**Graduate Council Meeting**

**February 28, 2020**

**201D DEV**

**Minutes**

**Approved 3/27/20**

**Faculty Present**: Dan Balfour, Andrea Bostrom, W. Burns-Ardolino, Dianne Conrad, Barbara Harvey, Betsy Williams for Jon Jeffryes, Courtney Karasinski, Linda Pickett, Jennifer Pope, Paulette Ratliff-Miller, Mark Staves, Joel Wendland-Liu

**Administrative Ex-Officio Present:** Irene Fountain, Mark Luttenton, Jeffrey Potteiger, Steven Lipnicki, Pam Wells

**Graduate Student Association:** Nate Swanson for Christina Lunn

**Ex-Officio Students Present:** Amanda Filkins

**Guest:** Loren Rullman, Dean of Students

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| **AGENDA ITEM** | **DISCUSSION** | **ACTION/DECISION** |
| **I. Call to Order** | A. Bostrom called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM. |  |
| **II. Approval of Agenda** |  | **Motion:** P. Ratliff-Miller **moved** to approve the agenda. W. Burns-Ardolino seconded. Motion passed unanimously. |
| **III. Approval of Minutes January 24, 2020** |  | **Motion:** P. Ratliff-Miller moved to approve the January 24, 2020 minutes. D. Balfour seconded. Motion passed unanimously. |
| **IV. Student Life Experience for Graduate Students – Loren Rullman** | L. Rullman gave an overview of the Division of Student Affairs.  Student Affairs did not have good data on the needs of students on the downtown campus. A special projects GA was hired to conduct assessment surveys to see what both undergraduate and graduate students need downtown and on the health campus. The perception that services are duplicated is not correct.  There have been numerous conversations about the lack of services for students downtown, but there was no data to back this up. The survey results will be helpful to show that there is a need so deans can move forward with requesting services for their students. Student Affairs has requested an office in Finkelstein Hall. The student ombudsman and other student services will rotate use. Growth will likely continue on the health campus, which has the least amount of student resources. Student Affairs is trying to be more conscious of including the downtown campus in activities.  Observations about the downtown campus are that it lacks food services, there is very little social space, and it needs more academic and study space that is graduate focused. Parking is an issue but it is outside the purview of the Dean of Student Affairs. A conversation with the VP of Finance and Administration might be in order to make him aware of what is needed. Safety and security are a concern of students at the health campus. These concerns are also experienced by faculty and staff with regard to parking, available food services, and safety.  Discussion has been ongoing about having a sense of community for graduate students. The GSA has hosted events to draw students together, but more is needed. Both structural barriers and conceptual barriers exist. Graduate students attend class mostly at night, and there are very few services available to them downtown. As an example, DeVos Building C is very crowded from 5-6 pm as it is the only gathering place before class for students. Graduate students socialize differently, too.  Many programs have dedicated space in their buildings which they requested at the time of construction, but including graduate student space in construction plans has not been done. Space is filled quickly so creating a graduate student study space or lounge later cannot be done. The Seidman Center has a graduate student lounge but it is underutilized because it’s set up as a conference room with a large table rather than an actual lounge. Perhaps the SCB dean could request that the space be changed to a lounge area.  The Dean of Students may not be able to advocate for grad students as well as college deans, the dean of the Graduate School, and the Graduate Council, but he is willing to partner with deans to influence administrators in a collaborative way. The downtown survey results will help identify what needs to be done, and will provide evidence that change is needed.  The UClub had been designated as a graduate student lounge for a brief time, however, it was still being used for events. With new administrators, it would be a good time to revisit finding graduate student space on the downtown campus. |  |
| **V. Chair’s Report – A. Bostrom** | The chair brought the course level policy to ECS two weeks ago and UAS last week. UAS discussed micro-credentials at length, but it is unclear if the Graduate Council’s draft policy will be affected by that discussion. |  |
| **VI. Graduate Student Association Report – N. Swanson** | GSA E-board nominations close 2/28/20. There are a number of nominations but not much diversity in program representation.  The GSA funding board received requests for $57,899 and funded $46,961.  The GSA is partnering with the Powwow program and will contribute $2,000 for an upcoming event. The GSA held a social on February 6 at Grand Rapids Brewing Company. Eighty students attended.  GSA has 75 tickets to sell for the March 14 Grand Rapids Griffins game. Tickets must be purchased online. There will be no cash sales.  A new graduate RSO was approved, the Communications Club.  The GSA is interested in the survey results discussed by Dean Rullman this morning to see if there is a way to compare the graduate student experience on the Allendale campus vs. the downtown campus. |  |
