



December 18, 2013

Cynthia G. Clopper
Associate Director
Center for Cognitive and Brain Sciences

GIS Cognitive and Brain Sciences

Cynthia,

The Graduate School Curriculum Committee (GSCC) met on December 11th and considered the proposal to establish a new Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization in Cognitive and Brain Sciences. Here, I'm writing to summarize the GSCC discussion of the proposal and outline the next steps in the approval process. Part of the purpose of the GSCC is to not only review the proposal but also to help prepare and strengthen it for its future approval steps through the University. In that spirit, the GSCC had the following comments and requests for clarification and/or additional information:

- The GSCC felt that the rationale for creation of this GIS could be strengthened. While the interdisciplinarity of the field is a natural strength for a GIS, it is used almost exclusively as a rationale. Little is mentioned about the content – Cognitive and Brain Science – which might be otherwise unavailable to students in an organized fashion or to which populations of graduate students the GIS would be offered. How the creation of the GIS fills a void in the overall offerings to graduate students at our university and to whom offering this content would be beneficial would clearly strength the rationale for creating this new specialization.
- The content covered in this GIS is exceptionally broad in scope due to the inherent nature of the field. Hence a comparatively long list of elective courses is presented. Disciplines as disparate as artificial intelligence, audition, linguistics, musicology, and behavioral psychology are represented. While the breadth of this long list of electives is highly appropriate, it suggests that, for their maximum benefit, participating students should be closely advised on which electives to take in order to satisfy their personal goals. The program should develop an advising sheet for its students. Additionally, the program might consider, as part of that advising sheet, whether to request some thematic relationship of the elective courses the student may take in order to maximize their educational experience.
- It should be clearly stated in the proposal that faculty involved in administering the GIS must hold graduate faculty status with the Graduate School.
- I would suggest that you incorporate a process for a formal assessment of the GIS within its first 3 or 4 years. Such an assessment would help to ensure that the learning goals of the program are being met and might additionally review the use of offered courses and the involvement of participating faculty.



Please submit a revised copy of the proposal on curriculum.osu.edu. The GSCC would like to have a final look at the updated version prior to its moving forward in the approval process.

The proposal should then be ready for review by the Graduate Council. Following Graduate Council, the proposal will be released to the Council on Academic Affairs for their review.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with questions or clarifications.

Many thanks,

Scott Herness
Associate Dean
The Graduate School