - Through the connections already established in the department and new avenues in which the creation of the program will develop, the department can help identify mentors in various locations such as other universities, companies, etc. around the world.
      - Kyonghee Kim: what is the proportion of students you are expecting to be domestic versus international for this program?
        - In the creation of the program, Cholani was initially targeting international students as donors often are willing to support

education but not living expenses, however David Douches pointed out that within their department they have a fairly even split between domestic and international students.

- Trixie Smith: How important are the GRE scores>
  - Following the requirements of current programs, GRE scores were listed as a requirement. However, Cholani would like to see that requirement removed as the program is finalized and materialized. Cholani believes this requirement limits the pool of applicants and wants to see the opportunity opened to as many potential students as possible.
- Kyoo Kim: What is the basis for the number of students admitted to the program?
  - Initially it was set to 10. David Douches explained that for the in-person degrees, they don't take students without a G.A. so there are limited funds which resulted in the lower number. It was then upped to 20 as an online program.
- Kyonghee Kim: Is there a marketing company you plan to work with to advertise and get the word out about the potential new program?
  - They reached out to the teaching and learning hub on campus to get started. They do not have a marketing budget. Once the program is approved, the hub can help with marketing and get them started in getting the word out.
- Dean Dagbovie: Is this only a Plan B program?
  - As the program grows, they would like to see about added it as a Plan A program as well.
- Dean Dagbovie: what kind of mentoring is available to the students of this program?
  - Karen Renner: each student requires a committee of 3 members to meet with at least once per year. This committee should be created within the first semester or the very beginning of the second semester in the program.
- Dean Dagbovie: Are courses CSS870 and 890 for the final professional project?
  - Yes.
- Dean Dagbovie: will all of this be synchronous or asynchronous?
  - Newly developed courses will be asynchronous and students may request one-on-one meetings (akin to office hours).
- Trixie Smith: if people in the field want to do the program, do they need the 15 credits of plant sciences courses first?
  - Karen Renner: students will need some undergrad work done in this field before they can be accepted into the program as background in the area of study is important to have prior to starting this program.
- Lorraine Robbins: the final exam, what are "all materials"?
  - There will be a project in each course that will build up to the final exam.

- Andre Lee: how come there are no other course options? There are 8 courses listed, but no option to vary the courses.
  - Cholani Weebadde: the courses developed were based on the needs of plant breeders. As the program grows, the number of course options will likely grow as well.
  - Karen Renner: we don't have enough resources currently to offer a pick/choose course plan. The program was designed on what plant breeders need to know.
  - i. Trixie asked for a motion to either approve or deny.
    - Tomas Hult moved to approve.
    - Beth Herbel-Eisenmann seconded.
    - All in favor, no one opposed, no one abstained.
    - Motion passed.

9. Request to change the requirements for the **Master of Science** degree in **Child Development** in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies (Claire Vallotton)
    a. It was requested that this agenda item was to be heard along with agenda items 10 and 11 and voted on a one item. This request was accepted.
    b. Agenda items 10 (Request to change the requirements of the **Master of Science** degree in **Human Development and Family Studies** in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies) and 11 (Request to change the requirements of the **Doctor of Philosophy** degree in **Human Development and Family Studies** in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies) were heard along with agenda item 9.
    c. Claire: they want to eliminate the GRE requirement for admission from these programs. Many other universities are moving in this direction and they don't want to limit their pool of applicants by continuing to have this requirement.
    d. The topic was opened for questions:
       - AJ Robison: can they still submit them and will they be a considering factor if the potential student wants them to be?
         - Claire: they can still submit them, but it is undecided if they will be considered.
       - Gregory Fink: Is this part of a larger discussion on using GREs in general?
         - Dean Dagbovie: Yes. There is an increased movement to not require GRE scores as admission requirements.
       - Trixie: there is not currently an overall Graduate School policy on this, is there?
         - Dean Dagbovie: No, it is currently defined at the local level.
    e. Trixie asked for a motion to approve or deny.
       - AJ Robison moved to approve agenda items 9-11.
       - Kyoo Kim seconded.
       - All in favor, no one opposed, no one abstained.
       - Motion passed.

