



Graduate Board
Thursday, February 17, 2022

By Zoom:

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

ID: 88476102805

Passcode: 497816

3:00-4:30 pm

AGENDA

1. Review/approval of the January 27, 2021 Graduate Board minutes
2. Review/approval of the February 1, 2022 Curriculum Committee report
3. Announcements/updates
 - a. UMSS – April
 - b. GSG seeking a graduate student BOT representative
 - c. Stodder Graduate Community Coordinator openings
 - d. Suggested addition to the Graduate School's letter of recommendation form
 - e. *Science* OP-ED
4. Ryan Weatherbee, OIRA – update on [Graduate Program Learning Outcomes](#) (PLO) tracking
5. Orlina Boteva and Sarah Joughin, OIP
 - a. Conditional admission of international graduate students
 - b. Identifying and recruiting visiting scholars
6. Sandra De Urioste-Stone – Results of the Survey of Postdoctoral Research Associates
7. Continued discussion of Land Acknowledgment Statement
8. Nonterminal master's degrees
9. Items arising



Graduate Board
Thursday, January 27, 2022

By Zoom:

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

ID: 81598007492

Passcode: 040737

3:00-4:30 pm

Attendance: E. Allan, P. Agrrawal, J. Artesani, C. Beitzl, J. Bonnet, T. Bowden, S. Butler, S. Campbell, A. Cruz-Uribe, S. Delcourt, J. Deisenreider, S. De Urioste-Stone, D. Dryer, S. Ell, S. Fraver, J. Gill, A. Goupee, H. Greig, W. Gramlich, V. Herbert, K. Huguenard, S. Klein, M. Camire, A. Knightly, N. Godfried, M. LaRocque, S. Marrs, C. Murphy, S. Ohno, E. Pandiscio, D. Rooks-Ellis, S. Smith, N. Stormer, G. Van Walsum, J. Settele, J. Walker, T. Yoo, Z. Zhang, Y. Zhu

1. **Guests:** Ace Barrera, Graduate Student Success Manager; Crystal Burgess, Graduate Communication Manager; Katie Glover, Climate Change Institute; Amanda Ashe, Director of Office of Research Compliance & Export Control Officer; John Allen & Will Manion, School of Engineering Technology.

Meeting called to order: 3:03pm

AGENDA

2. Review/approval of the November 18, 2021 Graduate Board minutes
 - a. Edit – Add Andy Knightly to the attendee list for Nov 18, 2021
Jim Settle – motion to approve
Sharon Klein – 2nd
Unanimous approval
3. Review/approval of the January 18, 2022 Curriculum Committee report

New Courses:

BIO 529 Plant-Insect Interactions
ECO 503 Experimental Economics
NUR 527 FNP Care of Adults II -Clinical

Modifications:

SED 506 Assessment and Program Planning In Early Childhood Intervention

SED 521 Center-Based Practicum and Seminar in Early Childhood

SED 655 Graduate Project in Early Childhood Intervention

Sandy Butler – motion to approve

Nathan Stormer – 2nd

Unanimous approval

4. Announcements/updates

- a. VP Varahramyan recently was alerted that UMaine has officially been designated as an R1 University (very high research activity) in the [Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education](#). Information will be formally released in the coming days.
- b. Reminder: Graduate School scholarship nominations are due by February 4, 2022
- c. S. Delcourt announced the recipients of Waldron, Chase and Hunter awards noting that the Graduate Executive Committee had a very difficult time make award decisions given the universally exceptional qualifications of the nominees:

Janet Waldron Dissertation Fellowships

Sally Barker, Psychology

Kendra Batchelder, Interdisciplinary

Vaclava Hazukova, Ecology and Environmental Science

George Chase Distinguished Research Assistantships

Mohammed Baten, Anthropology and Environmental Policy

Edwin Johnston, Ecology and Environmental Science

William Riihiluoma, Physics

Clinton Spaulding, Communication

Cassandre Stirpe, Earth and Climate Sciences

Susan Hunter Teaching Assistantships

Rose Deng, Psychology

Chelsea Fairbank, Anthropology and Environmental Policy

Hannah Mittelstaedt, Ecology and Environmental Science

Kathryn Roderick, Psychology

- **Official notification to all nominees will go out next week.**

- d. Entrepreneurial Revenue Graduate Program (ERGP) update
 - i. The ERGP implementation committee is waiting on official tuition revenue numbers from Alicia Wyman. Tuition return to the pilot program group may move forward as early as this spring.

