

Graduate Council Meeting

March 5, 2021

1:00 pm

Graduate Council Chair: Dr. Pam Morris

I. Call to order – 1:03 pm by Dr. Pam Morris

Members Present: Sally Ann Cruikshank, Brandon Grubbs, Yi Gu, Amy Harris, Jwa Kim, Pam Morris, Dan Morrell, Carl Ostrowski, Luciana Prestes, Brian Robertson, Christoph Rosenmuller, Saleh Sbenaty, Lisa Sheehan-Smith

Members Absent: Michael Fleming, Shannon Harmon, Barbara Lancaster, Michael Roach, Jeremy Winters

II. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting - Approved

III. College of Graduate Studies Update – Dr. Dawn McCormack

CGS enrolled 2,919 students in the spring which has never happened before. This means retention is good and we are helping students. Applications for fall are coming in quickly so we have fantastic things going on. Thank you for participating in Grad Council.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Curriculum Changes – Curriculum Subcommittee – Dr. Lisa Sheehan-Smith - Approved

B. Consent Calendar - Graduate Faculty Status Subcommittee – Dr. Jwa Kim - Approved

C. Scholarship Subcommittee Report – Dr. Brandon Grubbs
Policy Changes – Policy Subcommittee – Dr. Brian Robertson –
Approved: Members of the full-time tenure/tenure track faculty

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and/or administrators of MTSU with equivalent ranks who wish to seek admission to a program in the College of Graduate Studies must be approved by the Graduate Council before admission can be completed. If the graduate council is out of session (e.g., for summer or winter break) when a decision is required, the program director, Graduate Council Chair, and Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies may grant provisional approval with a hold in place until the final approval is granted by graduate council.

Potential students must submit a statement regarding any potential conflict of interest. Any identified conflicts of interest are potentially sufficient for denying admission into the program.

Administrative/Faculty may not take over 6 semester hours of coursework during any semester.

Approved as amended: Departments wanting to allow PLA credit must:

1. Develop a procedure to align learning outcomes for specific courses to which documented experiences correlate.
2. Send departmental procedures to the Graduate Council for approval.
3. Submit individual student PLA credit requests to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies for final approval based upon the departmental procedures approved by Graduate Council.

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Students are only allowed up to 12 hours of transfer credit. Up to 9 hours may be obtained through prior learning assessment or 12 hours combined prior learning assessment and transfer credit may be applied.

V. New Business

Dawn asked Council to review Policy 225

VI. Motion to Adjourn – 1:29 pm

Graduate Council Curriculum Sub-Committee Meeting
Minutes – Zoom
Friday, February 26, 2021
9:00 AM

I. Call to Order – 9:00 am by Lisa Sheehan-Smith

Members Present: Amy Harris, Barbara Lancaster, Pam Morris, Michael Roach, Lisa Sheehan-Smith

Members Absent: Christoph Rosenmuller

Visitors Present: Lyndsey Bennett, Mitzi Brandon, Nita Brooks, Susan Fieldhouse, Allison Martenson

II. New Proposals

A. College of Basic and Applied Sciences

1. DATA 6500 – Cases in Data Science – New Course – Effective Summer 2021 – Approved
2. DATA 6700 – Independent Study in Data Science – New Course – Effective Summer 2021 – Approved
3. DATA 6990 – Topics Seminar in Data Science – New Course – Effective Summer 2021 – Approved
4. Data Science, M.S. – New Program – Effective Spring 2022 – Approved
5. Professional Science, Actuarial Science Concentration, M.S. – Program Change – Effective Summer 2022 – Approved
6. Professional Science, Fermentation Science Concentration, M.S. – Program Change – Effective Summer 2022 – Can be made retroactive – Approved

