

**Graduate Council Minutes
September 22, 2012
12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
Health Science Campus, Health Education Bldg., Room 103**

Present: Brian Ashburner, Debra Boardley, Michael Dowd, Ali Fatemi, Viviana Ferreira, Barbara Saltzman (for Brian Fink), Hans Gottgens, Dwight Haase, Susanna Hapgood, Mohamed Samir Hefzy, David Jex, Richard Johnson, Andrea Kalinoski, Junghwan Kim, Jon Kirchhoff, Carolyn Lee, Willie McKether, William Messer, Holly Monsos, Ron Opp, Susan Pocotte, Geoffrey Rapp, Sonmez Sahutoglu, Youssef Sari, Constance Schall, Joseph Schmidt, Rebecca Schneider, Diana Shvydka, Tracy Szirony (for Susan Sochacki), Pamela Stover, Jerry Van Hoy, Lois Ventura, Richard Welsch, Kandace Williams.

Excused: Joseph Dake, Patricia Komuniecki, Anand Kunnathur, Amal Said, Barry Scheuermann.

Absent: Ainsworth Bailey, Mary Ellen Edwards, April Gardner, Marcia McInerney, Diane Salvador, Viranga Tillekeratne.

Guests: Amy Burns, Sherri Jiannuzzi, Stephen Schissler.

Call to Order, Roll Call, and Approval of Minutes

The meeting was called to order and the roll called. The Minutes of the December 13, 2012 Graduate Council meeting were approved with an edit on discussion section from Dr. Dowd.

Executive Reports

Report of the Executive Committee of the Graduate Council

On behalf of the Graduate Council Executive Committee (GCEC), Chair, Dr. Rebecca Schneider stated that in order help the GCEC to prepare agendas for the Graduate Council meetings, she has invited questions and ideas for possible agenda items for Graduate Council. This has given the GCEC the opportunity to think about what would be productive topics for discussion and to explore our constitution and bylaws.

Some questions have come to the GCEC regarding funding for graduate students. First, we want to remind the Council that questions regarding funding for specific programs or assistantships should go first to College of Graduate Studies. And specifically, questions could go first to Ms. Mary Main, COGS Business Manager. She will be able to verify specific funding. Second, we thought it would be helpful to invite someone from the Financial Aid office to refresh our understanding of funding for graduate students. Also, Dr. Messer will talk with us about research funding for graduate students.

The GCEC also discussed a question about a possible inconsistency within the constitution and bylaws. We carefully reviewed the documents that were highlighted for us and discussed each item. We asked that the issue be submitted in writing. The Executive Committees took time with the material provided and in good faith concludes there is not an issue.

In particular, GCEC interprets Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution of the Graduate Faculty to mean that the named ex-officio members do not need additional graduate faculty standing to fulfill the duties of his or her office.

Article II, Section 1 of the constitution states: The Graduate Faculty shall include the following ex-officio members: the President of the University, the Chancellor, the Provost, the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies (COGS), and the Vice President for Research.

Specific roles regarding Graduate Council and its committees are frequently assigned by virtue of the office not by graduate faculty standing. A compelling example is that of the Graduate Student Association President and Vice-President. These people are assigned as an ex-officio, voting member of the Graduate Council and may serve on committees, yet, they do not have specific graduate faculty standing.

Article IV, Section 6 of the constitution states: The GSA President and GSA Vice-President shall be ex-officio members of GC. They shall have full voting privileges and may be chosen to serve on committees, but not as chair.

Dr. Dowd stated that he would like to see language in the Constitution and Bylaws fixed. The GCEC response seems to suggest that ex-officio status trumps graduate faculty status. He was discouraged that this item was not brought forward to Council. He inquired whether Dean Komuniecki was recused during this discussion at the recent GCEC meeting. GCEC did not think that was necessary and Dr. Schneider suggested that further discussion could occur after agenda items are complete. Dr. Dowd stated that he appreciated the GCEC taking time to discuss this matter.

Program Review is an important topic to discuss. This year we will be refining the process for Program Review and may update the description of the GC Program Review Committee as needed. To help provide context, COGS Associate Dean, Dr. Susan Pocotte, has been invited to provide some background regarding Program Review.

President Gaber will visit with the Graduate Council at its next meeting on October 20th. The Executive Committee will be preparing questions for her. Below are some draft questions to get started. Please send ideas and suggestions for questions to the GCEC. If there is time at the end of today's meeting, possible questions can be discussed.