10. Request to change the requirements of the **Master of Science** degree in **Human Development and Family Studies** in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies
    a. Reviewed and approved along with agenda item 9.

11. Request to change the requirements of the **Doctor of Philosophy** degree in **Human Development and Family Studies** in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies
    a. Reviewed and approved along with agenda item 9.

12. Request to change the name of the **Master of Science** degree in **Marketing Research** in the Department of Marking to **Marketing Research and Analytics** (Richard Saouma)
    a. This request came from the Dean of the Graduate School to align with current language and offerings of the program.
    b. Tomas Hult offered further support of the change citing the program was started years ago and adding "Analytics" helps to more accurately define what the program has progressed into.
    c. The topic was opened for questions:
        ▪ Gregory Fink: is there evidence that a name change improves the breadth and depth of the applicant pool?
            • Richard Saouma: the name change helps define the program and falls in line with what the online information already provides the student.
    d. Trixie asked for a motion to approve or deny.
        ▪ Gregory Fink moved to approve.
        ▪ Jeremy Francis seconded.
        ▪ All in favor, no one opposed, no one abstained.
        ▪ Motion passed.

13. Request to change the name of the **Linked Bachelor of Arts** degree in **Marking/Master of Science** degree in **Marketing Research** in the Department of Marketing to **Linked Bachelor of Arts in Marking/Master of Science in Marking Research and Analytics**.
    a. It was noted this item should have been considered with item 12 as the reasoning for the change would be the same.
    b. Trixie asked for a motion to approve or deny.
        ▪ AJ Robison moved to approve.
        ▪ Jeremy Francis seconded.
        ▪ All in favor, no one opposed, no one abstained.
        ▪ Motion passed.

14. Request to change the requirements in the **Master of Arts** degree in **German Studies** in the Department of Linguistics, Languages and Cultures (Liz Mittman)
    a. This item was asked to be considered along with agenda item 15 (Request to change the requirements in the **Doctor of Philosophy** degree in **German Studies** in the Department of Linguistics, Languages and Cultures).

b. Liz Mittman: this change would be the language in line with the online system and clarify the requirements, allowing for more inclusivity.
c. The topic was opened for questions:
- Dean Dagbovie: what does the term "portfolio" entail?
  - Liz Mittman: materials that indicate their German language skills and education.
- Trixie Smith: is there language on the website that defines what the "portfolio" is?
  - Liz Mittman: not currently. It is usually done on a one-on-one basis with students as they apply, but the note will be passed on as it doesn't hurt to have more information on the website for students.
- Andre Lee: why is the personal statement limited to 500 words?
  - Liz Mittman: not exactly sure, but if you can't express yourself clearly in 500 words, perhaps you don't actually know what you want from your studies.
  - Trixie: the limit is there to keep the admission process more fair across the board. Expanding or eliminating the word limit could result in receiving too much information about students and creating an unfair environment in which to evaluate applicants.
d. Trixie asked for a motion to approve or deny.
- Jeremy Francis moved to approve.
- Lorrain Robbins seconded.
- All in favor, no one opposed, no one abstained.
- Motion passed.

15. Request to change the requirements in the **Doctor of Philosophy** degree in **German Studies** in the Department of Linguistics, Languages and Cultures
   a. Reviewed and approved along with agenda item 14.

16. **Roundtable:**
   a. Trixie asked for topics to be discussed in the future.
   - Andre Lee: in light of recent local and national tragedies, perhaps we can discuss recommendations to MSU for overall health and wellness of our graduate students and offer advising for new faculty on how to handle students following these situations.
     - AJ Robison: Dr. Meg Moore presented to their department and it was very helpful. It would be a good idea to involve/include her on this topic.
   - Gregory Fink: the topic of AI and how we respond to it.
     - AJ Robison: looking for guidance on how to police this and advise students on how to potentially maximize the use of this tool
     - Trixie Smith: the College of Arts and Letters has a guide they've created for this as a starting point. She will share it will the committee.

17. Adjournment:
a. Jeremy Francis moved to adjourn the meeting.
- Lorraine Robbins seconded.
- Motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:27pm