B. College of Behavioral and Health Sciences

1. CJA 5220 – Community Relations and Critical Issues – Course Title Change – Effective Summer 2022 – Approved
2. Physician Assistant Studies Program – Admission Requirement Change – Effective Summer 2021 – Approved
3. Physician Assistant Studies Program – Policy Changes, Approval of New Grade Mode – Effective Summer 2021 - (Addition) Approved

C. College of Education

1. Curriculum and Instruction, Ed.S. – Program Change – Effective Summer 2022 - Tabled

Graduate Council Curriculum Sub-Committee Meeting
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2. Curriculum and Instruction, M.Ed. – Admission Requirement Change – Effective Summer 2021
– Approved

3. Special Education: Special Education Interventionist and Special Education Comprehensive,
M.Ed. – Program Name Change – Effective Summer 2022 – Approved

D. College of Media and Entertainment

1. Media and Communication, M.S. – Program Change – Effective Summer 2022 – Approved

III. Motion to Adjourn – 9:20 am

Graduate Council - Faculty Status Subcommittee
February Minutes - Zoom
February 26, 2021
1:00 PM

I. Call to Order – 1:01 pm by Jwa Kim

Members Present: Jwa Kim, Dan Morrell, Carl Ostrowski

Members Absent: Michael Fleming, Luciana Prestes

II. Graduate Faculty Status

A. Adjunct

1. Paul Brawdy - Approved
2. Tyra Gross - Approved
3. Adam Sayers - Approved

B. Full

1. Mike Boyle - Approved
2. Natalie Griffin – Tabled
3. Ryan Jones - Approved
4. Francis Koti - Approved
5. Bethany Wrye - Approved

III. Motion to Adjourn – 1:14 pm

Access and Diversity Funding Scholarship

Scholarships Guidelines

- The number and amount of scholarships to be awarded shall be determined by the Graduate Studies Scholarship committee and shall be limited to the funds available in the spending account and consistent with the scholarship award guidelines. The amount shall be disbursed at the start of the fall semester.
- Applicants must meet the following criteria to be considered:
 - Be a fully admitted MTSU graduate student
 - Enrolled as either parttime or fulltime
 - **Diversity:** The MTSU campus is a rich blend of students from a variety of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds that bring with them a diverse array of life experiences. For the purpose of these scholarships, diversity is considered to include, but is not limited to, any of the following:
 - Disability status
 - First-generation college students
 - gender identity/expression
 - Non-traditional students
 - Personal hardships
 - Race or ethnicity
 - Sexual orientation
 - Special gifts or talents
 - Veteran status
 - Applicants must submit a personal statement that describes the student's career interests and why graduate school is important to their success (no word limit).
 - Applicants must provide a statement of intent to enroll for fall semester (intended course load).

Evaluation Rubric

- Applicant is MTSU graduate student (*required*)
- Applicant submitted intentions for Fall enrollment (*required*)
- Applicant provided compelling personal statement (*required*, +1-2)
- Applicant will not have graduate assistantship in Fall (+2)
- Applicant previously applied and never been awarded (+1)

Graduate Council Policy Subcommittee

Administrative/Faculty Taking Graduate Courses Policy

Potential Wording:

Members of the full-time tenure/tenure track faculty and/or administrators of MTSU who wish to seek admission to the College of Graduate Studies must be approved by the Graduate Council before admission can be completed. If the graduate council is out of session (e.g., for summer or winter break) when a decision is required, the program director, Graduate Council Chair, and Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies may grant provisional approval with a hold in place until the final approval is granted by graduate council.

Potential students must submit a statement regarding any potential conflict of interest. Any identified conflicts of interest are potentially sufficient for denying admission into the program.

Administrative/Faculty may not take over 6 semester hours of coursework during any semester.

