

September 8, 2015 Meeting Minutes of the Graduate Council

Members Present: P. Auter, C. Briggs, A. Brown, W. Ferguson, R. Gonzales, D. Harrington, R. Hernandez, H. Hurst, A. Khattab, M. Kightley, J. Lemoine, A. Magidin, A. Maida, S. McNerny, D. Olivier, P. Morton, C. Roche-Wallace, D. Stevens, C. Taylor, W. Xu, M. Wright, M. Farmer-Kaiser (ex-officio member)

Members Absent: J. Albert, D. Baker, D. Bellar, K. Evans-Jackson, J. Heels, K. Smith

Invited Guest: Dr. James Henderson, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

The meeting was called to order by W. Ferguson at 2:07 p.m.

Announcements:

The Council voted to approve the May 12, 2015 meeting minutes.

Dr. James Henderson, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, welcomed all new and returning members of the Graduate Council, thanking them for their willingness to support graduate education through their service. J. Henderson provided an overview of the proposed University strategic plan and the role of graduate education in it, offering his continued support for the University's investment in graduate education in terms of stipends, Library holdings, graduate program offerings, and other initiatives. He then thanked Mary Farmer-Kaiser for her work in advocating for increased doctoral and Master's level stipends, particularly for the immediate success in setting new University minimum stipend amounts for doctoral-level graduate assistants. He acknowledged that the University will not reach 100 doctoral degrees awarded annually with our current program offerings. New doctoral programs are being advocated, and the University intends to encourage UL System and Board of Regents approval by being upfront about the resources the University will invest. J. Henderson argued that explicit statement of support for proposed graduate programs will prove to the Board of Regents that the University is serious about its desire to expand graduate education. Finally, J. Henderson explained his authorization for over 70 new hires or opening of frozen faculty lines in order to bolster faculty numbers in departments campus-wide. J. Henderson then fielded a number of questions from Council members, including questions regarding the availability of new faculty for new and existing programs, the possibility of increased funding for Master's graduate assistantships, University support for online programs, analysis of faculty workload for online versus traditional format graduate classes, compensation for summer teaching, earlier efforts for hiring the best new faculty, and graduate studies enrollment management and strategies. W. Ferguson then thanked J. Henderson for his attendance and his willingness to share his vision for graduate education at UL Lafayette. J. Henderson exited the meeting at 3:00pm.

M. Farmer-Kaiser provided a brief explanation for the list of degree candidates presented to the Council. The list of degree candidates was then presented to and accepted by the Council.

W. Ferguson informed the Council that due to health issues, Dr. Edward Cazayoux was not able to serve as the Grand Marshal for the Summer 2015 Commencement Ceremony. Dr. Barry Jean

Ancelet was asked to serve as Grand Marshal. Dr. Cazayoux will serve as the Fall 2015 Grand Marshal.

Committee Reports:

Student Appeals Committee – There was no official report from the Committee. Shawn Thibodeaux of the Graduate School reported that there were 45 appeals for the Fall semester with 38 being approved and 7 being denied.

Curriculum Committee – No report.

Fellowship Committee – No report.

Graduate Faculty Membership Review Committee – No report.

Old Business:

W. Ferguson provided an update regarding the Provost's approval of the revisions to the Graduate Council Handbook, which includes Standing Committees description, completed by the Council during the previous academic year. He noted that the Provost asked for two minor changes. The first, he explained, was a request to revise the end of the chain of appeals from graduate students through the Committee on Graduate Appeals, to stop with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs rather than the University President. The second request was to eliminate some redundancy in the description of the Committee on Graduate Faculty Membership. W. Henderson and M. Farmer-Kaiser accepted these requests for revision on behalf of the Council. Robert McKinney was consulted regarding the replacement of the Graduate Council description in the Faculty Handbook and we are awaiting guidance for doing so. The approved Graduate Council Handbook was provided to each Council member.

W. Ferguson also reported that J. Henderson approved the creation and charge of the University Committee on Graduate Student Success and Retention. Thus, that Committee's membership will be determined soon.

New Business:

The agenda item for a graduate student appeal was removed from the agenda as a result of the student's decision to formally resign from the University. Thus, no appeal was considered.

The Council then moved to consider the request by Kenneth McMannis, Department Head of Civil Engineering, to allow a faculty member who is no longer at the University to serve as the thesis committee co-chair for two Master's students. The Council discussed the merits of the request and weighed the options of allowing the former faculty member to serve as co-chair along with a UL Lafayette Graduate Faculty member versus making the former faculty member continue to serve on the committees as an outside committee member. In light of the advanced status of the two students and the extensive work expertise already performed by the former faculty member, a motion was made to grant the request with the stipulations that the faculty

member be limited to the capacity of co-chair and that this extension be granted only through Spring 2016 Commencement. Motion seconded. Motion passed.

The Council then considered a request from Dr. Gail Poirrier, Dean of the College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions, for an exception to University course/lab/credit requirements for NURS 507. W. Ferguson explained, along with H. Hurst, the history of this course addition request from last Spring and elaborated on the curriculum requirements imposed by the Intercollegiate Consortium for a Master of Science in Nursing (ICMSN). M. Farmer-Kaiser provided additional information from Fabrice Leroy, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, who offered support for the exemption request should the Graduate Council find the course otherwise acceptable. Finding the request to be prudent, a motion was made to accept the request to approve the course/lab/credit requirement for NURS 507 as an exception. Motion seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting ended with a discussion of priorities for the Council for the upcoming academic year. W. Ferguson encouraged the Council to review the University's revised strategic plan and to provide suggestions and feedback to ensure a thoughtful, critiqued strategic plan that advocates for graduate education. He also identified the following issues as priorities for consideration as the Council moves forward: continued consideration for revision to the University guidelines for Graduate Faculty membership; the creation of rules and regulations for Graduate Certificate programs; review of international graduate student admissions criteria; updating our graduate assistantship Catalog policies; and the purpose and process for assigning outside observers.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded and passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:07pm.