

September 13, 2016 Meeting Minutes of the Graduate Council

Members Present: J. Albert (BIOL), D. Baker (MKHP), D. Bellar (KNES), H. Damico (CODI), P. Das (ECON), M. Farmer-Kaiser (ex-officio member), S. Gawronski (ENGL/GSO), E. Habib (CIVE), K. Hermann (COUE), H. Hurst (NURS), J. Lemoine (NURS), M. Kightley (ENGL), A. Magidin (MATH), K. McClung (ARCH), D. Olivier (EDFL), C. Parker (HIST), C. Ratliff (ENGL), C. Richter (GEOL), C. Roche-Wallace (MUS), D. Stevens (MGMT),

Members Absent: A. Fekih (ELEE), D. Harrington (NURS), R. Hernandez (CHEE), P. Morton (MUS), K. Smith (ARCH), W. Xu (CHEM)

The meeting was called to order by H. Hurst at 2:05 p.m.

Announcements:

H. Hurst welcomed the members of the Graduate Council, both new and returning, and thanked everyone for allowing her to serve as Chair for the 2016-2017 academic year.

H. Hurst reviewed the front materials in the binder provided to all Graduate Council members with particular attention paid to the Graduate Council handbook's description of attendance expectations.

H. Hurst asked that the Council to move approval of the May 10, 2016 meeting minutes to later in the meeting, following Outside Observer discussion.

H. Hurst noted that though the meeting agenda listed Dr. David Danahar, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, as a guest speaker for the meeting, he would most likely not attend due to a scheduling conflict. He will attend the October 11, 2016 Graduate Council meeting.

The list of degree candidates was presented to and accepted by the Council, with a motion to make corrections to spelling and capitalization on two specific student names. Motion seconded and carried.

Committee Reports:

Student Appeals Committee – No report.

Curriculum Committee – Committee report submitted by J. Lemoine. She explained that the Committee was just starting up and would have outstanding course change forms reviewed for the next Council meeting. Motion made to accept the report of the Curriculum Committee. Motion seconded and carried.

Fellowship Committee – No report.

Graduate Faculty Membership Committee – No report.

H. Hurst noted changes in standing committees memberships, as well as the change of three standing committee chairs.

Old Business:

H. Hurst asked J. Lemoine and M. Kightley, Co-chairs of the Ad Hoc Committee on Outside Observers for Thesis or Dissertation Defenses, to provide an overview of their committee's recommendations for outside observers presented in May. J. Lemoine and M. Kightley then reviewed their Committee report calling attention to the most significant proposed changes. In particular, H. Hurst and M. Farmer-Kaiser asked for review of the May 10, 2016 meeting minutes to ensure accuracy and for guidance regarding what practice the Graduate School should employ for assigning outside observers in the Fall 2016 semester, seeing as the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations had not been made into official policy yet. J. Lemoine concluded that the May 10, 2016 meeting minutes were in keeping with the Council's previous discussions and decisions on the matter. M. Farmer-Kaiser then asked that the Council determine what it would like to see implemented for the assignment of outside observers for the Fall 2016 semester since the recommendations are not yet approved as policy. She also formally requested that the Council propose a University Catalog revision to ensure that the recommendations become official University upon approval by the Provost and the Office for Academic Affairs. H. Hurst then asked if J. Lemoine and M. Kightley would be willing to draft this policy as they were Co-chairs for the Ad Hoc Committee. They both agreed. M. Farmer-Kaiser offered Graduate School support as needed. M. Farmer-Kaiser noted that although a policy would be submitted for inclusion in the new University Catalog, the Graduate School still needed guidance for the assignment of outside observers in the immediacy. A. Magidin suggested that the Graduate School employ the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations until they become actual policy. M. Kightley seconded the suggestion, asking what harm would there be in implemented those recommendations immediately, before Provost approval. M. Farmer-Kaiser noted concern about implementing new practices mid-semester and without notification to faculty and students. D. Stevens argued that the current policy as detailed in the Graduate Catalog is so vague that implementing the Ad Hoc Committee recommendations would not be adverse to the current policy, to which many in the room agreed. M. Kightley did express concern over the practice employed in Spring and Summer 2016 allowing Master's students to request anonymously an outside observer, arguing that without the random assignment of outside observers to some Master's thesis defenses as proposed in the Ad Hoc Committee recommendations, true anonymity was not possible and thus, students could be singled out for their request. Other Council members echoed this concern. D. Bellar suggested that the Graduate School assign outside observers randomly to a number of thesis defenses for the Fall 2016 semester to remedy the problem, with D. Baker agreeing. C. Parker then proposed employed the Ad Hoc Committee recommendations now. Motion made to allow the Graduate School to follow the Ad Hoc Committee on Outside Observers for Thesis or Dissertation Defenses recommendations for the Fall 2016 semester while an official policy and catalog entry is drafted. Motion seconded and carried with a majority vote and one abstention.