- What is your agenda for graduate education?
- What is the relationship you would like to see between President's office and Graduate Council?
- What would you like to see Graduate Council work on this year?

Dr. Schneider will report on behalf of the GC at the Board of Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Committee on Monday, October 12th. She sought suggestions and advice regarding this report.

Report of the Graduate Student Association

Due to class and schedule conflicts the GSA officers were not present, so Chair Schneider read the report prepared by Mr. Eric Prichard, President of the GSA.

- After attending the first meeting of the President's Advisory Committee, Mr. Prichard expressed his interest in seeking ways GSA can help improve the pipeline between undergraduate programs and graduate programs at UT while also helping providing some useful opportunities to undergraduate students. He also expressed interested in possibly having GSA members host a Q and A session in the spring on life in graduate school and preparing for graduate school, and inviting undergraduates to bring their questions. Additionally, he expressed interest in finding a way to get honors students involved as presenters at MGRS.

- The first GSA General Assembly meeting of the academic year was held September 15th. GSA committees have been populated and many students have already volunteered to take positions with MGRS steering committees. The recruitment coordinator will start contacting schools in October. Mr. Prichard will also begin reaching out to the leaders of the other GSAs at that time since the invited colleges may not always send the message along to students. It is never too early to volunteer to be a judge. The next GSA General Assembly meeting is October 14th. GSA representatives are still needed from the Colleges of Medicine and Life Sciences, Law, and the Judith Herb College of Education.

Report of the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies

On behalf of Dean Komuniecki who was away from the University, Dr. Susan Pocotte, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Graduate Studies (COGS), reminded the Council of two particular diversity initiatives: the GOAP – the Graduate Opportunity Assistantship Program Award- and the McNair Scholars Award, which are designed for under-represented and first generation students. These awards are inclusive of students who have overcome a major hardship in their undergraduate journey. The collaborative awards provide tuition and stipend to students serving as GAs in their home department, who cost-share the stipend. COGS serves as the portal for applications, first identifying eligible students then collaborating with the associate deans, program directors and department chairs, to ask if they are interested in offering admission to that student. Then COGS administers the final approval of funds, handling of the contract and dissemination of funding. Although, these programs can only support about 20 students annually, they do help the colleges with their diversity initiatives. Dr. Pocotte asked those managing student application pools to promote these programs as they receive applications for fall 2016. These programs are advertised through email correspondence with all applicants and on COGS website. She stressed the importance of not leaving opportunities unmet. The deadline is in the 2nd week in February, thus students should apply as soon as possible so that their admissions decisions can be made prior to the decision date. COGS wants to make sure that we directly communicate with as many stakeholders as possible. The McNair Scholars Award is more exclusive because applicants must have participated in the McNair baccalaureate program, a federal program at undergraduate level that serves as a pipeline.

Information and Discussion Items

Update on Financial Aid for Graduate Students

Mr. Stephen Schissler, Associate Vice President of Enrollment Services and Financial Aid (FA) reported on changes for graduate/professional students in the 2015-16 academic year and provided this information in the form of a hand-out. Significant changes or updates included:

- System issues with Banner and loans for the summer semester. Emails were sent in April to all students receiving summer financial aid alerting them to the possibility of delays of summer disbursements. We were fortunate to have been selected as a beta test site for Banner and were able to disburse loans on our regular schedule. Only a few students were minimally affected by these system updates.
- The change in the definition of a full-time graduate student to 9 hours had a significant impact on financial aid processing. The cost of attendance (COA) for all graduate students is based on full-time enrollment, which was changed to meet the new graduate student definition of 9 hours. Since the PharmD program in the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences is separate from COGS, we are still awaiting a policy to define enrollment for that program. The cost of attendance budget was prepared in February when Financial Aid had a billing plateau of 12 hours.

This caused some students to be under-budgeted and under-awarded for the academic year. Manual adjustments were processed for those students requesting additional aid. Financial Aid will have a better solution for next year.

