

December 16, 2014 Meeting Minutes of the Graduate Council

Members Present: J. Albert, P. Auter, D. Bellar, C. Briggs, J. Davis-McElligatt, W. Ferguson, S. France, G. Gjertson, D. Harrington, J. Heels, H. Hurst, A. Lakhotia, D. Linton, A. Loewy, A. Magidin, S. McNerny, D. Olivier, S. Ritchey, D. Wadsworth, M. Wright, M. Farmer-Kaiser (ex-officio member)

Members Absent: D. Baker, R. Cheek, R. Hernandez, A. Khattab, T. De Nardo, K. Smith

Guests: Melinda Oberleitner, Vanessa Hill, David Borrok

The meeting was called to order by D. Linton at 2:03 p.m.

Announcements:

The Council voted to approve the minutes of the November 11, 2014 meeting.

D. Linton introduced the new Graduate Council member, Jane Heels, GSO President, who replaced the previous GSO President, Brian Hill. J. Heels thanked the Council for ensuring representation of graduate students on the body and for the gracious welcome.

The list of degree candidates was presented and accepted by the Council.

Melinda Oberleitner and Vanessa Hill were present to provide an update from the University's Strategic Planning Committee regarding its agenda and work to date. An evaluation of the previous strategic plan and achievement of its goals was carried out to determine, in relation to our peer institutions, what trajectory the University should be on. Preliminary findings point to inadequate funding for academic instruction, surplus of data with little analysis and application, inconsistencies between undergraduate and graduate retention strategies, and poor performance and completion rates for late applicants, among other topics. Council members present suggested investigation and analysis of health benefits and funding levels for graduate students, considering incentives for dissertation, thesis, and synthesis project directors, and creation of policies to aid those faculty and students with children. M. Oberleitner and V. Hill thanked the Council for its time and invited additional feedback from individual members and the Council as a whole, and then exited the meeting.

Committee Reports:

Student Appeals Committee: No report. The Graduate Council moved to consider a student appeal on the agenda at this time. The student appealed to be readmitted into the Graduate School. After thorough consideration and review of the student's appeals history, a motion was made to deny the request for readmission; motion seconded and passed.

Curriculum Committee: Report prepared and submitted by S. Ritchey. The report was accepted by the Graduate Council.

Fellowship Committee: No report.

Graduate Faculty Membership Committee: No report.

Old Business:

M. Farmer-Kaiser proposed at the November 11 Graduate Council meeting a friendly amendment to the recently revised Graduate Faculty Policy to ensure clarity of intent. After discussion, a motion was made to revise the friendly amendment as follows: "All faculty members who wish to be a member of the Graduate Faculty must apply. Faculty who have completed a terminal degree within the previous three years are typically awarded an initial appointment at a level in accordance with that defined in the individual college's criteria. Academic Deans and Department Heads holding faculty rank who do not wish Level Two membership are eligible to apply for Level One membership. The level of Graduate Faculty membership required of Graduate Coordinators is left to the discretion of individual colleges and departments." At the December 16 meeting, a motion was made to amend the wording of the first sentence to read, "All faculty members, including academic deans, department heads, and directors, who wish to be a member of the Graduate Faculty must apply." The desire of the Council was to offer greater clarity with such wording. Motion seconded and passed to accept the new wording for the Graduate Faculty Policy.

M. Farmer-Kaiser continued the discussion from the November 11 Graduate Council meeting regarding the creation of a University committee to analyze and evaluate graduate student retention and engagement at the University. Discussion ensued to determine what the membership of such a body should look like, who should it report to, and what would be the lifespan. G. Gjertson suggested the creation of a Task Force rather than a University committee. Discussion ensued with members of the Council noting concerns that a task force may imply a temporariness that does not fit with retention needs and goals as well as that a task force or standing committee status may impact the need for resources to support this body's efforts or restrict its membership. D. Bellar suggested and G. Gjertson seconded that this entity be developed in a way that would be on par with the undergraduate University Committee on Retention and Engagement so as to invite the same attention/input from University administration and faculty. Motion made to tally who favored a University committee rather than a task force. Motion seconded and passed. Tally resulted in unanimous support for creation of this body as a University Committee on Graduate Retention and Engagement. Discussion continued with regard to membership. M. Farmer-Kaiser agreed to create a working document, including a proposal to define the committee's charge, membership, etc., for the Council to return to in the Spring semester.

New Business:

The Graduate Council considered an appeal from the Fall 2014 Graduate Faculty application review. The appeal was made by Dean Azmy Ackleh and was enumerated upon by guest David Borrok, Director of the School of Geosciences. The appeal noted that the faculty member denied graduate faculty status had submitted an older CV that was not reflective of current work; it also noted that a revised CV had been sent to the College of Science Peer Review Committee during

the review process but that this revised document had not been provided to or requested by the Graduate School or the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee. Dean Ackleh's appeal included the revised CV, which was reviewed by the Graduate Council. Motion made to grant the appeal. Motion seconded and carried.

S. Ritchey, Chair of the Graduate Curriculum Committee, presented the Council with a request to evaluate and redefine the charge of the Graduate Curriculum Committee. Ritchey requested that the initial review and editing of course change forms move from the Graduate Curriculum Committee, who desire to review solely course changes as it affects curricula and graduate rules/regulations. M. Farmer-Kaiser reported that upon consultation with Dr. Fabrice LeRoy, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs - Academic Programs and the new Curriculum Management Coordinator, Ms. Amanda Payne, Academic Affairs had agreed to accept the responsibility for initial receipt, review, and editing of graduate course change forms prior to consideration by the Graduate Curriculum Committee.

Deedra Harrington, Chair of the ad hoc Committee on Graduate Council Handbook/Faculty Handbook, provided a preliminary report regarding proposed revisions to the Graduate Council description. She introduced the Council to the working draft document and highlighted key discussion points that the ad hoc committee recognized would require decisions to be made by the Council. Key discussion points included: whether the Dean of the Graduate School, as an ex-officio member possesses voting privileges, what restrictions should be placed, if any, on Council membership; replacement of members during a term; and the definition of quorum. Motion made to define quorum as more than 50% of the Council's membership with at least one member from each college present. Motion seconded and passed. All other discussion was tabled until the February 10, 2015 Graduate Council Meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:33pm.