

Graduate Council Action Summary

2023/2024



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Graduate Council Members

Nermin Bayazit Mathematics	Faculty Representative, Co-Chair
Denise Bertrand School of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education	Recorder
Xuzhou Chen Computer Science	Faculty Representative
Becky Copper Glenz Dean, School of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education	Administrator Representative
Mark LeBlanc Registrar	Administrative Representative
Yang Liu Business Administration	Faculty Representative
Nirajan Mani Engineering Technology	Faculty Representative
Amy McGlothlin Humanities	Faculty Representative
Kyle Moody Communications Media	Faculty Representative
To be determined School of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education	Student Representative
Nancy Murray Dean, School of Education	Administrator Representative
Daniel Sarefield Economics, History & Political Science	Faculty Representative
Denise Sargent Education	Faculty Representative
Deborah Stone Nursing	Faculty Representative

New Courses

GCE-23-24-01 - Ethical Hacking

Department: Computer Science

Course Description:

This course introduces the basic terminologies used in ethical hacking and penetration testing of Kali Linux. Students will learn to explore the vulnerabilities in various systems and operate the industry-leading tools and framework to perform penetration testing on different targets.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on October 30, 2023

GCE-23-24-05 - Effective Instructional Methods

Department: Education

Course Description:

This course will examine the actions of the effective teacher. Topics covered will include the science of learning, effective instructional design, and essential elements of social-emotional learning. Students will develop skills in designing and implementing instruction anchored to best practices, and they will learn how to adapt to instruction for students with special needs.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE-23-24-09 - Practicum and PAL Task Supervision II

Department: Education

Course Description:

As in the fall semester, the Practicum Supervisors (PS) continue to work closely with his/her group of 6 candidates in providing the same type of support as was started in the fall. However, as candidates complete the transition of their journey from teacher to potential school leader this relationship expands. Through observation of school leaders, self-reflection, and feedback from colleagues regarding their leadership style, candidates will develop a deeper understanding of who they are as leaders and how they are perceived. Candidates will explore the concept of "ethical leadership" and examine areas where ethics have been challenged. Finally, they will develop an understanding of the many aspects of the job search process. This culminates in a mock interview that effectively replicates a stressful component of seeking and administrative position. Candidates benefit tremendously from this simulation that is accompanied with direct, clear, and actionable feedback. The PS also guides and supports those candidates who actively seek roles in school leadership. In addition to the above, the PS continues to carefully monitor the completion of PAL tasks 2 and 4, providing feedback and guidance to the extent allowed under the DESE guidelines. Finally, the PS works in conjunction with the candidate and his/her school based Supervising Practitioner to complete all of the requirements for the 500-hour practicum, which allows ELI to endorse the candidate for his/her Principal/Assistant Principal license.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE-23-24-10 - Practicum and PAL Task Supervision I

Department: Education

Course Description:

Starting in the fall semester, the instructional focus shifts to the numerous topics delineated in the DESE Professional Standards and Indicators for Administrative Leadership. Candidates are assigned an ELI faculty member who serves as the candidate's Practicum Supervisor (PS). The PS works throughout the year with approximately 6 candidates to support and monitor all aspects of the candidate's practicum. The PS attends every class so that there is weekly communication and support. In addition, the PS meets with his/her group of candidates periodically to share best practices and increase accountability. Throughout the year the PS monitors the practicum experience by providing feedback on all written assignments, providing guidance and direction on completion of all 4 PAL tasks, coordinating with the candidate and his/her school based Supervising Practitioner to ensure that the candidate is having a comprehensive and robust set of practicum experiences. During the fall semester the PS ensures that the candidate has completed all aspects of PAL task 3 and has planned

and begun work on PAL tasks 2 and 4. Finally the ELI PS also works with the candidate to facilitate the completion of all DESE required forms.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE-23-24-11 - Educational Leadership and the Law

Department: Education

Course Description:

