

MINUTES

The Graduate Council

September 19, 2023

Knight Library Dream Lab

Members Present: Jason Brown, Krista Chronister (*ex officio*), Katherine Donaldson (*ex officio*), Maile Hutterer, Gabriela Martinez, Kate Mills, Leslie Straka,

Members Absent: Ron Bramhall (*ex officio*), Erik Girvan, Xiangchen Gu, Aaron Gullickson, Bonnie Gutierrez (*ex officio*), Beth Harn, Jaewoo Kim, Ben McMorran, Barbara Muraca, Frances White (*ex officio*)

Division of Graduate Studies Staff in Attendance: Tara Kaiser, Jered Nagel

The meeting was called to order at 2:08PM.

Charge and Responsibilities

Assistant Vice Provost, Jered Nagel, opened the meeting and all in attendance offered brief introductions. Jered shared the Graduate Council Charge and Responsibilities as well as an overview of the decisions and accomplishments of last year's Graduate Council. Full details can be accessed via SharePoint. In terms of the volume of proposals, the Graduate Council typically reviews about 2-3 new program proposals, 5-10 revisions, and 3-5 major policy changes per year.

Nomination and Election of Officers

The Graduate Council must elect two members to assume the role of Graduate Council Chair and Graduate Council Secretary. The Chair works with the Division of Graduate Studies (DGS) to set agendas and pre-review proposals. They will attend hour-long meetings with Jered, Vice Provost Krista Chronister, and Associate Vice Provost Ron Bramhall prior to each Graduate Council meeting to prepare. The Chair is also expected to run Graduate Council meetings and serve as an Ex Officio voting member of the Academic Council. Academic Council meets once per month. The Secretary is responsible for certifying the minutes after each meeting. Kate Mills volunteered to assume the role of Secretary, but the Council will hold an official vote via email.

Graduate Council Committees

Each voting Graduate Council member must serve on one of six committees for the duration of the academic year. Full details on each committee, including their expected time commitments will be shared via email and can also be found on the SharePoint. An email will be sent to solicit member preferences. Ex Officio members may join a committee if they wish but are not required to.

What to Look for in Proposals

A detailed Proposal Review Guidance Document can be found in the Graduate Council SharePoint. In general, the Graduate Council will review proposals for new programs, program revisions, and policy changes. The Council will ensure that programs have accurately followed administrative processes and that no policies have been violated. The Graduate Council will not evaluate individual courses, content, learning outcomes, etc., but the UOCC representative that serves on the Council will inform members on whether curriculum requirements have been met and if a proposal may be voted on. Graduate Council members are also encouraged to provide feedback, share their perspective, raise questions, and offer solutions on potential problems or implications brought about by a proposal.

Summer Enrollment Policies

This has been a continued topic of discussion among last year's Graduate Council. The current Summer Enrollment policy states that summer session registration is not required unless: a) it is the student's first term in the program, or b) the student is using university facilities or faculty or staff services (for example, doctoral students taking exams or submitting papers for advancement to candidacy). Recent practice has been that if a student completed advancement requirements in the summer without being registered, the Division of Graduate Studies delays the advancement term to the next enrolled term, which in turn delays their advancement to a GE Level 3.

The proposed change, which has yet to be voted on by the Graduate Council, would change the policy to read: Summer session registration is not required unless a) it is the student's first term in the program, or b) the student's program requires it. Additionally, if a program requires summer registration, the minimum credit requirement will be changed from 3 credits to 1 credit.

The Graduate Council expressed concern on the financial implications of this new policy versus tuition waivers, whether it will be of financial benefit or harm academic units. Krista Chronister stated that financial loss is expected to be minimal, and programs will have the option to decide if they want to enforce registration or not which will affect revenue. Discussion on this topic will continue in the next Graduate Council meeting.

Open Discussion

What are some of the pressing issues in graduate education that the Council will discuss, i.e., GTFF bargaining? How can the Graduate Council address these issues for positive change?

- The Graduate Council is made up of individuals from all across campus with widespread expertise and experience making for an engaging committee and variety of perspectives. The Council along with the DGS can get word to the right channels to initiate change.
- Anything related to graduate education may be brought in for discussion, although there are aspects of GTFF bargaining that must remain confidential.

There have been some issues with graduate student fellowships. What is the Graduate Council's interaction with VPRI?

- The Graduate Council is not directly involved in collaboration with VPRI, but the DGS is, such as in tracking and distributing funds to students.
- A recurring challenge is the lack of workflow and communication flow between VPRI, DGS, and the students particularly in regard to the implications of accepting a fellowship.
- The DGS accepts Council feedback on any policies pertaining to relationship with VPRI.

What does the narrative of Graduate Council look like throughout the course of a year?

- Policies are brought forward earlier in the year, and program change proposals tend to trickle in throughout year. New program proposals usually come in winter and spring.
- There are often times as well when proposals come through suddenly and unexpectedly.
- There will never be any extra time requirement beyond the monthly Council meetings and meetings convened by the smaller committees.
- The DGS and Chair may work with programs outside of scheduled meetings to keep things moving forward.

The Council adjourned at 2:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Graduate Council Secretary