

Minutes of CGSR Meeting #10 on 3/24/2022

The Committee on Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR) held its tenth meeting of AY '21/'22 on March 24, 2022 (Thursday) via Zoom.

Present: D. Korkin (CS, Chair), L. Fichera (RBE, Secretary, filling in for S. Shell), T. Camesano (Dean of Graduate Studies), M. Demetriou (AE), D. Medich (PH), Y. Telliel (HUA), J. Tourtellotte (BCB, GS), B. Vernescu (Vice Provost of Research).

Guests: S. Miles (Registrar), K. McAdams (Director of Academic Program Planning), M. Terrio (Executive Director of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions),

Prof. Korkin called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm.

1. The minutes of meeting #9 were reviewed and approved with minor edits.
2. Voting item: Motion to allow WPI BS students to pursue the MS degree, with the double-counting option, within 5 years of the BS completion.
 - a. The originator of the motion, Professor Demetriou, observed that the motion needs to be updated because the language and text in the graduate catalog was not completely included in the motion.
 - b. The committee voted to table the motion.
3. Voting item: Student Petition to Attend Graduate Commencement Ceremony
 - a. The committee considered a petition to allow an RBE BS/MS student to walk in the upcoming May 2022 Graduate Commencement Ceremony despite not having completed their thesis work. The rationale for the petition is that:
 - i. The student has fulfilled all the other requirements for the MS degree, and they anticipate registering for a single (1) thesis credit over the summer and defend their thesis in July 2022.
 - ii. The student previously missed the opportunity to walk for their BS degree due to extenuating circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - iii. The family of the student has already made travel plans (from overseas) to attend the graduation ceremony in May, and rescheduling travel to next year could prove difficult.The student's petition is supported by their thesis advisor, Professor Radhakrishnan (ME/RBE), who confirmed that the student is on track to graduate in the summer, and by Prof. Xiao (Department Head, RBE).
 - b. The petition was generally met with support by committee members, given the extenuating circumstances experienced by the student and their family. The committee also considered the strong support expressed by the student's faculty advisor, Professor Radhakrishnan, who clearly stated that the student is really nearing the end of their thesis work.
 - c. S. Miles (Registrar) observed that other similar inquiries have been received by the Office of the Registrar, but that current academic policy explicitly forbids master's students to walk before they have successfully defended their thesis and submitted their final manuscript.

- d. There was discussion in the committee on whether academic policy should be amended to allow students in similarly exceptional circumstances to walk in the graduation ceremony. T. Camesano (Dean of Graduate Studies) suggested that a sub-committee could be charged to review such petitions. S. Miles (Registrar) will reach out to students who have submitted other inquiries and recommend them to submit their petitions to CGSR.
 - e. The petition was approved.
- 4. Voting item: the committee reviewed and approved a motion from A. Gericke (CBC, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies) to add a new course ID 510 Student Research Mentoring, pending minor modifications.
- 5. Voting item (discussion only): the committee discussed a motion from P. Shah (Business School) to change the minimum number of credits for WPI graduate certificates offered by the Business School from 12 to 9.
 - a. The rationale for this proposal is that the Business School is reorganizing their academic offering to meet the demand for shorter and less expensive degrees and micro-credentialing.
 - b. The committee found the language in the motion to be at times ambiguously broad, and the motion could be interpreted as seeking to change the minimum number of credits for all certificate programs at WPI, not just those offered by the Business School.
 - c. M. Terrio (Executive Director of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions) observed that, in general, WPI does not experience much traction with certificate programs, and that an excessive number of credits (12) is suspected to be one of the causes. T. Camesano (Dean of Graduate Studies) offered to further discuss this topic with S. Chiaramonte (Associate Vice President, Graduate & Professional Studies) and see if it would be advisable to change minimum credit requirements for all the certificate programs offered by WPI.
 - d. M. Demetriou observed that a motion for such a change would ideally originate from CGSR, not one of the schools or departments.
 - e. Discussion in the committee centered around the impact that such a motion would have, if approved, on other degree programs and academic policies. M. Demetriou (AE) recommended to assess the impact that this motion would have in light of existing rules for double-counting courses: Are there circumstances in which a student would be able to earn a certificate by taking a single course? S. Miles (Registrar) observed that students can currently only take 6 graduate credits before they need to enroll in a graduate program, and that by bringing the total number of credits required for a certificate down to 9, a student would effectively be able to earn two thirds of the necessary credits for a certificate before actually having to apply for admission.
 - f. The committee agreed to return the motion to the originator for revisions.
- 6. Voting item: the committee reviewed and approved two motions from P. Shah (Business School), pending minor modifications, to remove the following courses from the graduate catalog: BUS 545, OIE 556, MKT 564, and MKT 567. There was discussion in the committee that

whenever courses are removed from the catalog, departments should be reminded to promptly inform their students so that they adjust their plans of study. Chair Korkein suggested that the Chair of CGSR takes on the task of reminding departments.

7. Voting item (discussion only): the committee discussed a motion from P. Shah (Business School) to change the title and description of MKT 565 and MKT 569 in the graduate catalog.
 - a. MKT 565 has been redesigned to consolidate two courses, namely an earlier version of MKT 565 and MKT 598. In light of this, there was consensus in the committee that the revised description of MKT 565 should include a statement that forbids students who have previously taken MKT 565 or MKT 598 to earn credit for taking MKT 565.
 - b. The motion was returned to the originator for revisions.

8. Voting item (discussion only): the committee discussed a motion from P. Shah (Business School) to remove the Graduate Certificate in Health Systems Innovation from the list of those offered in the graduate catalog.
 - a. The committee noted that this certificate is not listed in the graduate catalog, only on the website of the Business School; therefore, the initial thought was that no approval is needed from CGSR. However upon checking the graduate catalog the committee found mentioning of this certificate in the catalog (p.52), so the motion was sent back asking to include the requested changes in the catalog.
 - b. The petition is returned to the originator.

9. Voting item: the committee reviewed and approved a motion from P. Shah (Business School) to modify the graduate catalog to add BUS 546 five different specialties.

10. Old Business: the committee resumed discussion on plans to introduce a policy to award posthumous degrees. T. Camesano (Dean of Graduate Studies) will follow up with S. Miles (Registrar) to obtain a copy of a similar policy recently introduced by the Committee on Academic Policy, so that CGSR can create a similar one for graduate students.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 pm.