Through analyzing case studies and court decisions, lectures, discussions, and candidate-led research presentations; candidates explore and understand the legal foundation, principles, and responsibilities that confront building-level educational leaders in today's school environment. Major topics analyzed include employment and worker's rights, student and family rights, school attendance, and special education. This course helps candidates determine appropriate legal steps to address the various situations educational leaders encounter on a regular basis.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-12 - Leader for Effective Change

Department: Education

Course Description:

This course speaks to the 'how' of educational administrative leadership, and more specifically how to facilitate effective educational change. Candidates inductively learn their lessons by reflecting on experiences within the school where they work. School-based problems and opportunities, classroom simulations and case studies seek to replicate what administrators actually do. Candidates develop their leadership skills by observing and practicing a variety of leadership tasks. This course has a heavy emphasis on theory and best practice underpinnings, but has an even weightier experiential base. The fundamental principles and concepts of educational change lay the groundwork for the execution of PAL task 2 which will be completed during the practicum portion of the program.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 22-23-13 – Personnel and Operational Management

Department: Education

Course Description:

Through observation, analysis and discussion, candidates will understand how to create and develop strong plans and procedures to address a full range of safety, health, and student needs, while ensuring efficient and effective operational systems. Operational topics covered include budget formation, strategies for fiscal responsibility, building maintenance, transportation, food service, scheduling for instruction, and management information systems. Personnel management topics include understanding a detailed and effective process for recruiting, hiring and on-barding excellent teachers, and principles of leadership during a crisis and the components of an effective entry plan.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-14 - Teacher Supervision and Evaluation for Professional Growth

Department: Education

Course Description:

Principals are expected to be instructional leaders and bring all students to high levels of achievement. They have formal power to supervise and evaluate teachers, and provide ongoing support to develop the capacity of teachers. This course aims to give students the appraisal and supervision tools they need to get results by understanding supervision and evaluation of highly effective, effective, mediocre, and ineffective staff. Candidates will thoroughly explore the Massachusetts Teacher Rubric and various ways to utilize it, have experiences in observing instruction, giving formative feedback following an unannounced observation. Students will also develop a deep understanding of the Formative and Summative evaluation processes. They will be actively engaged in exploring new approaches to supervision and evaluation that address some of the challenges of standard practice. Students will also put together a personal action plan for supervising and evaluating teachers, develop the ability to clearly introduce and articulate their plan of action to a faculty of teachers, and explore the ethical and equity dimensions of supervision and evaluation.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-15 - Collaboration in Special Education

Department: Education

Course Description:

One of the most important and essential roles of a school leader is to create an environment where all members of the school community feel safe, valued, and respected. Starting with the broad goal of creating inclusive school cultures where all stakeholders feel connected, and moving to the smaller interpersonal issues, candidates will develop a deep understanding of the role of the leader in creating an environment where all members feel like they belong. Candidates will develop a philosophy of inclusion; a broad understanding of positive behavior intervention supports and practices that proactively promote a safe and respectful school culture. Candidates will also develop the skills to respond to a variety of student behaviors for students who receive special education services and for those students who do not. A heavy emphasis will be on the IEP process. Candidates will understand the components of an effective prior to referral process, understand the components of academic and psychological assessment, develop skills in leading IEP meetings and student assistant teams, and develop an in-depth understanding of the components of an IEP. Finally, candidates will develop an understanding of the research on conflict resolution, develop a personal position and begin to practice conflict resolution skills. Finally, candidates will understand the key elements of, and the necessity for developing highly effective teams. Candidates will learn strategies of establishing and maintaining group norms, skills in formulating effective teams and strategies for working with ineffective and dysfunctional teams.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-16 - Effective Leadership Principles and Practices

Department: Education

Course Description:

