Graduate Council Meeting  
May 11, 2021 ● 2:30-4:00p ● Zoom  
Minutes

Attendance:  
Quorum: 11 (Current membership = 22)

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* A = AAA Committee; C = Course Committee; P = Program Committee; bold = chair

Alternate(s)

A. Mawyer for A. Berez-Kroeker, CALL

Guests: From Theatre and Dance: Lurana O’Malley, Markus Wessendorf, Hailiopua Baker

Announcements/Reminders

- Fall 2021 Meetings: Tuesdays, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.
  - September 21, October 19, November 16, December 14
  - Join Zoom Meeting https://hawaii.zoom.us/j/94790587666
  - Meeting ID: 947 9058 7666 Passcode: gdgc2021

Old Business

- Approval of April 20, 2021 minutes
  - page 4 - clarification on sequence of approval for GAs who wish to work from out of state.

  **Motion to Approve. Vote: Unanimous in Favor.**

New Business

- Course Proposals:
  - **MBBE 611** - Requested revisions were made. Additional option to list of required seminar courses, not a new requirement.
  - Research Ethics portion in objectives and outcomes. More information included in the course information and structure of the course.
  - Catalog description on UHM-1 form. There was some discussion that the description did not include much information RE: the research ethics portion and
responsible conduct of research aspects noted in the title. There was some mention of it, but the course documents seemed to cover more professional development than research ethics.

- A suggestion was made - would the proposer consider changing the title to just be about professional development rather than the current title which includes professional development and responsible conduct of research? Substantially more information about research ethics would be needed to keep it. For a one credit course, it could be about either professional development or research ethics.

  - Syllabus - it seems more about career development than equally on both topics. The course touches on research ethics, but doesn’t really cover it. It’s more on professional development/career development.
  - Changing the title could resolve the issues/concerns RE: research ethics.

- Motion to Approve with Requested Change to Title. Vote: Unanimous in Favor.

- Program Modification
  - THEA/DNCE - Some of the program committee thought it fine. One member abstained due to being a member of the department. Some concerns were raised about the background section, consolidating MA and MFA degrees in THEA and DNCE to degrees in MA and MFA in THEA & DNCE. It sounds reasonable and the reasons for changes cite the Manoa Budget Team plan. However, one concern is that the proposal also sounds like the creation of a new PhD in THEA. Clarification was provided by L. O’Malley. The proposal is to add a track under current PhD, but also change the name of the PhD in THEA to the PhD in THEA and DNCE. They eliminated two tracks as well, longstanding tracks, Asian and Western Theatre and are moving from offering them to a more holistic approach. A second concern referred to p 11 of the proposal and a question - any elimination of positions? No intent to eliminate any positions. This was neither suggested nor recommended by the Manoa Budget Team. Basically, they’re reducing the number of tracks from 4 to 3, cutting two, and adding 1 track; there is no intention to reduce faculty in the department. Another concern raised was if such consolidation puts them in a vulnerable position if this change is being motivated from a budget standpoint? Wouldn’t reducing the number of degrees possibly increase this vulnerability? L. O’Malley and M. Wessendorf clarified that while the changes free up resources within the department, there is still a need for all faculty. It may provide for possibly less outside instructors and faculty could do different types of work, possibly. M. Wessendorf acknowledged that this was an interesting aspect they did not think of, but the consolidation of the degrees does not mean they will not need their current faculty. They will still have the same number of students and degree requirements to meet.
  - The committee complimented the program on adding a new track in terms of implementing campus recommendations.
  - Reference was made to p. 11 about careers? There’s no Hawaiian or Indigenous Performance Studies degree, but the track at the PhD level makes this one a unique program. Planning for this track preceded the budget committee recommendations. There was a question RE: involvement by students in the planning of the track. H. Baker started 2 yrs ago with students and community members. Through that consultation and from her personal journey from Aotearoa in New Zealand in Maori and Indigenous Studies. She was clear that
this was something to bring to UH and department conversations where this degree might take someone, industries for it, capacity to be built, see research and scholarship as paths to building these possibilities and capacities in this community. H. Baker is a potential role model based on her personal experience and in the conversations she has had.

