MINUTES
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES COUNCIL
FOR RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

MEETING: April 26, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: D. Baker, F. Botelho, R. Cohen, A. Daily, S. Fleming, E. Groenendyk, J. Lariscy, J. McCutcheon, A. Mickelson, T. Roche, D. Ruggiero, C. Santo, J. Scraba, X. Shen, O. Skalli, J. Topinka, M. Trapp

MEMBERS ABSENT: E. Delavega, C. Powell

PROXIES: E. Choi (CERI), S. Jin (SWRK)

GUEST: R. Poston (Graduate School)

1. **Approval of the March 29th Graduate Council minutes**
T. Roche made a motion to approve the minutes and C. Santo seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

2. Guest report. Dean Poston discussed the importance of making timely admissions decisions. She emphasized that early decisions can help our programs to attract the best students.

3. Reports from the April 9th University Graduate Council meeting

a) **Student access to the Counseling Center**. Dr. Kreuz reported that all PhD students can now access the Counseling Center and their services. Previously, this required being enrolled for six hours, but Justin Lawhead, Dean of Students, has approved this change.

b) **New graduation analyst**. R. Kreuz reported that Peggy Callahan has been hired as the new graduation analyst. Previously, she was the Academic Services Specialist in the Kemmons Wilson School and worked with graduate students in that program for seven years. Before that, she was the Executive Director for the Coalition for a Better Memphis. She has a bachelor's degree in communications and journalism for Cal State Chico.

c) **DuoLingo presentation**. R. Kreuz reported that the Graduate Engagement Manager for DuoLingo made a presentation about the advantages of their English assessment test, which launched five years ago. It can be taken in an hour instead of four because it's adaptive. It costs $49 worldwide, and results are available in two days.

There are extensive checks for cheating; an algorithm monitors the student's camera and mic during the test, and shuts it down if anything problematic is seen, such as the use of multiple monitors, eye gaze changes, and others being present. Two human raters review the video. The program checks the ID provided by the test taker against biometrics.

Once someone has taken the test, they're locked out of taking it again for thirty days. And every test is unique due to a large corpus of test questions. The test is scored by both a program and a person.

Their data indicate that the results are highly predictive of English language skills, with a correlation of .78 for the IELTS and .77 for the TOEFL.

R. Kreuz reported that the Graduate School is agnostic about continuing with DuoLingo once testing centers abroad reopen. It may make sense to retain it as an option since it is faster and cheaper for the students. He asked that Council members, as they start working with students wo submitted DuoLingo scores for fall admission, to let him know about any problematic cases so that he can pass them along to Dean Poston.

d) **Authentication of graduation documents**. Jim Kierulff circulated an email on April 9 that R. Kreuz forwarded to the Council. He'd been getting documents that he couldn't authenticate. At the UCGS meeting, he mentioned the following as problems:

1) Forms being submitted by students.
2) Receiving documents via Gmail accounts as opposed to a Memphis account.
3) Students claiming to have gotten verbal approval via a Zoom conference.
4) Signatures cut and pasted by students.

Kierulff does hope to get these forms into DocuSign at some point. In the meantime, R. Kreuz asked that forms that do not require College-level signatures be sent directly to <gsgraduateanalyst@memphis.edu>.

4. Representation of the MS in Data Science and PhD in Urban Affairs programs on the Council.

R. Kreuz reminded the Council that traditionally, graduate programs have been tied to departments and representation on the Council was granted to each department. When the Doctor of Social Work program began last year, the program already had representation by virtue of being part of a department that already had a graduate degree (the Master of Social Work)

This is why the Institute for Intelligent Systems doesn't have a seat on the Council: it doesn't have its own courses and it doesn't grant degrees.

However, in the fall there will be two interdisciplinary degree-granting programs coming online: the MS in Data Science and the PhD in Urban affairs.

The Data Science degree involves core courses from our College (COMP and MATH), with elective courses from BIOL and PSYC. There are also electives from other colleges, specifically Public Health and Fogelman.

The PhD in Urban Affairs is an interdisciplinary program housed in the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy. It will have its own set of core courses, under the UAPP prefix, but will also draw on courses in CJUS, MATH, PSYC, and SOCI, as well as courses in the Colleges of Education, Public Health, and Fogelman.

Curriculum changes to these programs, as they evolve over time, will need to be approved by the Council, so it would make sense to have representatives from those programs sit on the Council as voting members.

However, Article III, section 1 of the Council bylaws state that:

> "The Council shall be composed of one elected representative from **each department with a graduate program** in the College and the Director of Graduate Studies of the College."

R. Kreuz proposed two options for addressing this:

> 1) The bylaws could be amended, perhaps by replacing the phrase "each department with a graduate program" with "each **unit with a degree-granting** program."
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> or
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> 2) The Council could defer making a policy change and instead deal with exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

R. Kreuz said he is not aware of any new interdisciplinary programs that are even in the planning stages, so this probably won't come up again for a while.

Finally, R. Kreuz pointed out that there are 19 voting members on the Council, representing the 21 degree-granting departments and units. (As the chair, R. Kreuz only votes in the case of ties.) Adding two more representatives would slightly diminish the voting power of the current Council members.

After some discussion, D. Baker made a motion to invite representatives from the two new degree programs to join the Council as nonvoting members and to revisit the voting status of those members in a year. C. Santo seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

5. New business. No members had new business to bring before the Council.

6. Announcements.

a) **Curriculog deadlines for the fall**. T. Tardugno reminded the Council that the CAS graduate curriculum deadline for the forms to be on the college level step by midnight on Wednesday, September 15. The CAS Undergraduate Curriculum deadline for the forms to be on the college level step by midnight on Wednesday, October 6.

b) **Changes in representation**. R. Kreuz asked the Council members to let him and T. Tardugno know if they won't be returning to the Council next fall. If there are changes during the summer, they should let them know as soon as possible so that records and mailing lists can be updated.

R. Kreuz announced that this concludd the meetings of the Graduate Council for the academic year. He said that it had been a pleasure working with all the members. He thanked them for their hard work during a very difficult year, and he looks forward to better times ahead.

T. Roche made a motion to adjourn the meeting. J. McCutcheon seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Prepared by T. Tardugno from notes proved by R. Kreuz.