

ACU Graduate Council
May 7, 2024
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
CBS Dean's Conference Room

Present: W. Carroll, K. Witemeyer, R. Slaymaker, W. Crawford, D. Barnett, D. Perkins, D. Andreas, A. Huddleston, C. Flanagan, L. Merchant, T. Womble

Absent: J. Cardot, D. Walls, M. Long

Guests: J. Smith, K. Williams, E. Gumm, D. Kennamer

The meeting began at 2:02 p.m.

- Prayer by W. Carroll
- Approval of the minutes from 3/19/24

Minutes passed unanimously.

Information Items:

1. OCCT 735 – Revise Title, Description, & Prerequisites

K. Williams – In our doctoral program, we've been growing and we have new accreditation standards. These course shifts are a result of that.

2. OCCT 782 – Revise Description
3. OCCT 791 – Revise Description
4. SOCW 748 – Revise Title, Description, Course Terms, & Content

R. Slaymaker – The title is antiquated, so we are shifting to what aligns better to standards in the field.

GST Information Items:

5. BIBM 675 – New Course – Spiritual Formation of Children

W. Crawford – This will be used in a certificate we are in the process of developing.

6. MTS – Revise Tracks and Total Hours from 45 to 48

W. Crawford – We discovered a discrepancy in documentation. We are correcting the program to 48 hours. We are also changing one of the track names to History of Early Christianity.

Action Items:

7. COMM 530 – New Course – Conflict Management

D. Andreas – We have an undergrad course COMM 430 to which we would like to add a graduate-level version to allow our graduate students to take a conflict management course. Students are interested in this content. Graduate students would have additional readings and research-based projects or practice-based projects such as interviewing practitioners.

**Motion to approve by D. Barnett; seconded by C. Flanagan; all in favor.
Motion passes.**

8. COMM 692 – New Course – Graduate Communication Internship

D. Andreas – We believe that some type of fieldwork experience would benefit all of our students. Because we have students interested in a vast array of communication fields, we had to balance rigorous outcomes with flexibility. We want them to have a keen understanding of moving from theory to practice and back. There needs to be nuance as well as knowledge. That is what we are hoping to address in this course. We will set expectations at the beginning so students will know what their project or portfolio will entail as well as how it will be assessed. They will also have a reflection paper. K. Williams – Credit hours is always a consideration with fieldwork courses. Is there a certain number of credit hours international students would need? D. Andreas – This is designed as a 3-hour course. It involves 120 hours of fieldwork. International students would need to have an internship in their degree plan, and this will be added to a menu so it will be part of the degree plan. R. Slaymaker – Does it have to be a requirement of the degree, not just a menu item? D. Kennamer – My understanding is that if it fulfills a degree plan requirement, then it would count. In my conversation with Lucy Dawson, that is what I understood.

**Motion to approve by R. Slaymaker; seconded by L. Merchant; all in favor.
Motion passes.**

9. MA COMS – Add COMM 530 & COMM 692 to Menu

D. Andreas – We are adding these new courses to our supplementary course menu. We are also adding COMM 642. We use this course a lot, so adding this will cut down on substitution forms.

**Motion to approve by L. Merchant; seconded by C. Flanagan; all in favor.
Motion passes.**

10. OCCT 725 – New Course – OTD Seminar V

K. Williams – With the new standards, we are needing to add some additional checkpoints in our degree plan to show students are progressing in a successful manner.

This will be another checkpoint to give students more direction for their capstone project. This also allows faculty to get credit for the work they are doing in helping students. This will happen in the final spring semester.

11. OCCT 643 – Close Course

K. Williams – We will close this course. We already removed it from the MSOT. Now that we have the additional standards being met elsewhere, we no longer need it. This will mean a shifting of hours. We have some new faculty coming in that will help us craft the new course that will fill the one-hour gap. We will have a special topics course fill the gap in the meantime. Our current cohort has already taken this course so we don't need to teach it out.

Motion to approve items 10-11 by D. Barnett; seconded by L. Merchant; all in favor. Motion passes.

12. OTD – Revise Program

K. Williams – See discussion above. We are needing to make some shifts to accommodate the changes needed to fit with our new standards. The only piece not included is the special topics hour that we discussed earlier. We tried to keep the same number of credit hours per semester and overall. W. Carroll – One of the things I noticed is that we only have 84 hours shown in this degree plan. The intent is to offer a special topics course, but if we publish this as is, the students would only be required to take 84 hours. We might need to have a place-holder course in the degree plan. K. Williams – We planned to take OCCT 637 from 2 hours to 3 hours. However, because our accrediting body wants to see distinct degree plans, we will probably actually remove that course from the degree plan and insert a new course that is specific to the doctoral program. W. Carroll – I am going to propose that we wait to vote until we have a clean degree plan. We can do that vote electronically. K. Witemeyer – We can get a course number for the new course and add it to the degree plan before it is officially developed.

Tabled to vote electronically.

13. SOCW 702 – Change Credit Hours from 6 to 3, Add Restriction, Change Content & Description

R. Slaymaker – This was initially designed as a leveling course for students who have a BSW. Most of the leveling involved a lot of research and since we no longer require a thesis, we think that we can change the content covered. That would allow us to reduce the credit to 3 hours. We are not reducing the total degree plan in hours because we will add an elective.

14. MSSW-ADV – Revise Program

R. Slaymaker – The changes to SOCW 702 will create three hours that can be added to the social work electives, increasing those to 6 hours. The total hours in the degree will remain the same. This helps align better with our standards. We are overhauling our BSW curriculum, so there will be changes that impact this degree coming next year as well.

Motion to approve items 13-14 by L. Merchant; seconded by A. Huddleston; all in favor. Motion passes.

Meeting ended at 3:04 p.m.

Addendum:

An online vote took place on May 14 to consider the OTD program revisions after the changes were made that had been discussed in council. The new course (to be developed Fall 2024) OCCT 733 (3 hrs) was added to the degree plan to replace OCCT 637 (2 hrs) and fill the missing hour required to keep the total program hours at 85 credit hours. The updated proposal was presented to council electronically by W. Carroll and all council members voted to approve.