



Department of Geography

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August 17, 2009

Associate Dean Elliot Slotnick  
Graduate School  
The Ohio State University

Dear Elliot,

The Department of Geography would like to request a slight change of names of the four specializations in the Graduate Program of Geography. We propose to add some courses to the selection for the fulfillment of graduate programs in some of the specializations. These changes are proposed to better reflect the expertise of new faculty in our department, and to reflect the changes in the discipline of Geography.

Specifically, the rationales are as follows:

1. Due to the large number of recent hires, the composition of our faculty has changed dramatically over the past few years. Since 2001 we have hired 15 professors, out of a total faculty of 25. Most of these hires have been at the assistant level. This demographic shift allows us to teach material that is more in keeping with new directions in the discipline.
2. The names of our specializations therefore need to be updated now. Updating names will better reflect and communicate course contents, and will make them more similar to the terms used at peer institutions. Our proposals for name changes result from intensive faculty consultation.
3. Interdisciplinarity and the pace of real-world events have made Geography a much more dynamic discipline than it was twenty years ago. Geographers now regularly engage with different fields of inquiry. Students' research interests are becoming more diverse and dynamic. Adding more courses to the list would offer students wider choices and reflect changes in our discipline.

In sum, Geography is currently a very dynamic and diverse discipline. Our department is also in the midst of a personnel shift that parallels the dynamism and diversity of the discipline. Our proposal updates the names and the selection of courses to better represent state-of-the-art contents in each specialization. It reflects the broad expertise of our faculty

and new courses in our department, and provides a clear and comprehensive education to students with a range of interests and career plans.

We hereby request the following changes in the following specializations:

**1. Urban and Regional Studies** (to become “Urban, Regional, and Global Studies”)

This specialization focuses on the spatial differentiation and organization of political, social, cultural and economic activity. The proposed changes respond primarily to broad support among faculty for course sequences and content which better reflect the state of teaching and research in Human Geography. Since this specialization links urban and regional politics and development to larger, global scale forces and trend, we propose the following revisions.

a. Change the name to “Urban, Regional, and Global Studies.” This name change builds on long-term strengths of OSU Geography while signaling the growing importance of the global-scale scholarship in Geography more generally. It also better represents the diversity of faculty strengths in this area.

b. To add the following courses to the list of selection for specialized courses:

605 (New Worlds of Latin America)  
608 (South Africa: Society and Space)  
652 (Social Cities)

**2. Spatial Analysis Methods (SAM)** to become “GIS and Spatial Analysis”

This specialization focuses on learning tools and methods for the management and analysis of geographic information while also receiving broad training in geographical principles. Geographic Information Science (GIScience) has become a widely known name in Geography and other disciplines. With new (Liu, Xiao, Sui and Ahlqvist) and existing faculty’s (Kwan and O’Kelly) focus on GIS, we think that we should add this to the name.

**3. People-Society-Environment** (to become “Environment & Society”)

This specialization focuses on understanding the relationship between people and nature. Although this is a relatively new specialization in the department (started in 2002), so-called “human-environment interactions” or “nature-society relations” have been at the core of geographical thought since its inception as a discipline. Drawing on this history of geographic thought, the proposed name changes better emphasize the reciprocal relationship between social and environmental processes. It introduces relevant theories in human and physical geography, appropriate methods of inquiry, and case studies of environmental challenges. We propose the following changes.

1. Change the name of this specialization to “Environment & Society.” This name change better reflects disciplinary terminology and signals the diversity of faculty strengths in this area.
2. To add 655 (Land Use Geography) to the list of selection of required courses. 655 is a newly revised course that focuses on the relationship between land use change, policy and impact on human society.

**4. Atmospheric and Climate Studies**

We do not propose any changes in this specialization.

Please let me know if you need any other information.

Sincerely,



Mei-Po Kwan  
Graduate Studies Committee Chair  
Professor of Geography

**Graduate Council  
September 28, 2009  
226 University Hall  
Meeting Minutes**

**Graduate Council Members Present:**

Ana Azevedo, Teresa Early, Hazel Morrow-Jones, Robert Perry, Ruth Peterson, James Phelan, John Sheridan, Harald Vaessin, Ingrid Werner, Danelle Wilbraham (representing Brian Gay)

**Graduate School Staff Present:** Doug Brownfield, Patrick Osmer, Ann Salimbene, Susan Reeser (recorder)

**A. Approval of Minutes**

- The minutes from the June 1, 2009, Graduate Council meeting were approved as submitted.