5. Student Success Manager - Ace Barrera

S. Delcourt introduced the Graduate School's new student success manager, Ace Barrera. Ace has been at the University for 22 years – 16 of those years as a professional employee at UMaine. Will be overseeing retention and student professional development activities.

Projects underway: getting to know all of our programs, meeting with program coordinators and learning how to be able to help the students better.

General advisor to assist students' progress through their degree programs as a complement to the student's academic advisor. Ace is here to support students and programs alike.

Ace will be working on professional development programs for students – writing groups (grants, research proposals, enhancing relationships with writing center, career center, library, etc...). Will be looking to enhance UMaineGRAD – Growth, Resilience, Advancement & Development workshop initiatives. Will also be serving on the Graduate Student Mentoring Committee as an *ex officio* member.

Currently working on retention reporting with OIRA and will be sharing information once compiled. Will be working with students wishing to change status from full time to part time, to take a leave of absence, students seeking a withdrawal, etc... His goal is to provide students resources to make good decisions.

D. Dryer – asked about academic progress reports and when they would be sent out. Ace said he will be sending these soon.

6. Export control information – Amanda Ashe, Director of Office of Research Compliance & Export Control Officer

We have had a number of students unable to travel to the US who are interested in beginning their courses remotely. The Department of Treasury (OFAC) creates export control sanctions that may prevent online delivery of our courses. Currently the following countries are subject to comprehensive sanctions (and thus are the most likely to require a license related to the provision of on-line education): Crimea region of the Ukraine, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Syria.

For export reviews, please email: um.export@maine.edu

Really important to stay in touch as the University may incur significant financial and legal implications for violations of export control regulations.

Amanda will share an updated list of countries and regulations with Scott, and he will share with the Graduate Board membership.

7. New Graduate Proposals

- a. Graduate Certificate in Climate Studies (online) – Katie Glover, Lead Coordinator Climate Studies – largely delivered online – created in partnership with DLL. 9 credits / 3 courses.

Executive Committee had some questions about this graduate certificate proposal and the existing graduate certificate in climate studies. K. Glover explained that the planning faculty encouraged the development of a separate certificate to better distinguish the audiences and to help the students develop a cohort. The online certificate may appeal to classroom teachers, anyone working in government in the climate policy area, etc...

Sharon Klein – said she teaches ECO 505 – which looks at aspects of sustainability and might be included as an elective.

Jacqueline Gill – added that she teaches one of the classes included in the certificate proposal and is happy to answer questions as well.

Hamish Greig – where would funding come from to teach the new courses and who would administer the program?

Physical Science course – Kirk Maasch will teach

Human Development of Climate Change – Cindy Isenhour will teach

INT 500 – experimental course for CCI – pilot version which will be taught by Katie Glover this summer.

ESC 556 – Beth Hufnagel – School of Teaching and Learning / Climate Change.

The certificate would be administered by the director of the school of earth and climate sciences, Karl Kreutz. DLL will largely fund instruction for the online classes.

Susan Smith – asked about requirements – Is a bachelor's is the only requirement?

Jacqueline Gill – asked about who would the certificate target?

There may be some confusion – current certificate is open to anyone in wishing to pursue climate studies. We cannot have two versions of the same courses with different expectations and learning outcomes. For EES students, they want experiential learning, etc....

J. Gill is also concerned about drawing students away from other CCI courses. She suggested “Climate Change for Professionals” as a potential name that would clarify the audience for this certificate.