Following clarification of the Ad Hoc Committee on Outside Observers for Thesis or Dissertation Defenses Recommendations, H. Hurst asked that the Council review and approve the minutes from the May 10, 2016 Graduate Council meeting. Motion made to accept the

minutes from the May 10, 2016 Graduate Council meeting. Motion seconded and carried with a majority vote and two abstentions.

H. Hurst asked for a report from the Ad Hoc Committee on International Student Admissions Policies. M. Farmer-Kaiser explained that the Committee had not met since their May meeting due to faculty schedules during the Summer semester. She then provided a brief overview of the Committee's mission and objectives for reviewing and refining admissions policies for international students. The Council voted in May to allow the current ad hoc committee membership (A. Maida, A. Magidin, C. Taylor, W. Xu, and M. Farmer-Kaiser) to continue its work. M. Farmer-Kaiser invited any others who wished to participate to notify her.

New Business:

H. Hurst began a discussion about the process for selecting a Grand Marshal for future commencement ceremonies, noting that current practice is ill-defined. A working draft of a call for nominations that could be used to solicit nominations from the UL Lafayette community was introduced to the Council. In addition to describing the role of the Grand Marshal in the General Assembly, the draft had a number of discussion points that the Council considered. First, D. Baker suggested that the selection to Grand Marshal should be in recognition for University services and not just service to graduate education, to which the Council agreed. Next, the Council discussed whether the Grand Marshal needs to be a retiree or someone in the process of retiring. The draft proposal states, "Typically, the Graduate Council recognizes a faculty member with this honor at the time of retirement or shortly thereafter." After discussion, the Council ultimately opted to leave this wording as is, indicating that a non-retiree is eligible to be nominated, though they have not typically been selected in the past. Next, the Council debated whether self-nominations should be allowed. While some Council members felt that self-nominations diluted the honor of being nominated by colleagues or might be used as a way to artificially strengthen a CV, other Council members noted that there would be no harm in allowing self-nominations as the Council makes the final decision on who is selected. D. Olivier raised the question of whether a list of recently or soon-to-be retired faculty/staff would still be provided for review regardless of nominations, fearing that some candidates could be passed over simply because they were not nominated. A show-of-hands was taken to determine opinions on whether self-nominations should be allowed, with a majority of the Council not favoring self-nominations. As a result, current proposal wording—"To nominate a candidate [or to nominate yourself] for this recognition..."—was changed to read, "To nominate a candidate for this recognition...." Finally, the Council considered the timeline for when nominations need to be submitted, with M. Farmer-Kaiser explaining that the Graduate School has traditionally notified the Registrar's Office the Grand Marshal selection by mid-November and mid-April for the Fall and Spring respectively. Ultimately, while the Council agreed that requiring nominations by October 1 for the Fall semester and March 1 for the Spring semester would be ideal (both in terms of time for Council consideration and for being able to select an alternate should the individual selected not be able to serve), the Council agreed to an extended timeline of November 1 to ensure plenty of time for nominations in Fall 2016. Motion made to accept the proposed changes to the Grand Marshal call for nominations document. Motion seconded and carried.

D. Olivier, serving as Chair of the search committee for the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, provided an update on the search committee's activity so far. She explained that the University would be using the same search company used when the University hired the previous Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. James Henderson. D. Olivier defined the makeup of the committee, which was meant to be representative across the University. She also noted that the committee will be developing a definitive timeline within the next few weeks. H. Hurst thanked D. Olivier for providing the update.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded and passed. Meeting adjourned at 3:29pm.