



University of
Pittsburgh

Office of the Provost
Graduate Studies

**University Council on Graduate Study Minutes
Tuesday, February 11, 2025**

The January meeting minutes were approved with 16 in favor, 3 abstentions. 6 members arrived after the minutes were approved.

Academic Program Proposals

The School of Education presented a modification to the Learning Sciences and Policy (LSAP) program to change the name to Human Development and Learning Sciences and reduce the number of required dissertation credits from 18 to 0. The motivation for the proposal is to merge the existing Applied Developmental Psychology PhD and the existing Learning Sciences and Policy PhD programs into a single, more focused program with the hope of increasing overall cohort size. The Applied Developmental Psychology program will be terminated as a program after current students finish; there will be no additional admissions cycles for the ADP program. Council members noted that there is already a significant amount of collaboration between the two programs and faculty overlap, so the merger seems natural. The proposal was approved with 18 yes votes, 2 abstentions. After the discussion, it was noted that the proposal also included curricular modifications. Those will be reviewed by the Office of the Provost prior to approval.

The School of Education presented a modification to 7 of their PhD programs to reduce the number of dissertation credits from 18 to 0 to reduce the total number of credits required for the program from 90 to 72. The programs impacted are: Applied Developmental Psychology, PhD, Education Policy, PhD, Exercise Physiology, PhD, Higher Education, PhD, Language, Literacy and Culture, PhD, Special Education, PhD, and Urban Education, PhD. The SOE analyzed their budget and enrollments and identified that nearly all students enrolled in dissertation credits had that tuition covered by SOE graduate financial aid. They determined that \$400,000-\$600,000 in tuition dollars could be saved by eliminating those dissertation credits. The reduced number of overall credits (from 90 to 72) is also more in line with typical practice across other PhD programs at Pitt. Council members inquired about the university policy requirement for dissertation credits; VP Godley confirmed that there is no requirement for a PhD program to include dissertation credits. The proposal passed with 17 yes, 3 abstentions.

Academic Policy Review

Advanced Standing Credits



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The revised Advanced Standing Credits policy was presented by VP Godley for discussion. Council members were broadly in support of the proposed 50% limit on the percentage of

advanced standing credits that could be applied from outside of Pitt to a Pitt degree. This limit would take the place of the current credit limits, which set the limit at a fixed number of advanced standing credits for each graduate program type (for example, a six credit maximum for all MA and MS programs). VP Godley observed that the proposed policy makes the applicability of transfer credits more transparent for graduate students, and that expressing the maximum advanced standing credits allowed as a percentage of total required credits rather than a fixed number will align better with the broad range of credits required to earn the same type of degree or credential (e.g., MA, MS, professional doctorate) across the university. Council suggestions included ensuring that the same minimum grade thresholds within a program apply for all courses accepted for credits, whether taken at Pitt or e VP Godley reminded Council that PACUP would also review the policy.

No policy vote was taken at this meeting.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm.



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Attendance

Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences	Grad Student	Juwon	Adenuga
Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences	Grad Faculty	Marc	Coutanache
Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences	Grad Faculty	Peng	Liu
Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences	Grad Faculty	Jonathan	Woon
Graduate School of Public and International Affairs	Grad Student	Zena	Kesselman
Graduate School of Public and International Affairs	Grad Faculty	Luke	Condra
Katz Graduate School of Business	Grad Student	Denise	Bergdolt
Office of the Provost	Chair	Amanda	Godley
Office of the Provost	Staff	Courtney	Syskowski
Office of the Registrar, Observer	Staff	Jonathan	Helm
School of Dental Medicine	Grad Student	Dylan	Baxter
School of Computing and Information	Grad Faculty	James	Joshi
School of Education	Grad Student	Gerard	Dorve-Lewis
School of Education	Grad Faculty	Michael	Gunzenhauser
School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences	Grad Student	Abdalmohsen	Alroumi
School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences	Grad Faculty	Mark	DeRuiter
School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences	Grad Faculty	Michael	Dickey
School of Law	Grad Faculty	Joshua	Ash
School of Medicine	Grad Student	Brooke	Dresden
School of Medicine	Grad Faculty	Arjumand	Ghazi
School of Medicine	Grad Faculty	Saleem	Khan
School of Nursing	Grad Student	Myeong-ga	Cho
School of Nursing	Grad Faculty	Elizabeth	Schlenk
School of Pharmacy	Grad Student	Britney	Stottlemeyer
School of Public Health	Grad Faculty	Ying	Ding
School of Public Health	Grad Student	Vijayasri	Hari
School of Social Work	Grad Faculty	Suzanne	Pritzker
Swanson School of Engineering	Grad Student	Yousra	Bensouda
Swanson School of Engineering	Grad Faculty	Bryan	Brown
Swanson School of Engineering	Grad Faculty	Bob	Parker

Additional attendees: Stephanie Hoogendoorn, OTP; Brian Galla, SOE