**Graduate Council Meeting**

**September 25, 2020**

**Virtual**

**Minutes
Approved 10/23/20**

**Faculty Present**: Dan Balfour, Andrea Bostrom, Wendy Burns-Ardolino, Amy Campbell, Shabbir Choudhuri, Xiang Ciao, Dianne Conrad, Monica Harris, Barbara Harvey, Jon Jeffryes, Courtney Karasinski, Rui Niu-Cooper, Karen Ozga, Jennifer Pope, Paulette Ratliff-Miller, Mark Staves, Joel Wendland-Liu

**Graduate Student Representatives:** Jeffery Brown, Phillip Todd

**Administrative Ex-Officio Present:** Irene Fountain, Tracey James-Heer, Mark Luttenton, Jeffrey Potteiger, Steven Lipnicki, Ellen Schendel, Pam Wells

**Graduate Student Association:** John T. Jones, Kesha Jones

**Ex-Officio Students Present:** Amanda Filkins, Maggie Scannell

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| **AGENDA ITEM** | **DISCUSSION** | **ACTION/DECISION** |
|  **I. Call to Order – A. Bostrom** |  |  |
| **II. Approval of Agenda – A. Bostrom**  | The Provost is not able to attend so the agenda was amended.  | **Motion:** W. Burns-Ardolinomoved to approve the amended agenda. J. Pope seconded. Motion passed unanimously. |
| **III. Approval of Minutes September 4, 2020 – A. Bostrom** |  | **Motion:** J. Pope movedto approve the September 4, 2020. W. Burns-Ardolino seconded. Motion passed unanimously. |
| **IV. Chair’s Report – A. Bostrom**  | Students Kesha Jones (CSAL, GSA officer) and Maggie Scannell (MPNL, Graduate School GA) were introduced.  Graduate Council Charges UpdateThe finalized charges are essentially the same as the previous draft. At a recent ECS meeting, it was explained that ECS’s intent with setting aside charges was to refrain from overwhelming faculty during this academic year. The Graduate Council’s memo on graduate assistant funding was accepted by ECS. The matter will likely be revisited at a later time.  |  |
| **V. Curriculum & Program Review Subcommittee Report – M. Staves** | Graduate Program ReviewMeetings were held with Provost Cimitile, J. Potteiger, M. Staves, and individual college deans to discuss outcomes of graduate program reviews for Criminal Justice, Public Health, TESOL, Educational Technology, and DNP. Meetings still need to be held for Reading, English, and Biology. Log 10716: New Program Proposal: M.S. in Water Resource PolicyThis new program proposal includes existing courses in biology, natural resources management, and public administration. It is designed for students with both a science and non-science background. The culminating experience is an internship. The proposal included letters from state agencies that would provide internship opportunities. Students in other programs such as Social Innovation would be welcome to take the water policy courses if the courses are counted toward the social innovation degree. The undergraduate environmental studies program would be a good fit for a combined degree.  | **Motion**: The GC-CPR’s motion and second to approve Log 10716 passed unanimously.  |
| **VI. Policy Subcommittee Report – S. Choudhuri**  | The Graduate School is preparing data regarding nomenclature and culminating experiences. Graduate faculty workload is still an issue to be addressed. |  |
| **VII. Graduate Student Association Report – J. Jones** | The GSA is revising the funding bylaws, 1) to allow for reimbursement of non-early bird registrations, 2) to allow funding for virtual conferences, 3) to allow students who are not members of an RSO to make individual requests for funding. Item #3 requires more discussion.The GSA funding board is meeting today to review three proposals.  |  |
| **VIII. Dean’s Report – J. Potteiger**  | Graduate School ActivitiesThe Graduate School’s policies, manuals, and forms for students, GPDs, and faculty are available online. TGS received two applications so far for converting prior learning to graduate credit. Program ReviewThe meetings with the Provost and academic deans went well. The Provost is very interested in the Graduate Council’s work on the program reviews. The final meetings for Biology and English will be held later to accommodate the new CLAS dean. The program review schedule will be pushed back one year. Adjustments can be made for those programs that want to line up their program reviews with their accreditation process. Strategic Planning Leaders across campus met with President Mantella regarding strategic planning. The current strategic plan will end after the current academic year. A new strategic plan will be created, and the Graduate Council will be more involved in graduate education strategic planning. The previous strategic plan includes a number of benchmarks over which the Graduate School had no control.  |  |
| **IX. Old Business**  | There was no old business.  |  |
| **X. New Business** | Reorganization Discussion Graduate Council members are concerned with the new unit’s administrative structure and responsibility and potentially having a non-academic person responsible for graduate education and losing the direct accountability currently in place between the Graduate School and Provost. This is important for the representation for graduate programs and graduate program review. The GSA has worked hard to create a structure for graduate students. Graduate students are now included in standing committees and the GSA has significant funds available, but future funding could be reduced. Concerns were expressed about how graduate student experiences and graduate student governance will be facilitated in this new structure.Scholarly work, teaching from the traditional position of faculty, graduate faculty selection, and decisions on what students need to graduate need to be academic decisions rather than marketing/administrative decisions. Members are concerned that a shift in focus to badging and micro-credentials could be a priority for the future of graduate education. Emphasis on obtaining a graduate degree needs to be maintained. Graduate education and lifetime learning pull from different markets. Individual graduate programs know what their messaging should be to attract students, a shift could put them at a competitive disadvantage. Expanding programs and marketing the university as a place to come back to complete a degree quickly could harm the university’s reputation and be considered a lower quality option. Universities are not job training centers but have a bigger role in society. A. Bostrom will summarize the comments in a memo to Chris Plouff with a copy to ECS. Faculty and Challenges During PandemicGraduate Council members discussed challenges caused by the pandemic such as online and hybrid teaching and student engagement, Key items included:* Students are having difficulty managing multiple online classes. Some are concerned with the spread of COVID in hybrid and face-to-face classes so they request online only. Some students seem to have stopped attending classes.
* Students complain that there is no consistency with how faculty offer their online classes.
* Some faculty do not enforce social-distancing or mask-wearing in class.
* Faculty have to deal with multiple modes of teaching for the same class, and online classes generate many emails and requests for meetings.
* Internships have been somewhat problematic with sites having differing requirements regarding remote work.
* Students have difficulty navigating technology, such as uploading assignments to Blackboard.
* Faculty need to be intentional about assignments that maintain academic integrity and affect learning outcomes.
* Practice partners for health programs have continued to accept students and ensure they have PPE.
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| **XI. Adjournment** |  | **Motion:** W. Burns-Ardolino moved toadjourn. J. Jeffryes seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:46 AM.  |