PLA Policy

Departments wanting to allow PLA credit must:

1. Develop a procedure to align learning outcomes for specific courses to which documented experiences correlate.
2. Send departmental procedures to the Graduate Council for approval

Students are only allowed up to 12 hours of transfer credit. Up to 9 hours may be obtained through prior learning assessment or 12 hours combined prior learning assessment and transfer credit may be applied. <http://catalog.mtsu.edu/content.php?catoid=31&navoid=6818#transfer-credit>

Physician Assistant Graduate Council Requests

1. To utilize the following grading scale:

90-100 A

80-89 B

70-79 C

< 70 F

We are attempting to adhere to the current College of Graduate Studies required cumulative 3.0 GPA standard and this will be a challenge for our students due to their very heavy course loads and the rigorous nature of their courses. Also, they do not have the option of repeating individual courses or taking a partial load in a semester because they are a cohort and progress through the program as one unit. The calculation of quality points utilizing the +/- system could impact their GPA negatively so we would propose to use the above scale instead.

2. We would like to remove the part of the grading policy for our students that says that only 7 credit hours of "C" course work can apply to the degree. Our students will be taking a total of 108 credit hours for their degree. Some semesters have as many as 20 hours in them and some courses have large credit hours. This means that a student could possibly make only 2 "C's" in the program and keep a cumulative 3.0 GPA but not be allowed to graduate. We are attempting to keep the required 3.0 cumulative GPA standard but since our students can not repeat courses or take smaller loads, we feel that this specific requirement would put several of our students in jeopardy every year (even if maintaining the 3.0).
3. We would also like to share our Academic Performance and Progression Policy for review. Our accreditation is very specific in what it requires us to explain to our students, so this policy is very specific with many details. *See the attached policy document.

Academic Performance and Progression Policy

Student Progression Committee (SPC)- The SPC will meet at the end of every semester to recommend students for progression. If a student has not completed the remediation process the SPC will decide if progression to the next semester will be allowed. The SPC will receive a remediation report after every block and semester to identify and follow students requiring remediation. This will help track remediation throughout the program. In addition, depending upon the frequency, nature and extent of the deficiency, a student may be required to repeat a course, decelerate, have a later graduation date, or be dismissed from the program.

Required Academic Standards- A 3.0 cumulative GPA is required for the program. If a student falls below the 3.0 minimum, they will be required to have a detailed remediation plan from the SPC which will include a 3-semester maximum time limit for raising their GPA to 3.0. A student will not be allowed to graduate without a final GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Professionalism- Professionalism is something that is required of every Physician Assistant student and is something that will be monitored throughout the program. Lapses in professionalism can result in a meeting with the SPC and a formal remediation plan. Regular course and instructor evaluations are required of the program aiding in self-assessment and accreditation. Physician assistant students who do not complete an evaluation will be considered to be lapsing in professionalism and will receive an incomplete grade ("I") for the semester. The incomplete grade will be changed to the earned course grade when the evaluation is completed.

Remediation and Reassessment- Remediation may be recommended at any point in the program to a student who is lacking knowledge or skills in any area- academic, professional, or otherwise. A student may be required to complete a reassessment action when an exam, project or evaluation is below a 70% or if they have a lab assignment with a failing grade. Each instructor will decide the details of reassessment items for their area of instruction. Upon successful completion of the reassessment, a student may replace their initial score with a score of 70% or "pass" for pass/fail assignments. Students must earn a GPA of 3.0 or higher cumulatively or they will be sent to the SPC for a detailed academic probation contract. For the clinical year reassessment will be required for any preceptor evaluation deemed a "fail" and for any end of rotation exam that is below a calculated score of 70%. During the clinical year the student will not be allowed more than 2 course remediations. For a course remediation a student will not earn more than a final course grade of "C." A student must complete the remediation process and be recommended for progression by the SPC in order to continue in the program. If a student does not successfully complete remediation, a deceleration or dismissal may be recommended.