- We will be implementing Period Based Budgeting in Banner for the 2016-17 academic year which will allow adjustments to COA's based on actual enrollment once fees are activated. This new process will help address the cost of attendance issue in a more automated and timely way. It will also assist students in minimizing debt as it matches their aid with their actual costs preventing over-borrowing. Changes will be communicated later this year.
- Although full-time enrollment for graduate students remains the same for summer, fall and spring; there is a difference in three-quarter, half-time and less than half-time definitions from summer to fall/spring. The biggest issue for financial aid purposes is the half-time definition for loan disbursement and deferment issues. For the sake of consistency, should we consider the same enrollment measures for all three terms?

Discussion:

Ms. Amy Burns, Associate Director-in the Office of Financial Aid, stated that since most budgets are based on 9 hours as full-time, her office was able to make adjustments manually for programs that require 12 hours. However, once you touch a student's budget, it won't fluctuate, so that issue is being worked on.

Ms. Sherri Jiannuzzi, Assistant Director of Loans in the Office of Financial Aid, said that she is waiting to hear from Pharmacy regarding its official definition of full-time for PharmD students. Dr. Youssef Sari said he will speak to his Dean so that an official policy can be sent to Financial Aid. Dr. Messer noted that there is a distinction between graduate and PharmD students in that they are not considered part of the College of Graduate Studies. They are considered a professional program.

Mr. Schissler pointed out that there are limitations with the ERP system in that it does not recognize different levels of full-time status. Mr. Schissler reported that Period Based Budgeting will limit the amount a student can borrow so that it is not in excess. This will help students avoid unnecessary indebtedness. It is his intention to share this information with several areas on campus.

Ms. Jiannuzzi noted that $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ time must be reported and she would like to get a jump start before next year. Half-time during the summer is 4 hours and 5 during the fall and spring. Dr. Hefzy said that for the past three years the College of Engineering has mandated that during the summer full-time has been 6 hours and half-time is 3 hours, unless it is their last semester. Mr. Schissler replied that colleges can require that of the students. It is an issue with the clearinghouse, so the University's definition is used. Dr. Fatemi questioned the logic of using 4 hours for summer and 5 hours for fall and spring. Dr. Hefzy said that their master's programs usually take five semesters and students do not register for hours they don't need. Dr. Fatemi added that the Ph.D. average time in Engineering is four years and only 60 hours are needed post-Masters.

Dr. Gottgens questioned whether the increases in student health insurance of up to 40% have had an effect on the financial aid operation? Mr. Schissler responded that the cost of attendance (COA), defined by the government is used as a basis as is family contribution and need. He was told that the sharp increase in premiums was due to the University no longer requiring health insurance to be purchased through UT. Instead, only students who wanted the insurance purchased it which led to adverse selection as well as much smaller numbers.

Dr. Pocotte added that the new policy on student health insurance states that it is no longer mandated except for students in the MD program and in the Colleges of Nursing, Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences, Health Sciences, student-athletes and international students holding a J1 visa. Graduate students can go to the marketplace as can any other citizen and international students can waive UT insurance if they find cheaper, comparable insurance elsewhere. Ms. Jiannuzzi stated that they have made averages as close to real costs as possible for students who are mandated to have insurance.

Additional concerns were expressed:

Does the cost of attendance take into consideration international students?

Open enrollment in the marketplace starts in November yet fall semester begins in August.

Is cost of attendance based on actual enrollment, full-time enrollment or headcount?

Ms. Jiannuzzi responded that international students are not eligible for financial aid. She also stated that the COA is currently based on FTE and billing for six credit hours. However, for 2016-17, it will be based on actual enrollment. Dr. Williams said that student health insurance is not appearing on their students' bills so she is concerned that they may not know be aware they are required to have insurance. Dr. Messer said it is his understanding that it is required. Council wanted to make sure the students are aware. Dr. Hapgood stated that COGS explains this as part of orientation and so do the colleges. She was not certain whether continuing students were informed.

Mr. Schissler was pleased to conclude his report to Council by informing them that that FAFSA filing for fall 2017 can be done beginning on October 1, 2016 using the prior year's (2015) tax return. He will be glad to share information as it becomes available.

Research Funding for Graduate Students

Dr. William Messer, Vice President of Research reported on research funding opportunities for graduate students. One possible means for growing enrollment is to increase the number of graduate students supported through research grants. Although faculty members generally have tried to include stipends for graduate students on proposals, he did not recall specific directives from the administration in recent years.

First, there may be opportunities for graduate fellowships and institutional training grants in programs with a strong track record of funding from NIH or NSF. Dr. Messer said that he had met with COGS Dean Komuniecki to discuss how we could promote and support such initiatives, and he would be happy to meet with individual faculty and students or with departments or graduate programs to position UT for future success.

