

1 Meeting Minutes of the Graduate Council

2
3 February 12, 2019

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5 Members Present: P. Lanier (MGMT), L. Bourdeau (MODL), T. Cline (ARCH), H. Damico (CODI), G. Davis
6 (KNES), F. Del Favero (EDFL), D. Khey (CJUS), J. Lemoine (NURS), C. Lenahan (NURS), C. Matherne
7 (MGMT), C. Ratliff (ENGL), C. Roche-Wallace (MUS), K. Smith (ARCH), H. Stone (EDCI), T. Wilson (ACCT),
8 D. White-Jefferson (NURS), Daniel Odion, (CIVE GRAD), Linda Fairchild, (EDFL GRAD), M. Farmer-Kaiser
9 (ex-officio)

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11 Members Absent: H. Chu (CMIX), S. Duke-Sylvester (BIOL), E. Habib (CIVE), K. Hermann-Turner (COUE),
12 R. Hernandez (CHEE), M. Mokhtari (PETE), A. Petculescu (PHYS), B. Schubert (GEOL)

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14 P. Lanier called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm

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16 **Announcements**

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18 Motion made to accept the December 12, 2018 meeting minutes. Motion seconded and carried.

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20 Motion made to accept the applicants to candidacy. Motion seconded and carried.

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22 **Committee Reports**

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24 Student Appeals – The Graduate Student Appeals Committee met on Friday, January 11, 2019 and
25 considered 54 graduate student appeals. Appeals included requests for admissions, re-entry/academic
26 amnesty, reinstatement with and without an assistantship, and transfer of credits earned at non-U.S.
27 institutions. The committee approved 45 appeals, denied 8 appeals, and deferred 1 appeal. Motion
28 made to accept the committee report. Motion seconded and carried.

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30 Curriculum Committee – No report.

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32 Fellowships Committee – No report.

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34 Graduate Faculty Membership Committee – No report.

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36 **Old Business**

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38 **Summer 2019 Grand Marshal Selection**

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40 The Council considered previously-submitted nominations for Grand Marshal to select another honoree
41 for the Summer 2019 commencement. After discussion, with individual members offering comments
42 and support for the various nominations, the Council voted by secret ballot. M. Farmer-Kaiser collected
43 and tallied votes, with P. Lanier confirming. The Council selected Dr. Margaret Daniel as the honoree to
44 serve as Grand Marshal for the Summer 2019 commencement.

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46 **Graduate Student Climate Survey Discussion**

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48 P. Lanier invited members of the Graduate Council to consider participating in an ad hoc committee

1 aimed at moving forward to create a graduate student climate survey. The data would help inform both
2 retention and recruitment initiatives. She added that she would like to see broad representation from
3 the different departments and colleges. C. Ratliff asked what the requirements were for participation in
4 the committee. M. Farmer-Kaiser suggested that interested members from the Council be given priority
5 consideration. C. Matherne reported that his colleagues are interested in exactly this kind of project and
6 that they are already researching similar topics. He added that that this work could inform the project.
7 M. Farmer-Kaiser added that, in the way that the Retention Committee does, this initiative could easily
8 involve the Dean of Students Office, the Office for Global Engagement, the Office for Campus Diversity
9 and other campus units as ex-officio members. L. Fairchild suggested that the survey should not be
10 longer than 15-20 minutes so that the completion rate is not negatively impacted. The Council agreed
11 with P. Lanier's suggestion that the ad hoc committee be created and for her to work with M. Farmer-
12 Kaiser to create a formal charge to guide its work. The goal will be to have recommendations for moving
13 presented to the Council by the end of the semester. M. Farmer-Kaiser noted that she would share the
14 initiative at the upcoming Dean's meeting.

15 **Exclusion of financial hardship in Official Leave of Absence Policy**

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18 The Council then returned to a topic raised as new business at its December meeting—the exclusion of
19 financial hardship from the official leave of absence policy. M. Farmer-Kaiser offered a brief institutional
20 history of the policy's creation by the University Committee for Graduate Student Success and
21 Retention. C. Ratliff said that in her experience students do not take the decision to apply for leave of
22 absence lightly and that we should consider a broader policy. M. Farmer-Kaiser shared concerns that
23 have arisen with the policy's requirement for documentation to support requests. She noted that, while
24 it is relatively easy for student to document requests motivated by medical reasons and military service,
25 students find it more difficult to provide documentation for requests for official leave that are prompted
26 by family necessity or dependent care. She noted similar concern about requiring documentation of
27 financial hardship. F. Del Favero suggested that the Graduate Council should consider removing barriers
28 from students declaring a leave of absence altogether. Motion made to ask the University Committee
29 for Graduate Student Success and Retention to provide further consideration and input a no-
30 conditioned leave of absence. Motion accepted and carried.

31 **New Business**

32 **Graduate Student Appeals**

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36 The Graduate Council was asked to consider two appeals from students who had been denied
37 reinstatement by the Committee on Graduate Student Appeals. Members took time to review the
38 individual students' appeal packets, which included a secondary appeal letter, a second letter of
39 response by the department for each appeal, supplemental materials (including letters of support), and
40 all materials that had been considered by the Appeals Committee. After some time for review,
41 consideration of the each appeal began with R. Viguerie providing an overview of the initial appeal and
42 decision by his committee. Members of the Council asked questions to R. Viguerie and other members
43 who also serve on this standing committee. Discussion ensued. Much focus was paid to the individual
44 students' demonstrated academic performance in the course in question and overall, feedback on
45 clinical performance as provided by the department, letters of support, and lack of support from the
46 department. P. Lanier clarified relevant policies and noted that, although other issues (including grade
47 appeals and faculty grievance issues) may have been raised, the question before the Council was only
48 the students' request to be allowed to continue in their graduate program of study despite having

1 earned a grade of F. Each appeals was considered separated and individual motions were made. In both
2 instances, motions were made to support the recommendation of the department to deny the appeal.
3 In each instance, motion was seconded. In each instance, motion unanimously carried.
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5 Motion made to adjourn at 3:55. Motion seconded and carried.