

Graduate Council Report to Board of Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Committee December 16, 2019

This report includes the activities of Graduate Council (GC) since our last report on September 16, 2019.

One of the core missions of GC is to review graduate faculty membership applications. The membership committee led by Dr. Svetlana Beltyukova has clarified some common confusions about different membership categories, and approved 97 new or renewal applications. The other critical function of GC is to review and approve graduate-level courses and programs. The GC curriculum committee led by Dr. Tim Mueser has been doing excellent work. Of particular note, the curriculum committee has worked closely with the Provost's office and College of Graduate Studies and made adjustments to transition into the new Curricular Inventory Management System (CIMS). It is also commendable that the curriculum committee has volunteered time during summer and most likely during the winter break too to review some time-sensitive proposals. Dr. Tim Mueser will be on sabbatical in the 2020 Spring semester. Dr. Ozcan Sezer, a current GC member and curriculum committee member, has graciously agreed to be interim chair of the committee.

The GC has worked closely with the College of Graduate Studies in issues regarding policies and strategic planning on graduate education. In consideration of changing environment of graduate student recruitment and literature on the non-correlation between graduate student performance and scores of standardized tests, Dean Amanda Bryant-Friedrich at COGS proposed to remove the mandatory GRE score requirement at the University level but leave to each graduate program to decide whether or how to use these scores. The proposal has been approved by GC and is already in the implementation phase by the COGS. Dean Bryant-Friedrich has also led five discussions on different aspects of the COGS strategic plan, focusing on Student Success and Funding Efficiency. In addition, the Executive Committee of GC (GCEC), together with the GC Academic Program and Regulations committee led by Dr. Mark Templin, have been working on several policies in the fall semester, and three of them, the Graduate Academic Grievance Policy, the Graduate Student Short-Term Leave of Absence Policy, and the Transfer of Credit to Graduate Degree policy, are under final review at the GC Academic Program and Regulations committee and are expected to reach GC for approval next semester.

The GC has also worked to further enhance the communication between graduate faculty and various administrative units on campus. We appreciated that President Gaber and Interim Provost Bjorkman visited GC on October 1 and had lively dialogue and discussion with GC members. We have also invited Dr. Kandace Williams, Associate Dean of College of Medicine and Life Sciences to discuss the graduate programs in her college, Dr. Amy Thompson, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, to give updates on online course evaluation project and new faculty mentoring program (September 17); Dr. Bill Ayers, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, to update GC on the curricular inventory management system (CIMS) and Ms. Shelly Drouillard, Director of Career Services, and her team to brief GC about their career consulting services with graduate students (October 15). We invited Mr. Brian Pack, Director of Benefits & Wellness at Human Resources, to update GC on the Graduate Health Insurance Plan (October 29); Ms. Meghan Cunningham, Director of Communications to discuss how her department can help graduate faculty (November 12); and Dr. Barbara Schneider, Associate Vice Provost, and Dr. Cyndee Gruden, Associate Dean at COGS, to lead discussion on how to develop new graduate programs (November 26). The information exchange and accompanying discussions helped clarify how various UToledo departments could help graduate faculty and graduate education, and conversely how graduate faculty and GC can help other units on campus.

The Graduate Council looks forward to continuing our partnerships with the College of Graduate Studies, the Provost's office, the Research office, the Graduate Student Association, and UT faculty, staff and students in supporting our graduate and professional programs.

Respectfully,
Song-Tao Liu, Ph.D.
University of Toledo Graduate Council Chair