J. Settele – question about courses from SPIA that may have potential to be included – he will send information directly to K. Glover.

J. Gill – noted that some of those courses mentioned today would be great to include in the regular climate studies certificate — “we have so many more classes than we did when we designed that back in 2013/2014!” J. Gill said she is happy to help K. Glover with this certificate proposal if needed.

S. Delcourt – suggested that K. Glover try to modify this certificate proposal to further distinguish it from the existing climate studies certificate (a new certificate title? slightly different curriculum with different learning outcomes? more specific description of the target audience?) Monique LaRocque and Katie Glover will discuss further.

S. Delcourt noted that we can place this on the Graduate Board agenda again next month and revisit the proposal if there is a new version.

b. MS in Engineering Technology – Will Manion, John Allen

Electrical Engineering Technology vs. Engineering in Business curriculum. 4 different engineering technology programs however, this is the first fully online MS in Engineering Technology – new step for the program.

Target of the proposed MS program is working professionals 30 total credits – 9 credits are a project management component, providing in depth time to work on professional components in the field. 21 credits in engineering technology subject areas feature a variety of online offerings.

Executive Committee question – why did SET choose to make this a Master of Science degree rather than a Master of Engineering degree? Will Manion explained other similar programs across the country have developed the MS rather than the ME degree, and they are mindful of their competitors.

Yifeng Zhu – in support of the program, but has questions about calling the nonthesis program a MS degree rather than a ME degree which is used for many nonthesis programs. S. Delcourt added that many of UMaine’s nonthesis programs are MS degrees even though there is a ME degree in engineering physics and in civil and environmental engineering.

Motion to approve = Will Gramlich

Sandy Butler -2nd

Unanimous approval to move forward with one abstention (Yifeng Zhu)

c. 4+2 Addendum in Electrical and Computer Engineering (no approval required)

Y. Zhu explained that the +2 option is to allow a student to complete a thesis and still take advantage of the 9 credits to be counted in both undergrad and grad degree requirements.

Will Gramlich – asked about the actual difference between a 4+1 and a 4+2. S. Delcourt replied that all programs were initially proposed as nonthesis options which could be completed in a plus

one year. However, some programs wanted to retain some of their undergrads in a thesis programs which might not be completed in a single year depending on the progress of the thesis research, hence the plus 2 option.

J. Gill – stated that her program offered “4+” options, but they do require a thesis for the “+” options. Students can do the thesis in 1 additional year if they begin the research as Honors College students. These students are ranked at a lower priority for TA consideration. Most are grant-funded (Biomedical researchers in SBE are the ones generally pursuing the “+” options.)

8. Continued discussion of Land Acknowledgment

S. Delcourt reviewed the prior discussion – President’s Council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion developed a land acknowledgement statement that UMaine has adopted. Sharon Klein shared with Graduate Board in November.

Within the Higher Ed program, Elizabeth Allan noted that some doctoral students are including a researcher positionality statement in their dissertations.

Executive Committee discussed whether there is a need to pick just one option since the nature of student research varies across disciplines

J.Gill – suggestion to allow students to write their own statement – be thoughtful and customize it. (provide links and examples of how others have done this in the past.) Provide tools & resources, but encouraging more personal versions.

J. Deisenrieder suggested that some guidelines for students would be very helpful.

E. Allan agreed that connecting the statement more to the student and requiring that the student reflect on how the land has influenced the student as a researcher could be beneficial.

S. Klein expressed concern about straying too far from the statement that has been vetted by the tribes.

D. Dryer – suggested that the default could be that the existing land acknowledgement is included (just as the template for the thesis/dissertation includes personal acknowledgments), although students could opt out or decline to include that if they wish. Students could then have the option to extend the land acknowledgment statement or to reflect on it. Or to provide a positionality statement, with examples and additional references that students could consult as needed. Either, both, or neither would options.

J. McClymer – liked Dylan’s comment. Best to encourage, educate, but not

require a statement.

