

UNL Graduate Council Minutes  
May 6, 2021  
Via Zoom  
2:30 p.m.

Attending: Jennifer Clarke, Andrew Donesky, Geoff Friesen, Rhonda Fuelberth, Adam Houston, Laurie Lee, Yusong Li, Laura Muñoz, Eric Rodene, Kara Viesca; Dean Tim Carr, presiding.

Approval of Minutes from April 1, 2021

Motion was made to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

English proficiency admission requirements

Dean Carr ask the Council to consider removing the English Language Test (ELT) requirement for international students who score below the minimum on TOEFL or IELTS. Normally, students scoring below the minimum standard would take the ELT to determine if they pass or are placed in ENGL 887, which is taught by the Program in English as a Second Language (PIESL). One suggestion is to use the TOEFL or IELTS score as the determinant for placement in ENGL 887 rather than taking the ELT.

Questions: Who identifies whether applicants are native English speakers? How can we avoid racism in the process? Can new guidelines be written that more clearly outline expectations and responsibilities for departments when making judgments about English skills? Does TOEFL/IELTS judge a student's speaking skills? Why does ENGL 887 not count toward degree requirements? Can it count as a support course? Who pays tuition for ENGL 887 if not on a student's plan of study? Does the ELT serve a specific purpose other than determining placement in ENGL 887? Does the ELT or ENGL 887 predict student success?

Dean Carr will invite Alisha Hanshaw to discuss data and experiences we have collected at UNL for international students.

Proposed deletion of specialization in Educational Leadership and Higher Education (EdD in Educational Studies)

Dean Carr explained that the recently approved (at the April meeting) specializations in "Community Colleges" and "Higher Education" were designed to better define these focus areas, making the specialization in "Educational Leadership and Higher Education" obsolete. If approved, current students will be allowed to finish in the current specialization or switch to one of the new specializations. Motion was made to approve deletion. Motion passed.

Proposed new certificate in Strategic Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Admission process is unclear. Is a student required to be in the MBA program for admission to the certificate? Does a student pursuing only the certificate need to have a previously awarded MBA? Can a bachelor-only applicant be admitted? Dr. Friesen explained that the department has made admission requirements fairly easy as a recruitment tool so students can determine if they are ready to pursue the MBA. The certificate is a valuable way for students (and faculty) to demonstrate whether they will be successful in an MBA program.

How do learning outcomes map to the courses? Electives seem very broad, which cover multiple areas. How will advisors direct students into specific electives? Need to be more specific in the proposal about why students would take certain courses. Do the courses have prerequisites on the electives that preclude certain courses being included? Motion was made to table pending revisions. Motion passed.

Proposed accelerated master's program: BA in Hospitality, Restaurant & Tourism Management to MS in Leadership Studies

Students in HRTM have historically pursued the MS in Leadership Studies, so the proposal is a logical mechanism for HRTM students. Council members expressed confusion in the proposal about "required" and "elective" courses. Do these terms refer to the future master's degree, or do they refer to their use toward the BA degree? Motion was made to table pending revision. Motion passed.

Proposed accelerated master's program: BSD in Interior Design to MS in Architecture (Specialization: Interior Design)

Dean Carr explained the BSD and MS degrees currently offered. The proposal is clearly written and no major concerns were voiced. Motion was made to approve. Motion passed.

Proposed dual degree in Master of Community & Regional Planning (UNL) and Master of Public Health (UNMC)

Dr. Zhenghong Tang joined the meeting to describe the proposal. There are many institutions offering similar dual degree programs that share credit hours between MCRP and MPH. The dual degree program is essentially sharing electives from each program, although the requirements for each degree must be satisfied on their own merit. The proposal needs a statement that the electives are actually credit sharing. Also change wording in section C.2. from "must" to "should." Motion was made to approve proposal with the recommended modifications. Motion passed.

New Course Approval Report

No report.

Graduate Student Assembly Report

Climate survey was sent out to graduate students. Results are expected in the fall.

Announcements

Graduate commencement is tomorrow and in-person.

Adjourned at 5:02 pm.