The focus of this course is on essential interpersonal leadership skills that all effective administrators need to develop. Candidates will identify and clearly articulate their core values. Through a variety of activities and mock interviews, candidates will be able to speak clearly and concisely about their central beliefs concerning education and leadership. Candidates will also develop skills in communicating difficult information. Through exploration of research and role-plays, candidates will understand, practice and receive feedback on delivering challenging information. A significant focus is placed on understanding school culture, requiring candidates to delve deeply into the many and varied aspects of their school's culture. Through readings, activities and discussions, candidates will understand the essential elements of school culture and have strategies to shift the culture of a school. A heavy emphasis is placed on developing a deep understanding of cultural proficiency and the impact that implicit bias plays in schools. Candidates will also understand the research on adult learning and learn the essential components of high quality professional development.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-17 - The Principal as Instructional Leader and Curriculum Evaluator

Department: Education

Course Description:

Instructional leadership requires a thorough understanding of standards-based education, state curriculum frameworks, new common core standards, the curricular learning expectations of a school system, curricular differentiation, and the role of assessment in driving instruction. To be effective instructional leaders, principals must be able to help teachers navigate the world of curriculum while helping them teach with "the end in mind" for all children. In 2012 the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education delineated the Professional Standards and Indicators of Effective Administrative Leadership Practice as requirements for initial administrator licensure. These four standards and twenty indicators clearly articulate what school leaders need to know. As prospective school principals or program supervisors, candidates for licensure should, among other things, be able to: Align their curriculum with the state's curriculum framework Review, evaluate, and revise instructional programs on the basis of sound information and relevant data Identify, implement, and evaluate content-based instruction based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the common core standards Be familiar with the range of instructional programs and policies that can promote academic learning for all students, and differentiation of instruction in order to close the achievement gap Know multiple strategies to assess student performance Demonstrate understanding of current issues in American education Build capacity among teachers through professional development This course of study will equip aspiring principals or program supervisors with the skills and knowledge needed to meet these standards.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-18 - Using Data to Address the Opportunity / Achievement Gap

Department: Education

Course Description:

The identification and effective use of all types of data are the foundation of this course. Candidates are required to analyze school-based data from a variety of sources to formulate school improvement plans. Candidates are taught to delve deeply into data from EDWIN to understand gaps in student performance and identify cohorts of underperforming students. Candidates examine various support systems that are available to assist students, and learn strategies that engage teachers in developing plans for continuous improvement and narrowing achievement gaps. There is a heavy emphasis on data analysis skills, accompanied by authentic activities that allow students to practice working with a group of teachers to analyze data and create a plan for improvement. These courses help candidates prepare for and begin the completion of PAL task 1.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-19 - Parental Engagement for Student Learning

Department: Education

Course Description:

Effective school leaders address family concerns in an equitable, effective, and efficient manner, and create opportunities for families to inform policies, practices and programs that enhance student learning. Utilizing case studies and other activities, candidates will develop skills, explore options and possibilities and develop a step-by-step plan to connect with and engage parents and families. The majority of work will be directly connected to PAL task 4, as candidates work closely with a group of educators and parents to write a plan to enhance family engagement as they execute one aspect of this plan. Candidates will also understand the requirements for School Site Councils, and the effective roles parents play in this organizational structure. Candidates will identify groups of parents who are underrepresented or less active in school life, and develop outreach strategies to increase engagement with the school. Working throughout the year with a candidate-created group of teachers and parents, this course will greatly assist candidates in completing the requirements of PAL task *

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24- 22 - Reflective Seminar

Department: Education

Course Description:

This course will return to a consideration of all prior courses in the program. As the terminal course in the program, the Seminar will revisit prior learning, and a Capstone Journal will be submitted, intended to be an expression of synthesis of all these prior courses, and a personal statement of recognized strengths and challenges of each seminar participant as they seek to apply and extend their learning in the program to their field. These journals will also be shared and considered by the other seminar participants to receive and offer feedback, and thereby deepen the product of the reflection by and from each student.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

New Programs

GCE 23-24-07 – Master of Education: Curriculum and Teaching - TESL (Non-Licensure)

Department: Education

Description of Program:

