

PH.D. COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES 2/10/20

Members in attendance: Nathalie Williams, Katherine Kim, Christian Novetzke, Clair Yang, Noam Pianko, Tony Lucero, and Rebecca Alhadeff;

Trung-Anh Nguyen, Francis Abugbilla, and Rachel Rothenberg (late)

Members missing: Sara Curran

OPEN SESSION

UPDATES

1. Student social activities (no students present)
 - a. Social gatherings on Friday evenings met twice – good turn out
 - b. Decided to get together every Friday
 - c. Did not discuss a proposal → Maybe end of the quarter or end of year
 - d. Still need to send a request
2. Career Advising/Lara Iglitzen (no students present)
3. Elena Bell received American Council Fellowship to study in Russia 2021
4. Possible faculty appointment to JSIS of Radhika Govindrajan

NEW BUSINESS

1. Printed Dissertations (per student request) – it could be possible.
 - a. For: A lot of departments do it and it looks scholarly and motivating factor for students.
 - b. Against: Ph.D. students don't use that lounge; they would just collect dust.
 - c. Alternative Options: Post on intranet. Collect info from students → maybe add it to the survey this summer.
 - d. Student Opinion: not as important as everything else on the letter.
 - e. Counter-proposal: online link, add the money for this to the student activities fund (instead of this). Could we have a discretionary budget for students to use as they would like? What about the M.A. students?
 - i. Empower students
 - ii. What would it be used for? Concern with combining research funding vs. social events
2. Curriculum Changes – discussions should be couched in what could we do in the ideal, but mostly, what could we really accomplish

*****Nathalie will put together a proposal for next meeting*****

- a. Foundational Fields
 - i. Good time to make changes given changes at other levels at JSIS
 1. Must have the practical aim of being more efficient in our use of faculty
 - ii. What is the benefit of having these fields?
 1. Applicants like the fields, but students don't find them useful
 - iii. Why don't students like it –
 1. M.A. students who don't have the background or have read the seminal theory; spend too much time on semantics and basic concepts; overly broad;
 2. If research projects maps closely, it works. Constrained by the fields. Some students need literature;
 3. Combination of methodology and theory (students pick a field because the methodology they want to use will be taught);

4. Students worried about the class and the preliminary exams. Students feel like they have to make an RCC list for their prelims, etc.;
 5. Not pertinent or preparatory for their exams – read things that are important to int'l security/IR, but not to conflict states/reconstruction (too broad)
- iv. Alternative Options
1. Classes to better train students to use, understand, and contribute to theory development. Define them by skills
 - a. this would give students a more realistic understanding
 - b. this would also give them a purpose
 2. Treat them more like group independent studies
 - 3.
 4. Classes that are synergistic with JSIS 200 series, i.e. 1 History/Sociology class; 1 Political/Economic class; 1 Anthropology/Culture class
- v. Do we want a correlation between exam & course? Should we disentangle those two?
1. Traditional/disciplinary Ph.D. programs they have foundational courses and then do their oral exams; but it seems that we are combining them
 2. They have been disentangled in practice: make your exam and reading list based on literature in their specific themes, though it does cut across field seminars (because there wasn't a close enough link between the syllabus/reading list between the course and the students' dissertation work)
 3. Differences between classes due to who teaches the course
- vi. Is it possible to keep the 4 fields as themes, but get rid of the course for each of the themes? – philosophical question
- b. JSIS 594
- i. Rethinking this as core seminar for all things MA/Ph.D.
 1. Course that meets twice, once for everyone (lecture), the second day for only Ph.D. students (seminar)
- c. Bridge Lab
- i. 3rd years – practice is different from what is on the website (it is meant for non-academic setting), but the audience is academics; no one attends from outside the Jackson School, wants professors of practice. Learn from those not in academia.
 - ii. Bridge lab is only for first and second years, but wants to bring in other cohorts.
 - iii. Should it be a non-class or a class?