Dear Councilors,

Please read below for the follow up to the Applied Ethics proposal discussion and come prepared to vote on Friday. I have attached their revision with changes marked in it. They are planning to upload a clean copy into the CPS.

Thank you,
Lisa
Chair, Graduate Council

I met with Allen Thompson about their proposal and relayed the concerns of the Grad Council to him. We had a productive discussion and it was clear that AE’s interpretation of the words ‘engage’ and ‘intersect’ were broader than we thought and did, in their mind, include the concepts of use. They expect students to have some experiences such as we imagined.

They have made changes to their proposal (attached) to address our concerns. Please read below for what we discussed last week and a summary of their changes. Please come to Friday’s meeting prepared to vote on this.

What Lisa wrote to AE:

1. The Council believes that an implication of a masters degree in science is that graduate will have USED the methods, approaches and tools that are characteristic of scientific inquiry and USED epistemological methodologies common in scientific inquiry. That is, an MS degree implies that the graduate has experience using scientific inquiry. In the 5th paragraph of the document, the words ‘engage’ and ‘intersect’ are used – rather than words that describe actual use of these methods. The Council thought that replacing those words with words that indicate actual use might be needed.

AE agreed to make some wording changes but from their perspective, the words ‘engage’ and ‘intersect’ included ‘use’ but also included other types of interactions including critical thinking. From their perspective, words like ‘use’ were too narrow. They added some additional phrases to help with that and the following sentence “Candidates for the MS should have experience with the practices characteristic of applying scientific methodologies, such as formulating hypothesis and designing research experiments to test those hypothesis”.

What Lisa wrote to AE:

2. The third sentence in the paragraph is “The student’s curricular plan must, for example, represent science studies through coursework that engages scientists, various scientific communities, science policy, ethical issues in STEM, and/or the ethics of science and technology studies.” However, the description of the required course of study in the CPS doesn’t indicate which courses under Part B would fulfill this requirement. The Council would like to see the addition of language that would identify which courses would be acceptable to meet this need. This request is driven by a broader concern that OSU expects that two different degrees should have different coursework otherwise they are the same degree with different names and thus not allowed. As written, it’s not clear that the MS curriculum is indeed different from the MA curriculum.

AE agreed to clarify this. The courses listed in the CPS were examples only and did not include the courses for minors or other courses that students might choose that are science-related. They added 2 additional PHL courses related to science to their course lists in the proposal. Many of their students do minors and they anticipated that science-related courses could show up there but, since minors are controlled by other majors, they didn’t list these courses. They added this sentence: “This may be accomplished through courses which satisfy the student’s graduate major (e.g. PHL 544 Biomedical Ethics, PHL 551 Knowledge and Reality, PHL 570 Philosophy of Science, PHL 574 Philosophy of Biology), or their graduate minor.”

What Lisa wrote to AE:

3. The third requested change is minor and likely a typo. In the section at the end of the document that provides the SLOs for the Proposed MS, it says "Students pursuing the MA Applied Ethics will be assessed by....". It should say “Students pursuing the MS in Applied Ethics...”.

AE made the correction.