Master of Education: Curriculum and Teaching - TESL (Non-Licensure) - 36 credits

Core Requirements:

EDUC 9005 Dynamic Perspectives in Education

EDUC 9300 Educational Research

EDUC 7234 Curriculum and Assessment for English Learners *a course in curriculum development*

EDUC 7232 Second Language Acquisition *a course in literacy development*

Additional Requirements for the Concentration:
EDUC 7235 Culturally Responsive Instruction
EDUC 7636 Essential Linguistics for Educators
EDUC 8234 Literacy Methods for English Learners
EDUC 8233 TESL Methods

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on December 11, 2024

Program Changes

GCE-23-24-06 – CAGS in Educational Studies

Department: Education

Program Change:

The current title of the program is CAGS in Interdisciplinary Studies: Individualized Concentration. We are proposing to change it to CAGS in Educational Studies.

Rationale:

The IDIS CAGS program was situated in the Humanities Department. However, the current students in the program are teachers/professionals in the field of education. Therefore, the program was moved to the Education Department. In addition, school districts financially incentivize teachers to further their education so the name change would be more appealing to potential candidates..

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on December 11, 2023

GCE-23-24-08 – MGMT 9500 - Capstone: Strategic Management (3 credits)

Department: Business Administration

Program Change:

This is a capstone course that provides a study of administrative processes dealing with the formation of policy. Topics covered include strategy formulation, the role of the general manager, and the design of strategic planning systems. Attention is focused on problem identification, problem-solving, and decision-making. Extensive examination is made of cases involving a variety of institutions in both the public and private sector.

Prerequisite(s):

Completion of 15 core credit hours of core courses plus three credits of an elective or specialized course, for a total of 18 credits, or permission of the Department Chairperson.

Rationale:

Students sometimes cannot meet their intended graduation dates due to the current requirements and scheduling of the MGMT 9500 course.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on December 11, 2024

GCE 23-24-20 - EDUC - M.Ed. in EDLM Non-Licensure Principal Concentration

Program Change:

Adding a plan of study for the university's M.Ed. in EDLM Non-Licensure Principal Concentration degree that outlines the courses needed to be taken by the ACCEPT Collaborative student cohort.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-23 - EDUC - EDLM OAP

Program Change:

The M.Ed. in Educational Leadership and Management Online Accelerated Program at Fitchburg State University offers courses and experiences that grow understanding and practice in leadership across a broad range of learning environments, including school administration, special education, curriculum leadership, and online learning communities. A diverse and dynamic faculty and student learning group allows for each student to be exposed to the full set of possible environments where best practice educational leadership is necessary.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-24 - EDUC - Curriculum and Teaching OAP

Program Change:

Delete: "Many courses in this program involve participation in embedded experiential/field experiences in fulfilling course requirements."
Replace with: "This program is open to both current practitioners and those interested in advanced study of topics related to the field of education more broadly."

Third bullet: Change to: "Acquire advanced knowledge of educational theory and research concerning curricula, practices and environments."

Fifth bullet: Change to: "Acquire advanced knowledge of emerging research around planning, implementation, and evaluation of educational environments and programs."

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-25 - EDUC - CAGS Program Name Change

Program Change:

The Ed.S. (Education Specialist) degree is a nationally know credential and students seeking this degree can quality for financial aid. The Ed.S. degree is equivalent to a CAGS degree however the CAGS (Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study) degree is a regionally recognized credential used in New England. Changing the title of the CAGS credential to an Ed.S. credential will expand the potential market for the degree to individuals outside of New England and also provide options for students to access financial aid if needed. There are no curriculum or other program changes required.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-26 - EDUC - CAGS IDIS Program Change

Program Change:

The Ed.S. (Education Specialist) degree is a nationally known credential and students seeking this degree can qualify for financial aid. The Ed.S. degree is equivalent to a CAGS degree however the CAGS (Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study) degree is a regionally recognized credential used in New England. Changing the title of the CAGS credential to an Ed.S. credential will expand the potential market for the degree to individuals outside of New England and also provide options for students to access financial aid if needed. There are no curriculum or other program changes required.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

GCE 23-24-27 - EDUC - M.Ed. in Curriculum and Teaching name change.

