

Minutes of CGSR Meeting #19 on 3/28/2019

The Committee on Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR) held its 19th meeting of AY '18/'19 on March, 28 2019 (Thursday) in FI 207.

Present: R. Rao (Co-Chair), B. Choate (GS), M. Timko, T. Camesano (Dean of Graduate Studies), G. Fischer, M. Rolle, S. Johnson

Absent: S. Scarlata (Co-Chair), B. Vernescu (Vice Provost for Research)

Guests: Michael McGrade (Dean of Graduate Admissions), Sarah Miles (University Registrar), Kristin McAdams (Academic Programs), and Jennifer deWinter and Gillian Smith (IMGD)

Professor Rao called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM

1. The minutes of the March, 14 2019 meeting were approved.
2. A revised petition by CHE for converting an experimental course to a regular course was reviewed. CGSR suggested a minor modification either to the course description or to the course bulletin that students who have already taken the experimental course cannot also take the converted regular course.
3. CGSR reviewed a revised petition for an interdisciplinary graduate degree involving RBE and HUA. A concern was raised that none of the proposed advisors have their primary appointment in any of the traditional RBE departments. To be compatible with what CGSR interprets as the spirit of the Graduate Catalog (p 110, middle column, "At least one member of the group must be from a department or program currently authorized to award the masters degree."), CGSR considered recommending that at least one of the advising group have a primary appointment in one of the core RBE departments. CGSR agreed to work with the proposing faculty and student to resolve the concern.
4. J. deWinter and G. Smith (IMGD) presented a proposal for two new degree programs in IMGD, an M.F.A. and a Ph.D. – and some modifications to their existing M.S. degree to accommodate the new degree programs. The M.F.A. is a three-year degree on interactive and media and game design, as opposed to development for the existing M.S. degree, consisting of 51 credits and a recurring studio course. The Ph.D. will be on Computational Media, co-opting a degree name used at several universities (Georgia Tech, Carnegie Mellon, etc.) and aligning the degree with a recent NSF/NEH/NEA workshop on the subject. As with other Ph.D. degrees, the IMGD degree will consist of 90 credits (or 60 for students with a prior M.S. degree). IMGD anticipates that its Ph.D. students will likely take elective courses mainly in CS, HUA, LST, and RBE – potentially impacting their enrollment at a minor level. A new course on research methods will be required for all IMGD Ph.D. students. The existing tracks within the existing M.S. degree will be formalized to differentiate the M.S. from the new degrees. Motions were received for the M.F.A., Ph.D. and modified M.S. programs, as well as for the new supporting and colloquium courses, and several existing courses that will be re-named. Some new faculty and students will be required. A question was raised on market research. IMGD is experiencing a period of growth in its M.S. program. Nationally, IMGD is a growth area, with the first Ph.D. programs being established in the last several years. Anecdotally, current M.S. students have expressed interest in the M.F.A. A concern was raised that the current proposal permits up to 15 undergraduate credits (at the 4000 level) to count for 2/3 graduate credit. However, some departments (including CS and IMGD in its current M.S. program) do permit this practice, which is consistent with the wording of p. 22 of the current Graduate Catalog. A concern was raised about accreditation and acceptance of international students, since WPI does not

yet offer M.F.A. degrees. Some of the language regarding “rotating topics” as compared to “special topics” courses was discussed, especially given that the rotating topics courses will be core requirements. After discussion, CGSR agreed to place the proposal on its next agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 12:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Timko
CGSR secretary (C19)