Second, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs is taking an active role in encouraging faculty to consider supporting graduate students on research grants. Starting last week, Grant Coordinators on both campuses are asking faculty if they can increase their support of graduate students on proposals being submitted for external funding. He was pleased to report that one faculty member has already responded positively to the request.

Finally, the Grant Coordinators have indicated that one issue for Main Campus faculty was the requirement to include \$4,000 per graduate student on research proposals to cover medical insurance. With recent changes in health care legislation (i.e., the Affordable Care Act) and with the opportunity to be covered by their parents up to age 25, there is an opportunity to rescind the previous requirement to include medical insurance on the grant proposal.

The concept was reviewed at the level of the Senior Leadership Team last week, and approval was given to make the change in policy. Accordingly, although faculty may wish to include support for medical insurance on their proposal, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs will no longer require including the \$4,000 per student line on the proposal budget. It is hoped that this will help encourage faculty to generate support for graduate students, thereby increasing graduate enrollment.

Discussion:

Dr. Ferreira commented that this can be attractive to graduate students when health insurance is covered. Dr. Messer said there are other barriers and he will discuss further with Dean Komuniecki. Dr. Schall inquired whether other universities in the region offer health insurance with teaching assistantships and suggested that be looked at. Dr. Williams noted that ~90% of universities that she works with cover health insurance for their TAs. Dr. Jex suggested input from the GSA to which Dr. Messer agreed.

University of Toledo Program Review: The Graduate Council Role

Dr. Susan Pocotte, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Graduate Studies brought to the Council a PowerPoint Presentation in order to provide an informative outline of the University of Toledo program review and the Graduate Council role in that process partly due to changes made in the Bylaws. The role of Graduate Council is more robust. For brevity, the presentation slide titles and additional comments on each are listed below, however, for complete details, see the presentation attached to the minutes.

- Definitions
Some of our degrees include multiple programs and many tracks. Programs within a degree are reviewed.
- Scope of Academic Program Review
The GC revised its bylaws in spring 2015. Although there was not support at the time, GC worked to maintain its voice in this process. UT systematic Review Process – listed on Provost’s site
- Required
As required by several higher education entities, the internal centralized process is conducted by Ms. Heather Huntley, Director of University Accreditation and Program Review.
- Past –timeline
- Present – charge
- Systematic Program Review Process
Highlights where Graduate Council fits in
- Orientation and Initial Planning
Handled by the Office of Assessment, Accreditation and Program Review Office
- Self Study
Team must include graduate faculty and graduate students. If the OAAPR office makes revisions to graduate templates we are notified to review
- External Review
OAAPR office handle, however, program gets to weigh in on selection of external reviewers
- Program Review Team Support
Timeline indicates that reporting back occurs in the spring, therefore, the GC GPRC committee needs to be a 12-month committee
- Program Response and Improvements
- Specific to Graduate Programs
GC GPRC will report to GC and GCEC and GC has an opportunity to respond
- Completion
- Role of Graduate Council per Bylaws

- Graduate Council Graduate Program Review Committee
GC shall develop documents to provide to GPRC with its charge and general guidelines for conducting program review. GC should respond to this fairly quickly
- Programs Scheduled for Review 2015-2016 (programs postponed from AY 2014-2015)
Reports are like reading a narration. GC should have benchmarks and provide feedback
There should be a way to streamline and make effective
- Next Steps
- Questions

Dr. Pocotte stated that on average there are about 50 programs per cycle. Previous years have been lean and now we are catching up. Last year Education postponed review of 26 programs. There are negotiations at the Deans level.

Dr. Pocotte sought comments and questions from anyone already having gone under the review current process. There were none.

Old Business

Chair Schneider referred to two topics that were mentioned earlier but were moved to end of meeting to respect the time allotted for agenda items. Dr. Schneider asked that questions for President Gaber be sent to her or one of the Executive Committee members. Regarding Dr. Dowd having previously raised the subject of conflicting language in the Constitution and Bylaws, Dr. Schneider asked for recommendations for next steps stating that they looked at the documents and came to what seemed a reasonable solution. Dr. Dowd replied he would like the language in those two documents to be fixed.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

There being no further business the Council adjourned at 2:03 p.m.