- The strengths of the proposal is that it is consistent with the strategic plan for both the campus and department. The inclusion of Hawaiian performance studies, in particular, is contributing to UH becoming a Hawaiian place of learning.
- The concern relative to this proposal freeing up faculty to potentially lose faculty is addressed by the potential for faculty to do other tasks and maybe decreasing hiring lecturers. Representatives from the program clarified, however, that the changes do not really change the curriculum and the faculty are still necessary. This change does help with recruitment and addressing concerns with low enrollment.
- Relative to addressing efficiency and synergy, encompassing both areas more properly reflect both areas while evolving the curriculum in historically and other ways to stay current and preparing for the future. Over the years they have already been integrating the degree programs. Hence, this proposal is more than just a response to the recommendations. This was part of the action plan prior to the recommendations.
- Per L. O'Malley, the program would like to add back a minor revision which is to retain the Master’s Plan A, rather than remove it. A member of the Graduate Council suggested this statement be added back into the proposal.
- A question from a member was, with this proposal, how was THEA & DNCE retaining current strengths in terms of Theatre of Japan, Indonesia, Asian Theatre? It’s a unique and strong aspect in terms of recruitment. Many of the disciplines are unique and discrete within THEA & DNCE and there is greater integration within the department. None will be removed. Restructured versus turning their back on the discipline with less separation by Asian and Western. The faculty felt a strong need to address de-colonizing the curriculum and social justice. They were criticized for silo-ing of programs, this way, they’re trying to have more permeable boundaries between THEA and DNCE and between the different types of THEA. They want students to take classes in all different areas, be in production in all areas. More interdisciplinary experience for students through their classes, techniques, and productions. It’s also shifting the focus and re-centering curriculum as well as Kennedy Theatre for more of a Hawaiian place of learning. This is also in response to student feedback that has been articulated over the last few years.
- **Motion to Approve with Modification (add Plan A to MA) to be Included.**
  Vote: Unanimous in Favor.

- Public Thesis Defense
  - This question was posed for discussion by the Graduate Council. Should there be a public defense for a Plan A Master’s Theses? SOEST programs and others agree that these are public and it’s a dept presentation by many. Per K. Suryanata, students in her program already assume they have to make a polished presentation. In principle it’s public, but up to students to publicize.
○ The discussion was about leaving it up to the program to decide, however, in terms of implementation, it varies, some include a public presentation and defense. There seemed to be general agreement to allow for the interpretation. What is the level of “publicness”?
○ Language on the GD website:
  ■ The final defense is an oral examination open to the public, during which the author of a thesis or dissertation demonstrates to his or her committee satisfactory command of all aspects of the work presented and other related subjects, if applicable. The defense is required for the dissertation and Masters plan A students.
○ Question RE: including a UR for master’s student committees. There may be bias in closed door discussions that might impact students. With policies to protect students from bias, it’s unclear why master’s students would not have a UR similar to doctoral students. Per M. Singh, other institutions require UR-type representatives for all graduate committees. At other institutions, names of possible URs are given to students by the Graduate chair and they then talk with the faculty about serving as a UR or a list is generated of faculty who could be asked to serve as UR. M. Singh shared that there are difficulties at UHM in finding a UR. Random versus student selected UR? In some programs, students prefer to identify their own UR. In some cases faculty will provide a list of names to help students to identify a UR.
○ Understanding the role, quality control, if the person has expertise that could contribute to the dissertation, their role could become more substantive.
○ Importance of transparency? Open defense for a master’s degree? M. Singh agreed that it was fine to vary on the definition of “public” for a master’s defense. The invitation of others to be present could be included. The issue is with URs, the closed door discussion; it’s the final determinant of the degree; there has to be some level of protection for the student. The UR is somebody who can be asked who agrees to serve in that role and is representing GD.
○ Grievances procedures for post defense matters? Current grievance procedures don’t seem to be designed to resolve post defense concerns.
○ Varying experiences with students and committees, the difficulty in the decision making process on whether or not students can be successful as well as faculty members’ responsibilities with regard to their role as a committee chair, member, or UR. The discussion was on-going on this issue.

Adjourned: 3:59p

Next Meeting: Fall 2021