

**Graduate Council**  
**Minutes of February 16, 2021**

Dr. Boyd called the Zoom meeting to order. In attendance were: Basil Englis, Paula Englis, Michelle Haney, Sherre Harrington, Joyce Heames, Alan Hughes, Nancy Mercer, Carolyn Stufft, Monica Willingham.

Minutes from December 15, 2020 were *approved by voice vote*.

Campbell School—point of information

Ms. Mercer provided a point of information about the accountancy track of the MBA. It is being paused due to lack of students as well as lack of faculty to teach. Dr. Boyd asked for more information about the lack of faculty.

Dean Heames responded that Kim Bushnell was a key component of the program and she has moved to different role. Ms. Mercer added that there was also an adjunct who has retired. Dr. Boyd noted that there is a SACSCOC policy that if a program is inactive for long enough it would be considered a substantive change to bring it back. Dean Hughes confirmed that the limit is five years. Ms. Mercer commented that they were taking a look at the entire program and will be reviewing next steps. Dr. Boyd suggested that it might be a good program to be online?

Ms. Mercer also reported on survey of May 2020 graduates. The results indicate that they are good to be included with the 2021 graduates in the May ceremony. They would like to have some opportunity to do something with each other, perhaps something more informal.

Dr. Boyd asked if the graduate education school had feedback from their graduates? Ms. Willingham responded that they are also fine being a part of the 2021 class ceremony. Dr. Boyd commented that we may not have enough room in the chapel for both classes for both schools with family members.

Dean Heames inquired about the status of the undergraduate commencement. Dr. Boyd responded that one option is to use the football field, but if it is too hot it might be in the Evans lawn area, with social distancing. Dean Heames asked if it would be possible for it to be set up the Friday night before so that we could use it for the graduate program. Dr. Boyd replied that we'd have to check into it, but they do not set up the sounds system the night before. Perhaps we could use a smaller sound system for the ceremony.

Dean Heames commented that in case of bad weather, the graduate program could perhaps fit in the Cage or Krannert, but the undergraduate ceremony would require limited guests. Dr. Boyd commented that we'd have to discuss whether to combine them into one ceremony or not under various circumstances.

Old Business

Dr. Baines reintroduced proposal to revise the MAT program.

The program would be intended for students who have post-secondary degree already who may wish to move into the teaching field. He commented about questions of early childhood MAT, which isn't feasible at this time given the number of new courses that would be necessary to satisfy state requirements. Middle grades offers additional challenges which would require more planning. This program would be for secondary teaching. Dr. Boyd questioned whether the secondary courses are already available. Ms. Willingham responded that some of the courses are already available. Dr. Baines outlined the extensive number of hours necessary.

Dr. Boyd asked if the secondary education majors not also need additional hours? Dr. Baines added that these students would come in with a degree that meets the content requirement.

Dr. Englis asked for confirmation that you're not choosing to move ahead with the early childhood program, but are moving forward to move ahead with the secondary education program? Dr. Baines responded that yes, we're only asking to approve the secondary MAT program at this time. Dr. Boyd suggested that, given that this program has been inactive for so long, it is considered a new program from a SACSCOC perspective and would need approval by Graduate Council.

Dr. Boyd asked if it was not the case that additional faculty would be needed for the Elementary education MAT program. Dr. Baines responded that there are some courses at the undergraduate program at the 200-level that could be cross-listed. Ms. Willingham commented on some courses that had been used in the past.

Dr. Boyd suggested that, given earlier conversations about the desire to combine these programs and reactivate the early childhood program as well, perhaps the department should look at what it might take to do both.

Dr. Baines responded that we don't currently have the full-time faculty necessary to teach this program. Making use of part-time faculty to currently cover these elementary-level courses. This is part of why we need to move forward now with the secondary education MAT.

Dean Hughes noted the deadlines for SACSCOC and state approval.

Dean Heames asked about the feasibility of business graduates to be in the program. Dr. Baines responded that we don't currently offer a Business education option but could apply for this.

Dean Hughes asked if it make sense for Dr. Baines and Ms. Willingham to research a bit more prior to starting the approval process with SACS? Dr. Haney commented on the three-course sequence already approved by the PSC for the autism endorsement. Dr. Willingham suggested that there is also a pedagogy-only path that was already approved. Ms. Willingham indicated that several courses had been approved already. Dr. Baines responded that he was not comfortable with some of those pedagogy-only programs due to concerns of quality and lack of financial aid. Dr. Boyd commented that it seemed that last year there was some enthusiasm about the pedagogy-only program.

Dr. Boyd noted that, looking back at the Graduate Council meeting in December, the education school was encouraged to consider whether it might be better to combine additional programs into a single proposal.

Dr. Baines responded that, if it is the wish of the Council, we can go back and look.

Dean Hughes, asked about the feasibility of middle grades? Dr. Boyd responded that she is not certain whether there were enough Berry graduates that would have two majors and whether it would work. Dr. Baines responded that our numbers in middle grades have been quite small over the past 5 years, so it is not clear that the program would be viable.

Dr. Boyd asked if the department is considering closing the middle grades program? Dr. Bains responded that we've not determined what to do yet, but have noted the very small enrollment in the programs. Given the uncertainty and complexity we did not want to include the middle grades into this proposal.

Dr. Boyd responded that certainly a priority would be to increase interest and enrollment in the UG middle grades program. Dr. Boyd asked if there was also a cross-walk between the two programs? Ms. Willingham responded that there was.

Dr. Haney suggested that as the department continues to discuss options, she would encourage them to consider additional endorsements as part of the programs that might make the program more interesting to students. Dr. Baines agreed.

Ms. Willingham commented that for endorsements it doesn't matter whether it is an undergraduate or graduate level.

Dean Hughes asked what the ideal timeline would be. Dr. Boyd responded that we can move as quickly as needed. Next meeting would work, or later if necessary.

Next meeting TBD.

Chair: Mary Boyd

Secretary: Bryce Durbin