| **VII. Curriculum & Program Review Subcommittee Report – M. Staves** | Graduate Program Review  All eight site visits for graduate program review are complete. The MPH team report was reviewed for full Graduate Council approval. Corrections to typos and formatting were noted. The graduate program director had submitted a correction of fact regarding covering biostatistics and emergency management.  The external reviewers recommended more online and hybrid options and instructional design support. There have already been changes initiated university-wide with instructional design specialists hired to support the colleges and the university will be hiring a vice president for information technology and chief information officer.  The team report and external reviewer report will be submitted to the Provost. After that, the Provost will meet with the college dean, and dean of the Graduate School with her recommendations.  GC-CPR Update  There are three items in the SAIL queue for review at the next GC-CPR meeting. | **Motion:** The GC-CPR motion and second to approve the Master of Public Health team report was passed unanimously. |
| **VIII. Policy Subcommittee Report – D. Balfour** | a) Converting Professional Learning into Graduate Credit  The main points of the draft policy are that there is a maximum percentage of total graduate credits that will be allowed for professional learning, students must be admitted to a graduate program, the credits will be accepted for a specific course (697 Professional Learning), cannot be used as a culminating experience, and must be tested.  There needs to be consistency across programs with regard to administering exams and submission of a portfolio. FTLC may be able to assist with evaluation of portfolios.  Procedures need to be developed to assist programs with implementing the policy.  There needs to be a process for the credit going on the student’s transcript.  Revisions were made to the draft document with regard to the approval process.  Converting Micro-credentials into Graduate Degree Credit This policy is to allow an existing micro-credential to be accepted as graduate degree credit. This clarifies how credits taken while a non-degree seeking graduate student can be applied towards a graduate degree by a degree seeking student. Currently, graduate students are allowed to count up to 12 credits taken while a non-degree seeking graduate student. The policy allows students to stack badges, which will put them over the 12-credit limit.  Students must meet degree requirements; thus, they are prevented from using undergraduate credit or irrelevant courses as credit toward a graduate degree.  Edits were made to item #1 of the draft policy for clarification.  c) GCPC Response to UAS/ECS Charge regarding stipends for Graduate Assistants The charge was to evaluate the current practice of awarding stipends for graduate assistantships. The GCPC response informs UAS/ECS that no changes are needed to the current practice. | **Motion:** M. Staves moved to approve the revisions to the draft policy. W. Burns-Ardolino seconded. Motion passed unanimously.  **Motion:** J. Pope moved to approve the policy as amended. W. Burns-Ardolino seconded. Motion passed unanimously.  **Motion:** W. Burns Ardolino moved to approve the policy with revisions. D. Conrad seconded. Motion passed unanimously.  **Motion**: M. Staves moved to approve the document. J. Pope seconded. Motion passed unanimously. |
| **IX. Dean’s Report – J. Potteiger** | 2018-19 Graduate Exit Survey Results  The intent of the graduate exit survey is to help programs improve their quality and to support graduate students needs.  The survey is sent to graduate students at the end of each semester. They receive an email with a link to the Qualtrics survey. Some programs give students class time to complete the survey to increase participation.  Distribution of the survey results include unredacted versions to the Provost first, then college deans, then the graduate program directors receive redacted versions. Results are not provided to GPDs wherein the sample size is small (<4) and could result in identification of the students by the GPD.  The response rate was thirty-one percent this year. The goal is to have the majority of responses in the good to excellent categories.  Changes have been made which resulted in improved scores in some areas, particularly in the quality of advising and seeking employment. Advising handbooks were created and the Career Services office implemented changes to provide better services to graduate students.  The scores for some survey questions have declined this year. It is unknown if this is an anomaly or if it’s the beginning of a trend. |  |
| **X. Old Business** | There was no old business. |  |
| **XI. New Business** | There was no new business. |  |
| **XII. Adjournment** |  | **Motion:** P. Ratliff-Miller moved to adjourn. M. Staves seconded. Meeting adjourned at 11:05 AM. |