Program Change:

We are proposing to change the name of the hybrid/on-campus version of the masters of education in curriculum and teaching to masters of education in pedagogy and learning.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024

Policy Changes

GCE-23-24-02 - Assignment of incomplete grades

Department: School of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education

This is a proposed change to the assignment of Incomplete Grades for graduate students/programs.

NEW:

Program Requirements:

The purpose of an Incomplete is to account for extraordinary circumstances in students' academic and personal lives and to accommodate a need for extra time.

Instructors may assign an incomplete grade (IN) at their discretion if a student has completed at least 80% of the coursework and only when it is mathematically possible for a student to pass the class with a 2.0 or higher, on successful completion of the Incomplete work.

Instructors will assign a deadline for completion of the work no later than the last day of classes of the next semester (semesters include, Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer). If the student does not complete the work, this will result in an automatic grade of 0.0 for the course.

Students should be aware that, while an IN is not counted in the determination of academic standing, it may have an impact on eligibility for financial aid and the satisfaction of prerequisite credits.

Rationale

There has been confusion among SGOCE students, faculty and chairs regarding the Incomplete grading policy after a change was made to the undergraduate Incomplete policy in response to Covid restrictions at attendance. A new policy was officially put into place for undergraduate students but the policy did not officially change for graduate students.

The policy as written says that students have up to 4 weeks after receiving their grade to complete their outstanding work to avoid receiving a grade of 0. However, in practice the grade of Incomplete will remain on the record until the end of the semester unless an instructor assigns a grade earlier and the grade moves to a 0 in accordance with the same timeline in place. The proposed change aligns with the undergraduate policy and also clarifies that the semester includes Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer as the day school practice only looks at Fall and Spring.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on October 30, 2023

GCE-23-24-21 - Grade Appeal Policy Change

Department: School of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education

This is a revised grade appeal policy.

NEW:

Proposed Policy:

Grade appeal:

The Instructor is the primary authority with respect to a student's proficiency and final grade in a course. A student who believes that their final grade reflects an erroneous, capricious, arbitrary, or prejudiced academic evaluation may appeal the grade. The academic judgment used in determining the merits of the grade to be awarded shall not be reviewable. This process does not apply to instances in which the student's grade is based on findings of academic dishonesty, which are addressed through the Academic Integrity Policy.

Students should make every effort to resolve questions with their course instructor about grades prior to going through a grade appeal process. A grade appeal should be pursued only after all other efforts for resolution with the instructor have been exhausted.

Students submitting a grade appeal must provide evidence that they have tried to resolve their grading question with the instructor prior to submitting an appeal. The student submitting the appeal is responsible for developing and presenting the case for changing a grade.

Grade Appeal Steps:

The appeal must be submitted within 30 days of the assigned grade. The appeal should be submitted using the student petition form and should include all relevant facts including but not limited to: evidence that the student has connected with the instructor to resolve the questions prior to submitting an appeal, a statement of the grounds for the appeal; the desired outcome from the appeal; summary and documentation of the appeal; name(s) of the faculty or administrator(s) involved in the appeal as well as their responses and decisions; and supporting documents.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the program chair, they can submit a final review request to the Academic Dean of their School. The student should forward the appeal and supporting documentation along with a summary of why they are appealing the decision made by the program chair. These materials can be emailed to gce@fitchburgstate.edu for processing. The academic dean will respond within 15 working days of receiving the appeal after conducting a thorough investigation of the evidence provided by the student. The instructor will also be asked to submit any related evidence for review. The response will include a rationale for the decision.

All decisions made by the academic dean are final. This concludes the grade appeal process.

Proposal approved by President Lapidus on May 30, 2024