

MINUTES

The Graduate Council

November 14, 2023
Zoom

Members Present: Ron Bramhall (*ex officio*), Krista Chronister (*ex officio*), Nancy Cunningham (*ex officio*), Erik Girvan, Xiangchen Gu, Aaron Gullickson, Bonnie Gutierrez (*ex officio*), Beth Harn, Maile Hutterer, Jaewoo Kim, Annie Liu, Gabriela Martinez, Ben McMorran, Kate Mills, Barbara Muraca, Leslie Straka, Frances White (*ex officio*)

Members Absent: Jason Brown

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

UO Senate Members in Attendance: Betina Lynn

The meeting was called to order at 2:08PM and the September minutes were approved.

Election of Officers

The Graduate Council held a vote to appoint Aaron Gullickson as Graduate Council Chair and Kate Mills for Graduate Council Secretary. The Council voted unanimously in approval of these appointments.

Graduate Course Syllabus Policy

This proposal involves including graduate-level courses in the university's syllabus requirement policy. Currently, the Graduate Course Syllabus Policy only *recommends* that graduate courses have a syllabus but including it in the university-level policy would *require* that graduate courses have a syllabus. Overall, the Council agrees that it is best practice to require a syllabus for courses as it lays out clear guidelines on expectations and course objectives, as well as ensures that programs are not violating any university policies.

The Graduate Council shared the below ideas and concerns:

- Would need to revise the University's syllabus requirement policy to clearly distinguish what applies to graduate courses and what applies to undergraduate courses.
 - o Ex) Language about "core education requirements."
- Individual course syllabi must also have customized language in cases of:
 - o Generic courses such as research or individualized instruction.
 - o 400/500 level courses where graduate and undergraduate requirements may be different.
- The Course Attendance and Engagement Policy
 - o This policy would not apply to graduate courses, but several Council members agree that adopting a version of it that applies to graduate courses as necessary would be beneficial.
 - o There was a suggestion to create a separate version of this policy specifically for graduate courses.
- Accreditation standards may have different or additional requirements that would need to be captured.

Because of the above concerns, the Graduate Council could not vote on the proposal. The Division of Graduate Studies (DGS) will work with Aaron Gullickson and Ron Bramhall to revise the proposal and bring it back to a later meeting for a vote.

Summer Enrollment Policies

This is a continued discussion from AY 2022-23 to amend the summer enrollment policy. Option 1 of the proposal would only require students to register for summer credits if, a) it is the student's first term in the

program, or b) the student's program requires it. If a student was required to register for summer credits, Option 1 would also decrease the minimum enrollment credits from 3 to 1. This option eliminates the need for students to register for summer credit if they are defending their dissertation, or if they are advancing to candidacy in the summer. Option 2 of the proposal is to make no change to the current policy.

Maile Hutterer motioned to approve Option 1. Beth Harn seconded the motion, and the Council unanimously approved.

Informal Grievance Procedures

Krista Chronister seeks the Graduate Council's advisement on clarifying a procedure for which students may voice an informal grievance. Currently, there are no set guidelines on best practices for faculty on handling informal grievances, and practices across campus vary widely. Krista explains that often times, students are instructed to consult their advisor regarding a grievance, however, this poses a problem if the grievance is about the advisor. Filing a formal grievance can be difficult as well.

Graduate Council members shared the following ideas and perspectives:

- Idea to utilize an internal or external representative or committee that students can consult when grievances arise.
 - o An outside representative would reduce workload on departmental faculty which would be helpful to smaller, tight-knit units.
 - o Some students may feel more comfortable going to an outside entity, whereas others may feel more comfortable consulting authorities within their own department.
- It would be helpful to learn what other departments are doing.
 - o Physics and Chemistry already utilize a Graduate Support Group that receives specialized training on these matters.
 - o Law school utilizes its own academic affairs staff.
 - o Psychology utilizes an advising committee.
- The DGS could develop and communicate a set of best practices and possibly serve as a liaison between students and departments.
- Remind faculty and campus partners of the resources currently available: OMBUDS, Mentorship Reimagined, etc.

Previously Published & Co-Authored Material in Theses and Dissertations

This is a proposal to remove an administrative procedure that requires a form be submitted to the DGS for pre-approval when a student wishes to include previously published or co-authored material in their thesis or dissertation. Rather than requiring the form, this proposal would allow students to work with their dissertation committee to determine how the works will be included. Departments will be expected to follow the style manual as well as the checklist within the Application for Graduation or Oral Defense Application. These applications will still be reviewed by the DGS for compliance. Departments are still entitled to implement their own policies in addition to the DGS requirements.

The Council noted that what a dissertation looks like can vary across department. Some may allow the bulk of the dissertation to be made up of previously published works, whereas others may require more original work. It was brought up that if departments are allowing students to mainly use previously published work in their dissertations, and are incorporating appropriate bridging between chapters, then this policy may not even be needed. There should however be transparency so that students know the thesis and dissertation requirements.

Removing the policy altogether and determining what constitutes a dissertation calls for a much deeper discussion. For now, Jered Nagel proposes to eliminate the pre-approval form requirement, and revisit the removal of the policy at a later time.

The Council adjourned at 3:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kate Mills", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Kate Mills, Graduate Council Secretary