**B. Announcements – Dean Pat Osmer**

1. Dean Osmer explained the role of the Graduate Council members indicating that they are the Graduate School's advisors on graduate education issues. Graduate Council is charged with the responsibility to help strengthen graduate education, clarify and streamline Graduate School guidelines and policies, and has final approval of curricular changes prior to review by the Council on Academic Affairs. Dean Osmer said that Council members are welcome to recommend agenda items for the meetings.
2. Dean Osmer shared new initiative ideas for 2009-2010 to Council including the need to increase the number of master's degree programs, strengthen international collaborative programs, tracking electronic learning at the Master's level, semester conversion, enhance visibility through strategic communications, and to simplify rules and procedures. Dean Osmer encouraged members to send him other ideas or proposals.
3. Dean Osmer reported on the initiatives undertaken by Graduate Council during 2008-2009 such as: mandatory electronic submission of Master's theses, changing the minimum Ph.D. credit hour requirement from 135 to 120, streamlining the guidelines for formatting dissertations and theses, revised the policy on the investigation of allegations of research misconduct, revised the doctoral residency requirements, clarified candidacy and the candidacy examination definitions, one year update of the doctoral program review, relaxed the residency requirements for the presidential fellowship recipients, and instituted the College allocation for the Graduate School's University Fellowship competition.
4. The final reports of the Task Forces on the Life Sciences and the Environmental Sciences have been submitted to Provost Alutto. Dean Osmer and Dr. Joan Leitzel will meet with Provost Alutto to discuss implementation plans and next steps.
5. The Graduate School will hold its quarterly meeting for department and graduate studies chairs on Tuesday, October 27, at the Blackwell from 3:00-4:30 p.m. Graduate Council members are most welcome to attend.

**C. Election of Chair**

- Council members approved Professor Jim Phelan continuing as the chair of Graduate Council for 2009-2010. Dean Osmer thanked Professor Phelan for his service as chair last year and for his willingness to continue in this role.

## D. New Business

### 1. Post-candidacy status for AuD students

The Department of Speech and Hearing Science is requesting modifications to the 3 credit hour, full-time status post-candidacy rule for the Doctor of Audiology (AuD) the professional doctoral degree program. Audiology justified the request stating that students in the AuD program currently spend their fourth and final year of study working on a one-year professional externship but are still required to carry 9 credit hours per quarter to maintain full-time enrollment even though they aren't on campus. 3 credit hours more accurately reflects the amount of university resources used on these students.

- **Council members approved the proposal for the AuD program. However, post-candidacy credit hours for other professional degrees e.g., the Doctor of Nursing Practitioner (DNP) or Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.PT) will be reviewed after petition on a case by case basis.**

### 2. Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) Fellowship set-aside

Dean Osmer explained a proposal by Cyndi Freeman, director for Graduate Student Recruitment and Diversity Initiatives in the Graduate School, to set aside 15 University Fellowships for students who have successfully completed the Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) at Ohio State in an effort to make early recruitment offers to highly qualified prospective students. SROP is a CIC-sponsored program that provides largely underrepresented undergraduates with an intensive, faculty-mentored summer research experience with the end goal of being to successfully recruit them into graduate programs. The Graduate School proposes to make competitive four-year offers to SROP students when they are admitted to a program. The offers would include Graduate School funding during the first or second year and dissertation year funding. Graduate programs would be required to provide funding during the intervening years.

- **Council members asked that the Graduate School prepare a written proposal for review at the next meeting. Cyndi Freeman will also join in the discussion and provide further detail.**

### 3. Semester Conversion

Dean Osmer reported that Associate Dean Elliot Slotnick is the Graduate School's representative on the university's semester hour conversion committee. Council members indicated that while some of their programs had begun making plans for the conversion to semesters others were taking it slow and waiting for direction before beginning.

Council members identified several policy issues that will be affected with the transition, such as, e.g., curriculum conversions, graduate associate teaching appointments, rules for residency, number of credit hours for the Master's and Ph.D. degrees, and the number of credit hours for post-candidacy students.

Council members felt that the Graduate School must take the lead in setting up a template of functions that will need to be changed in preparation for the proposed 2012 conversion date. Dean Osmer asked Council members to send him a list of topics that will be

affected by the calendar conversion. The Graduate School will prepare a general listing for discussion at the next meeting.

#### **4. Proposal to amend the definition of a dual degree graduate student**

Ann explained the rationale for wanting to simplify and clarify the current dual degree policy, which indicates that the dual degree program applies to students pursuing two master's degrees simultaneously. The new policy will include the simultaneous pursuit of another master's degree, a Ph.D., or a professional doctorate degree in a second program.

➤ **Council members approved the proposal.**

#### **E. Graduate Council Curriculum Committee Reports and Actions**

– Theresa Early, Liaison

1. Proposal to create a new Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization in Analysis of Material Culture
2. Proposal to create a new Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization in Medieval and Renaissance Studies
3. Proposal to create a dual Master of Public Administration and Master of Business Administration (MPA/MBA) degree program
4. Proposal to add new courses in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences in the Environment and Natural Resources Graduate Program
5. Proposal to add new courses in Forest Science
6. Proposal to rename three of the four specialization tracks in Geography

➤ **Professor Early explained the Curriculum Committee review and vetting process and reported that each of the proposals above had been approved by the committee. The proposals were approved by Graduate Council and will be forwarded to the Council on Academic Affairs for further processing.**

#### **F. Other**

- Graduate School IT staff member Doug Brownfield explained the log-in process and operation of the SharePoint site that's been set up for Graduate Council members to view meeting materials, announcements, and conduct discussion groups. Graduate Council minutes will also be posted to the Graduate School's website for review by anyone.
- The next Graduate Council meeting will be held on Monday, October 19, from 3:30-5:00 p.m. in 226 UH.

**The meeting was adjourned at 4:59 p.m.**