MINUTES
The Graduate Council
September 23, 2021
EMU Cedar/Spruce Room

Members Present: Ron Bramhall (ex officio), Krista Chronister (ex officio), Katherine Donaldson (ex officio), Ihab Elzeyadi, Aaron Gullickson, Beth Harn, Jaewoo Kim, Gyoung-Ah Lee, Leslie Straka, Frances White (ex officio)

Members Absent: Michael Fakhri, Huaxin Lin, Julia Pomerenk (ex officio)

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

The meeting was called to order at 3:35pm.

Welcome from the Vice Provost

Vice Provost Krista Chronister opened the meeting by stating her vision of the Graduate Council which involves two major parts:

1. Realigning the charge of the Graduate Council with Senate expectations and responsibilities.
2. Addressing the curriculum approval process and policies to make it more innovation-friendly and rewarding for departments and programs.

Nomination & Election of Officers

There were no volunteers or nominations accepted for Graduate Council Chair, so the Division of Graduate Studies will determine a strategy to select a Chair in the coming weeks. Currently, the Council is working on filling several vacant seats.

Leslie Straka nominated herself for Graduate Council Secretary, and the Council voted in approval.

Graduate Council Charge and Responsibilities

The main charge of the Graduate Council is to advise the Vice Provost for the Division of Graduate Studies on matters pertaining to graduate education and student excellence, diversity, and access. Graduate Council members recommended the following as part of the Grad Council’s charge:

- Emphasize the Council’s advisory role to allow time for improving internal processes, reducing barriers, and creating new and improved initiatives.
- Remove program review as it relates to course approval and instruction, and instead provide broad oversight.
- Have a Graduate Studies representative on UOCC.

Graduate Council members brought up several ongoing problems related to graduate education that the Council should try to address during AY21-22:

- Courses being eliminated because of low doctoral enrollment which affects the quality of the programs. The University however is putting a cap on how many doctoral students are allowed in each college.
- Making graduate education more affordable.
- Addressing the fact that some programs are assigning credits and thus making students pay for experiences such as working with an advisor, independent studies, or dissertation preparation when those should already be included in their program.

Ongoing action items of the Graduate Council to address the above concerns:

- Ensure that discussions occurring within the Graduate Council stay within the scope of the Graduate Council.
- Develop proposals for initiatives and allow for feedback from Council members, ex) idea to repackage funding for recruitment purposes
- In regard to curriculum review:
  o Determine strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum review process and work with Senate to make changes for improvement
  o Develop an overarching set of guidelines for units on which courses need to be regularized and which should be program requirements.
  o Develop overarching guidelines on how programs should select course numbers and set standards for receiving credit for internships, practicums, research, etc.
  o Set minimum requirements for generic courses that must be met and have a faculty member officially sign off that they are being met.
  o Hold regular audits to ensure these new guidelines are working as intended.

**Graduate Council Committees**

Graduate Council members are required to serve on one of three committees. Two committees involve award and fellowship application review, and one involves reviewing academic grievances from students. Assistant Vice Provost Jered Nagel will send out an email asking for preferences on which committee each member would like to serve on for AY 2021-22.

**Closing and Action Items**

The Division of Graduate Studies will:

- Revise the charge of the Graduate Council based on recommendations above.
- Write up a revised policy for courses with generic numbers, gather feedback and approval from Council members, and submit it to Senate for approval and implementation.
  o Jered will share with the Council the current guidelines on what to look for when reviewing proposals.
- Continue to work the Senate on filling vacant spots on the Graduate Council.

The Council adjourned at 4:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Straka
Graduate Council Secretary