Progression- Requirements for progression in the program are as follows:

DIDACTIC YEAR

- Follow all policies and procedures published by the MTSU PA Studies Program

Version 1

Approved 01-08-2021

- Achieve a grade of 70% or above in all didactic courses
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above
- Successfully complete all required didactic year projects
- Successfully fulfill all required health requirements for the clinical year
- Successfully achieve ACLS, BLS, PALS certification that is valid through graduation of the program
- Comply with professional expectations published within the MTSU PA Studies Program
- Receive recommendation from the SPC

CLINICAL YEAR

- Follow all policies and procedures published by the MTSU PA Studies Program
- Receive recommendation from the SPC
- Achieve a calculated grade of 70% or above on end of rotation examinations and receive an entrustable grade on preceptor evaluations
- Comply with professionalism expectations published within the MTSU PA Studies Program Student Handbook
- Achieve a grade of 70% or above in all clinical courses

Completion- Requirements for completion of the program and graduation from the University are as follows:

- Successfully complete all requirements for the Didactic phase of the education
- Successfully complete all requirements for the Clinical Year
- Comply with all professional expectations throughout the program as published within the MTSU PA Studies Program Student Handbook
- Receive recommendation by the SPC
- Be in good standing with the MTSU Registrar, Business office and Security office concerning all tuition, fees, fines, or requirements.
- Pass all components of the program Summative Evaluation and be deemed entrustable in all program competencies.
- Complete the entire PA program within 48 months of matriculation.
- File an Intent to Graduate Form with the College of Graduate Studies and complete the College of Graduate Studies Exit Survey by the end of the first week of the final semester.

Deceleration- Deceleration may be recommended at any time to a student who does not meet the requirements for progression in the program. A student may also decelerate because of an approved leave of absence granted by the Program Director. Refer to the Leave of Absence Policy for more information on this. The SPC will be responsible for making deceleration decisions.

Withdrawal- The MTSU Physician Assistant Studies Program will follow University guidelines for a PA student withdrawing from the program. This includes transcript and grade reporting as well as refunds of tuition and fees. The University policies, guidelines, and timeframes for

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withdrawal and refunds are located [here](#). An enrolled PA student requesting withdrawal should also notify the Program Director in writing utilizing the PA Student Withdrawal Form.

PA students must attend the PA Program in a full-time capacity and thus individual courses in the curriculum are not eligible for withdrawal or drop.

Dismissal- Grounds for dismissal in the program include but are not limited to:

- Failure to meet conditions established in a remediation agreement
- Lapse(s) in professionalism
- Greater than 2 course failures
- Excessive Absences, Tardiness, or Early Departures
- Academic integrity issues
- Illegal Activities
- Failure to report any incident that may appear as a part of a criminal background check within 48 hours
- Unpaid University balances

Student Grievances and Appeals-

- If a student wishes to dispute the decisions of the SPC they may appeal in writing to the Program Director within 3 days of the SPC decision. If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Program Director, they may follow the University guidelines listed below for the corresponding category.
- Middle Tennessee State University wants to ensure all students have a positive educational experience, are treated fairly and courteously by University personnel, and are provided an outlet to address conditions and circumstances that concern them. Procedures for student complaints and grievances may be found at www.mtsu.edu/information/student-complaints.php.
- An “appeal” is a request by a student for a determination by a Grade Appeals Committee of an assigned grade where inequities or unethical or unprofessional actions are alleged. Please refer to the link found [here](#) to review guidelines on grade appeals.
- Graduate students have the right to appeal for cause any decision affecting their academic standing as graduate students. Cause excludes grade appeals, which are under the purview of the MTSU Grade Appeal Committee. The Graduate Council and the College of Graduate Studies have approved in principle the document Appeal Advisory Committee of the Graduate Council. This document may be viewed on the website at www.mtsu.edu/graduate/pdf/StudentAppealsGradCouncil.pdf.
- This policy sets the conditions and procedures for appeals to, and appearances before, the Board of Trustees (Board). <https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/governance-and-compliance/060.php>

ARC-PA STANDARDS A3.15a,b,c,d,g, A3.17f