J. Gill – positionality statements are not common in most physical and biological sciences, so that would require some guidance/training/explanation.

W. Gramlich – agreed that he is not as familiar with a “positionality statement” and would require more information if it became a requirement.

N. Stormer – suggested that we are careful to allow the statement to do the work it was intended – and not look for it to do more than it is intended.

S. Klein – if it were required to be in thesis and dissertations, we would add it to the thesis handbook.

C. Burgess shared the information on thesis requirements for reference:
<https://umaine.edu/graduate/resource/thesis-guidelines/>

S. Delcourt would like GB representatives to bring this issue back to their programs for discussion. The Executive Committee will develop a working draft of a policy as a starting point.

9. Items arising – none

Meeting Adjourned: 4:30PM

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT

The Curriculum Committee met on February 1, 2022 and is recommending the following courses to the Graduate Board for approval at its February 17th meeting.

New Courses:

EHD 661 The Sociology of Education

EHD 663 Comparative and International Education

EHD 664 Philosophy of Education

ESS 551 Teaching Social Studies at the Secondary School

Modifications:

EDT 571 Methods of Integrating Computational Thinking for Diverse Learners

EHD 660 History of American Education

Current Recommendation Form

● crystal.burgess@maine.edu

Phone Number

Relationship to Student

●



On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the highest), please indicate the student's academic ability and potential to succeed in graduate level coursework

● Please select an option



On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the highest), please indicate the student's motivation for the proposed program of study

● Please select an option



This recommendation may be used for:

● Please select an option



Please include the reasons for your recommendation of this student, or attach a document below. Examples of recommendation topics include: What is your estimate of the applicant's promise as a graduate student and professional success? What are the applicant's greatest strengths and weaknesses? What is the extent of your acquaintance with the applicant?

If you are attaching a letter of recommendation, please write "See attached letter" below.

Proposed Recommendation Form

Add question requesting the reference to rank the applicant compared to other students at their institution with options to indicate top 1%, top 5%, top 5%, etc.

Language of question and rank options to be determined by Graduate Board.

● Email Address

Phone Number

Relationship to Student

● ▼

On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the highest), please indicate the student's academic ability and potential to succeed in graduate level coursework

● Please select an option ▼

On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the highest), please indicate the student's motivation for the proposed program of study

● Please select an option ▼

How does this applicant compare to other students at your university?

Please select an option ▼

Please select an option

- Top 1%
- Top 5%
- Top 10%
- Top 25%
- 25-50%
- 50-75%
- Below 75%

student, or attach a document below. Examples of recommendation topics include: What is your estimate of the applicant's promise as a graduate student and

WORKING LIFE

By Gabriela Lopez

More than an exam

My Ph.D. adviser had encouraged me to take a vacation. So I was sitting at an airport restaurant, sipping a margarita, when I received the email. It informed me I had failed my qualifying exam on my third attempt, which meant dismissal from the program. I knew things hadn't gone perfectly. A day earlier my committee had told me it needed more time to decide whether I passed. But I was still dumbfounded. How was it possible that one exam—1 hour of my life—could erase all my other successes and define me as unfit to be a scientist?

I wasn't sure what to expect when I started my Ph.D. program. As an Afro-Latinx first-generation college graduate, I didn't have family members who could tell me what it was like. I had worked in a lab as an undergrad student and I assumed I was prepared for what was to come. But I struggled with my classes during my first year, spending countless hours receiving tutoring and studying in the library. Often, I had to interrupt my reading to look up the definition of scientific words and concepts.

I ended that year with increased confidence, eager to put my newfound knowledge into action as I dove deeper into my research. But my confidence took another plunge shortly thereafter, when I made my first attempt at the qualifying exam. I had never taken an oral exam before, so the experience was terrifying. I stood in front of my exam committee while they asked me about my research project and then peppered me with questions about concepts and methods, some not directly relevant to my research.

