



University Council on Graduate Study Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 9, 2024

Academic Program Proposal

Proposal to establish a Doctor of Chiropractic in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences

The mission and vision of the Doctor of Chiropractic (DC) program align with the SHRS mission and vision to advance health, rehabilitation, and reintegration service delivery through teaching, research, and professional service. As indicated in the proposal, establishment of a DC degree at the University of Pittsburgh in the SHRS Department of Community Health Services and Rehabilitation Science will enable the school to break through a major chiropractic education barrier - the University of Pittsburgh would be the first research-intensive public university in the United States to offer an educational program leading to a DC degree. The proposal has considerable support throughout the School of Medicine, including chairs of Orthopaedic Surgery and Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. In addition, SHRS has worked closely with the Pittsburgh VA to incorporate DC services within primary care and with the UPMC Health Plan to improve the quality of care in their chiropractic network. The program length will be 2.67 years compared to 3.5 to 4 years for most other DC programs.

UCGS recommended that the minimum GPA requirement for admissions be lowered to 3.0 as is the case with most other graduate and professional programs at Pitt. UCGS members also noted that the research project required of all professional doctoral programs was missing and suggested that the program add a research-focused capstone project. Otherwise, UCGS was in full support of this new academic degree. A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the Provost that the proposal be approved. Members present voted in favor of recommending approval to the Provost (25 in favor; 2 abstain).

Subcommittee Reports

Course Repeat/G Grade (with PACUP) subcommittee considered [transfer credit maximums](#) and other issues related to transfer credits including block transfers.

The subcommittee chair was Linda DeAngelo, and the members were Elizabeth Schlenk, John Twyning, Betty Braxter, Mary Besterfield-Sacre, Liann Tsoukas, Don Ulin, and Nicole Cecchini.

Recommendations for Course Repeats:

- Change language from “repeats” to “attempts.”
- 2nd attempt requires a plan for success.



- 3rd attempt requires unit approval and plans for success.

Recommendations for G/I grades:

- Discontinue the use of two distinct grades for incomplete work at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.
- Use G grade for undergraduate students with incomplete work.
- Use I grade for graduate students with incomplete work.
- Instructor should submit default or backup grade at the time of issuing G or I.
- Discontinue the use of the NG grade. Instead, if no updated grade is inputted by the instructor on the student record after 1 year, the default grade will become the permanent grade on the student's record.

In the UCGS discussion of the recommendations, it was noted that it might be beneficial to use the single term "Incomplete" (I) instead of G for both undergraduate and graduate students since the subcommittee recommended parallel policies/procedures at both levels.

The Graduate Faculty subcommittee considered the definitions of [graduate faculty](#) and adjunct graduate faculty, potential mentor training requirements, conditions under which graduate faculty status can be revoked and the process for appointment to graduate faculty.

The subcommittee chair was Saleem Khan and Jonathan Woon, and the members were Robin Lee, Wendy Mars, Bryan Brown, Michael Dickey, Dennis Galletta, and Madeline Kreider.

Recommendations:

- Require mentor training as a condition of graduate faculty status.
- Change the term "adjunct" to something such as "auxiliary" and make the appointment fixed term.
- Create guidelines for periodic review of "program affiliation."
- Articulate conditions for suspending or revoking graduate faculty status.

The Guidance on Graduate Mentoring and Advising subcommittee considered the University's guide to graduate mentoring and advising (entitled [Elements of Good Academic Advising](#)) for University-wide mentor/advisor training and support.

The subcommittee chairs were Susan Grayson, Bob Parker, and Pernille Roege, and the members were Rithika Behera, Mark DeRuiter, Greg Kinzler, Nadine Robert, Jenay Willis, and Robert Marshall.

Recommendations:

- Focus on graduate mentorship beyond academic advising.
- Centralize resources for transferability across units.



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- Centralize definition of excellence across disciplines.
- Recognize relationship-building in mentoring.
- Create a system of mentor accountability.
- Provide concrete support for mentors and mentees.
- Academic advising improvements, such as defining cadence for advising, intra-school communication, and student-centric advising, per degree objective, timeline and student background.