Report of the Faculty Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Special Programs
2015-2016

The Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Special Programs ("Committee") met once in September, October, November, December, January, February, and April, and twice in March. Members of the Committee were Jo Ann Ewalt (Chair; MPA and Political Science), Barbara Beckingham (Secretary; Geology and Environmental Geosciences), Christine Finnan (Teacher Education and Anthropology), Anthony Varallo (English), and Mike Braswell (Accounting and Legal Studies).

Much of the Committee’s work was impacted by the work needed to prepare for SACSCOC reaffirmation, as outlined below.

September: The Committee decided to ask for workshops, led by Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning staff, to assist graduate program directors in defining programmatic student outcomes and in developing assessment plans and analyzing results. The Committee also noted the need to address course numbering issues since coherence is needed in numbering within programs and across campus and when cross-listing undergraduate and graduate courses. The workshops were held in October and November, and the Provost submitted a course numbering proposal later in the year.

October: The Committee approved EVSS 606 Wildlife law. This course had been offered a number of times as a special topics course. M.ED. Teaching, Learning and Advocacy: the Committee approves adding existing courses to a new concentration in Project Based Learning and approves new courses: MTLA 668, 671, 672, and 674.

November: MS Mathematics: The Committee approved a name change to MS in Mathematical Sciences, approved a program revision to create two concentrations, one in Mathematics and one in Statistics, and approved minor admissions requirements. MA English: the Committee approves adding an existing course ENGL 650 to the program’s required courses, approved deleting courses from approved electives, and approved reducing the number of electives from 6 courses to 5.

December: The Committee reviewed draft policies on course numbering and syllabus requirements and provided feedback to Associate Provost Conseula Francis. The Committee also reviewed a draft of guidelines intended to help programs provide appropriate differentiations in course requirements for undergraduate versus graduate syllabi.

January: The Committee approved the syllabus differentiation guide reviewed in December. MAT Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Performing Arts: in order to comply with the Read To Succeed Act, which requires students to take at least 12 hours of literacy education, a number of course revisions were approved along with the approval of some new literacy courses. MS Environmental Studies: the Committee approved expanding the EVSS special topics designation from 1 hour to 1-3 hours. MS Marine Biology: The committee approved deleting BIOL 510 and 631, which have not been offered in some time. The Committee voted not to approve the program’s request to change the required course BIOL 700 Thesis from 4 credits to 1-4 credits. MS Accountancy: The Committee voted to approve three new courses ACCT 550, 538, and 589, and to delete ACCT 542, 543, and 545, and to edit the course description for ACCT 531. These changes are being made by the program because of courses the program deemed to be out of date.
February: The Committee heard from Alex Kasman, who objected to the marketing of a Rejuvenate Retirement continuing education course (a “canned” course available at many non-educational institutions) offered on the North Campus because an online description of the course it seems to be more about gaining customers than about educating. Godfrey Gibbison said evaluations of this course have been positive. It was noted that there is no vetting or real oversight of continuing education courses at the College. MAT Middle Grades Education: the Committee approved adding one existing course EDFS 687 as a prerequisite to the program and two existing courses EDEE 690 and 640 as core requirements. The Committee also approved deleting EDFS 635 and deleting EDEE 678 from the English emphasis requirements. M.ED Languages: The Committee approved deleting SPAN 590 and 671 from the Spanish emphasis requirements. MS Environmental Studies and MS Mathematics: the Committee approved numerous course renumbering proposals to comply with the new cross-list policy that requires that graduate courses that are crosslisted with undergraduate courses must be at the 500 level. The Committee also approved a new graduate program, MA Community Planning, Policy and Design.

Conseula Francis discussed the fact that all courses approved for required and elective courses for graduate programs must be listed in the 16-17 Catalog.

March 16 special meeting: this meeting was held at the request of Conseula Francis, Associate Provost, to allow for program changes needed as the College prepares for SACSCOC reaffirmation. MS Environmental Studies: renumbering 600-level courses to 500-level and adding existing courses as possible electives. MA English: the Committee approved a proposal to terminate the African American track and to delete courses not recently offered. MA Communications: The Committee approved deleting one course not recently offered and affirming past practice by adding a number of existing courses to approved electives and to requirements. M.ED Languages: the Committee approved adding a number of existing courses to approved electives. MPA: the Committee approved adding a number of courses to approved electives. MTLA: the Committee approved adding existing courses to approved electives and one course to the New Literacies concentration. MS Child Life: the Committee approved replacing a number of existing EDEE courses with existing CHLI courses. The Committee also approved four new courses CHLI 602, 607, 608, and 610. M.Ed Science and Math: the Committee approved a change to the catalog working to make the program list of options clear. MS Marine Biology: The Committee approved a number of course renumbering proposals to change 600-level courses that are cross-listed with undergraduate courses to 500 level. The program also brought back its proposal to change BIOL 700 Thesis from 4 hours to 1-4 hours. The Committee voted not to approve this proposal.

The Committee also reviewed and affirmed a Curriculum Management Recommendations Memo introduced by Associate Provost Conseula Francis to change catalog language clarifying inconsistencies and bringing graduate school policy into agreement with college-wide policy.

March: the Committee reviewed and made comments on a draft policy 12.1.5 on Assignment of Credit Hours for theses and independent studies. The Committee also made comments on the Course Numbering policy 7.6.9 and the Syllabus Policy 7.6.10. The Committee also heard a presentation from Alice Hamilton regarding non-credit courses offered at the School for Professional Studies.

The Committee discussed whether it should recommend to the Speaker of the Senate that a separate committee be formed and charged with the continuing education and special education portion of the Committee’s current charge. A decision was made that the chair should draft such a recommendation and forward it to the Speaker, which she did.
April: ENGL: the Committee approved a revision to an existing course ENGL 512. HIST: the Committee approved changes to the program’s special topics courses to clarify that these courses are repeatable as long as the subject matter is different.

The 2016-17 Committee members also attended this meeting. Christine Finnan was elected Chair and Barbara Beckingham was elected as Secretary.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann Ewalt
Chair, 2015-16 Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Special Programs