

MEMORANDUM

6 November 1996

TO: Graduate Council

FROM: Ad Hoc Group on Graduate Level Course Distinctions

RE: A Proposal for Delineating Distinctions between Graduate and Undergraduate Course Work

In an effort to address the strictures forwarded by the North Central relative to a lack of distinction between graduate and undergraduate course work, the ad hoc group assembled from members of the Graduate Council proposes the following:

- 1) Adding a category, titled "Graduate Level Course Requirements," to the current eight issues that must be addressed when proposing a new course (see attachment #1).
- 2) In addressing this issue, applicants would respond to the three questions delineated in attachment #2. (The three questions were culled from guidelines articulated in the Curriculum Handbook.)
- 3) Inasmuch as there will be a variety of ways in which the three questions can be addressed, attachment #3 includes sample drafts of descriptions for both dual-listed and 700 level courses.

Proposal Delineating Graduate-Level Course Requirements

ATTACH THE FOLLOWING:

- I. COURSE JUSTIFICATION
- II. RELATIONSHIP TO PROGRAM OBJECTIVES
- III. BUDGETARY IMPACT
- IV. PROGRAMS AFFECTED IN OTHER ACADEMIC UNITS
- V. COURSE DESCRIPTION
- VI. REQUISITES
- VII. *GRADUATE LEVEL COURSE REQUIREMENTS (WHERE APPLICABLE)*
- VIII. TENTATIVE COURSE SYLLABUS
- IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Attachment #1

ITEMS ON PROPOSAL PROCEDURES

GRADUATE LEVEL COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Addressed Along Three Lines:

- Content (Breadth & Depth)

How does the course content distinguish the course as having greater depth and more specialized coverage of advanced disciplinary issues relevant to theory and its application than UW-Whitewater undergraduate course work? (The description here might address, but need not necessarily restrict itself to, such issues as: what are additional presentation/project requirements?; how many additional hours will graduate students spend on specific issues?; and how are students encouraged to examine/practice/witness the application of theory?)

- Intensity

How do the course requirements reflect a more intensive level of study and greater academic/intellectual rigor than UW-Whitewater undergraduate course work? (The description here might address, but need not necessarily restrict itself to, such issues as: how are the graduate-level assignments different than their undergraduate counterparts?; how does the complexity of the material differ from that of the undergraduates?; and how are the processes and standards of evaluation different for graduates and undergraduates?)

- Process (Pedagogical Design)

How does the course design promote more individual interaction with the professor(s), more self-directed learning, and greater use of campus learning resources than UW-Whitewater undergraduate course work? (The description here might address, but need not necessarily restrict itself to, such issues as: what is the nature of outside-of-class activities required of graduate students?; and how do research expectations differ for graduates and undergraduates?)

Attachment
2

Sample
Description of Graduate Level Course Requirements
for 500 & 600 Level Courses

Graduate students in this course will be asked to complete work that differs from the undergraduates in three ways. First, graduate students will, relative to their undergraduate counterparts, complete additional readings. These readings will come strictly from primary source material and focus on important sub-issues of the topics relevant to each week's discussion.

Second, graduate students will write exclusively take home essay exams where they will be asked to take stands on controversial issues relevant to theory and/or practice, using material from the assigned readings to substantiate their position.

Finally, each graduate student will be responsible for writing a case study research paper. This paper will go beyond the literature review papers written by the undergraduates. It will require that the graduates construct a case analysis around a significant concept (both the concept and the process of constructing the case study will be preapproved by the instructor). The paper will be evaluated not only according to how effectively the case is (re)constructed—revealing the application of theory, but also relative to the conclusions the author draws (and the kinds of questions s/he raises). Graduate students will then present their findings during a half-hour long lecture/discussion before for the undergraduates.

Sample
Description of Graduate Level Course Requirements
for 700 Level Course.

The prerequisite, coupled with the over-view of materials in the first six weeks of the course, will prepare students to zero in on specific issues of interest that spring from the readings. To that end, each student will be responsible for leading a class session about topics that appear on the syllabus or that they conceive of and convince the instructor are significant. The discussions they lead will be based on readings that they assign the class and questions they provide fellow class members to ponder during the readings.

Each student will also write a series of short "probe papers" where they identify (a) significant question(s) that the current literature affiliated with the topic has not yet addressed. These papers establish how their question(s) represent a significant lacuna in the current literature of the discipline generally and our understanding of an important issue specifically.

Students will also complete and report on, both orally before the class and in a research paper, an independent research project that addresses either a basic research issue (e.g., theory building or theory testing) or an applied research issue (e.g., application of theory-based principles in the field). The issue, the data collection method (either a qualitative or quantitative), and the research process will be described in a short prospectus prepared by the student and then approved/refined in an individual meeting with the instructor.

*Attachment
3*

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Proposal Delineating Graduate-Level Course Requirements

*in Dual
listed
courses*

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ITEMS ON PROPOSAL PROCEDURES

GRADUATE LEVEL COURSE REQUIREMENTS

GRAD U/G
Classes
Dual listed

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for 500 & 600 Level Courses

Sample only

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Attachment # 3