I had switched research projects 5 months earlier, after my first adviser left the university, so I wasn't as confident going into the exam as I might have been otherwise. I struggled to remember terminology and come up with thorough answers on the spot, especially when I was asked questions I hadn't previously thought about.

Once it was over, my committee told me I'd conditionally passed, which meant I had to take more time to study and prepare to talk about a subset of topics. I was shaken but still hopeful. But when I retook the exam, I failed again. That's when I was told I'd have one more chance.

For the next 2 months, I did everything in my power to prepare. I sat down with my committee chairs and asked them for guidance. I practiced answering oral questions with my adviser and lab. I even stopped doing lab work to focus on my exam preparations. I was all in.

When the exam was over, I left the room feeling a mix of



"I still have a little voice in the back of my head fretting I'm not good enough. But I try to quiet it."

fear and relief. But those feelings changed to frustration the next day, after I learned I'd failed. I reflected on how different my experience going into the exam was from my peers'. Many had college-educated family members they could speak with about their work. My family members, in contrast, are less familiar with science. We also speak Spanish at home, and I have difficulty translating even the simplest scientific concepts into Spanish. These struggles and many others hampered my ability to comfortably speak the expected "language of science."

My adviser believed in me and persuaded the department to allow me to complete a master's degree. So I carried on with my research, resigned to my situation. But with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter protests, things started to change. I watched as movements such as #BlackInTheIvory took hold, initiating discussions about the lack of support for first-generation, underrepresented students in academia. And I was heartened to see my program reassess its own approach.

After a series of meetings and open forums—during which I submitted anonymous feedback—faculty members voted to do away with the qualifying exam structure I'd struggled with. From then on, students would be asked questions, so that faculty could gauge their knowledge and skills and provide constructive feedback. But they wouldn't face expulsion from the program.

My adviser petitioned to reinstate me to the Ph.D. program, and I'm now back to working on my doctorate. I still have a little voice in the back of my head fretting I'm not good enough. But I try to quiet it by surrounding myself with mentors who support me and by staying focused on developing into the great scientist I know I can be. In the end, I am much more than that 1 hour exam. ■

Gabriela Lopez is a Ph.D. candidate at Northwestern University.

ILLUSTRATION: GABRIELA LOPEZ

Proposed Graduate School policy on the inclusion of a land acknowledgment in graduate student theses and dissertations

University of Maine graduate students are encouraged to include a statement in their final thesis or dissertation which acknowledges that their graduate study has taken place on the ancestral lands of the Wabanaki Tribal Nations. The Graduate School acting through the Graduate Board recommends 2 options for a tribal land acknowledgement. The first option is to include the statement that was developed by the President's Council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and adopted by the University of Maine:

The University of Maine recognizes that it is located on Marsh Island in the homeland of Penobscot people, where issues of water and territorial rights, and encroachment upon sacred sites, are ongoing. Penobscot homeland is connected to the other Wabanaki Tribal Nations—the Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, and Micmac—through kinship, alliances, and diplomacy. The University also recognizes that the Penobscot Nation and the other Wabanaki Tribal Nations are distinct, sovereign, legal and political entities with their own powers of self-governance and self-determination.

UMaine President's Council on DEI

The second option, which may be especially relevant to graduate students undertaking qualitative research studies, is to include a researcher positionality statement in the thesis:

Masters and PhD student researchers in the social sciences are often required to explore and explain their positionality, as, in the social world, it is recognized that their ontological and epistemological beliefs influence their research.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1268044.pdf>

The positionality statement could include an acknowledgement of the land:

Articulating your positionality means locating yourself in your familial history, discerning where your knowledge comes from, and addressing the lived experiences that guide your perspective in your life, research, and teaching roles. We all inhabit intersectional identity groups that connote varying levels of power and privilege such as race, socioeconomic class, ability, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.

<https://inthearts.arts.ubc.ca/renewed-project/discussion-topics-prompts/discussion-prompts-positionality/>

Graduate programs endorsing option 2 should provide resources to graduate students electing this option.