

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

MEETING: January 30, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: D. Baker, E. Choi, E. Delavega, W. Duffy, S. Fleming, E. Groenendyk, J. Lariscy, T. Maclin, M. B. Mader, A. Mickelson, H. Sable, X. Shen, O. Skalli, J. Topinka, B. Zheng

MEMBERS ABSENT: D. Downey, A. Johnson, I. Ortega-Santos, C. Santo, V. Rus

PROXY: Brianna Burtera for I. Ortega-Santos; Doyun Koo for Amanda Johnson

PRESIDING: R. Kreuz, CAS Director for Graduate Studies

1. Approval of the minutes from the November 21st meeting

There were no additions or corrections needed for last month's minutes. E. Delavega motioned to approve the minutes. O. Skalli seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

2. Report from the January 18 College Directors and the January 20 University Graduate Council meetings by R. Kreuz

a) **Drop for nonpayment issues.** Many students were dropped for non-payment who should not have been, including many CAS graduate assistants. The Graduate School is working to figure out why this happened and has found no clear pattern so far. Students are not dropped for owing less than \$500, but it is possible that the new textbook fee pushed some students over that line.

R. Kreuz asked if anyone had students affected by the second (January 27) drop date. E. Delavega reported several students dropped. J Topinka had a student dropped due to a last-minute financial aid decision. These students are having to now reenroll via the Registrar's office. W. Duffy asked R. Kreuz to ask Dean Tollefsen about communications his department is receiving from the Graduate School about unpaid fees from the Saudi Arabian Culture Mission (SACM). R. Kreuz will check on this.

b) **Spring enrollments.** As of today (day 13), following last Friday's drop for nonpayment, the overall headcount is down 1%. On the undergraduate side, it is down 5%, or 675 students. The graduate side is up 2%, or 87 students. Dual enrollments are up by 24%, which is offsetting some of the undergraduate decline. Overall credit hour is down about 2%.

c) **Course validation policy (policy change).** The UCGS approved new language for the catalog, stating that departments now can waive course validation, or decide how to validate courses from a list of options.

d) **Time limit for degree completion (policy change).** The UCGS approved a time limit change for master's programs requiring 36 hours or more. These now must be completed within 10 years.

e) **Co-authored journal articles in theses and dissertations (policy clarification).** The UCGS approved language regarding co-authored journal article use in theses and dissertations. This will appear in the online guidelines, not in the catalog.

f) **English proficiency minimums changed (policy change).** The UCGS approved slightly raising minimum requirements, as they are currently too low to ensure success for international students. The changes also bring the various test scales into line, and they align with the requirements of the university's peer institutions. These changes have been approved by the Balaji Krishnan, the Vice Provost for Global Initiatives, and they will need to be approved by the provost.

Programs can have higher score requirements than the Graduate School. The new Graduate School minimums would go into effect for the Spring 2024 admission cycle.

It has also become clear that even if a foreign university claims that its "medium of instruction is English," it is not enough to ensure the students' proficiency in English is sufficient. The Graduate School recommends that departments should require proficiency tests for even these students.

g) **Minimum degree requirements (proposed policy changes).** The UCGS is still working on language on the following topics:

i) **Candidacy forms.** At the master's level, the proposal is to remove the requirement of the submission of candidacy forms before the thesis is complete. Candidacy forms should be submitted by the Graduate School's deadline in the semester of graduation.

ii) **Continuous enrollment policy.** There is a proposal to remove the requirement that late-stage doctoral students be continuously enrolled, and that they must pay back tuition from previous semesters, since this discourages students from returning and completing their degrees. Departments will need to have a review process for readmitting students.

iii) **Leave of absence.** Taking a leave of absence should be an option for any student at any stage in their program. Retroactive approval will not be granted, although exceptions can be made in certain circumstances and with substantial acceptable documentation. While on a leave of absence, the clock stops and time away will not count toward degree completion time limit.

iv) **Comprehensive examination for doctoral students.** The proposal is that it will be up to departments to decide the content and format of their comprehensive exams.

v) **Late-stage candidacy for doctoral students.** Once doctoral students have passed their comps (and once this form is on file in the Graduate School), they can be classified as late stage. Students will not need to have passed their dissertation proposal to be considered late stage. Students can take dissertation hours prior to passing the comprehensive exam but cannot drop down to one hour until they are late stage. Dissertation hours should require a permit. All programs should specify the maximum number of dissertation hours which can be counted toward degree.

vi) **Foreign language requirement.** Language about such requirements will be dropped from the catalog, although programs will still be free to require it.

Once the final language for these proposals is determined and approved by the UCGS, R. Kreuz will share with the CAS graduate council.

h) **Health insurance.** A proposal is now before the Provost and Deans Council to offer health insurance for all students. The university received three bids, and the proposal is to accept one from Wellfleet. Only graduate students with assistantships will be subsidized by the university, and the cost split would be 60/40 (University paying 60%, student paying 40%). The student cost, for an individual plan, would be \$928 per year (or \$77 per month). The university's share would be \$1,391 per year per student on the plan. The university would not subsidize anyone but the student for those who opt to purchase family plans. This insurance would be required for international graduate assistants. For those who go home in the summer, there would be an option to purchase nine-month plans. As before, students could elect to stay on their parents' plans if eligible, and the Church health plan will still be an option.

How will the cost be managed? Dean Tollefsen's proposal is that some would be funded centrally, and the rest would come from a tax on the colleges, with each paying a share proportional to the number of its students opting for insurance. Given that CAS has the most graduate students at the UofM, CAS's total tax would be highest.

The Dean's Council heard Dean Tollefsen's proposal January 25th, and Dean Emmert stated he would find a way to make this work, given how important the issue is for students' quality of life, as well as for recruitment. More details will be shared as they become available.

Questions were raised: What co-pays or deductibles will be associated with this coverage? Will there be additional university funds to help with the cost for low-income students? R. Kreuz made a note of these questions and will relay them.

i) **Doctoral production to maintain R1 status.** The UofM needs to continue its production of doctoral graduate to maintain R1 status. Only 22 finished in Fall '22, although 62 have applied for Spring '23. If feasible, dissertation chairs should encourage their late-stage students to defend by May, as this will help the numbers for the current cycle. The deadline for applying to graduate for the spring is February 3.

j) **Upcoming meeting with Graduate School.** Dean Tollefsen has sent out invitations for the following meetings:

February 8: admissions and Slate

February 17: graduate coordinators and advisors (issues concerning current graduate students, forms, holds, and probation)

March 1: GA contracts

R. Kreuz asked that these dates be shared with the relevant staff. Anyone involved in these processes is strongly encouraged to attend. Recordings will be available.

3. Announcements/Reminders

a) **Web link changes.** The Graduate School updated several student forms last year, and the link to the comprehensive exam form has changed. Department web pages with these forms linked should be checked against the Graduate School forms page to make sure the most recent version is linked. If anyone has a form saved for use, they need to replace the outdated version with the new one.

b) **Graduate certificates.** Students should be enrolled in certificate programs when they begin that coursework, and not at the end. This causes problems for Peggy Callahan when students are applying for graduation, and they are not enrolled in a program.

c) **Course repeats.** When a course is repeated for a better grade, it is not automatically marked on the graduate record. An email must be sent to LaTorie Bradshaw, the records analysis coordinator in the Registrar's office, asking to have the course marked on the transcript. This can only be done twice. Until the repeat is marked, the first attempt will be included in the student's GPA.

4. New business

Fee waivers. Some programs are experiencing large numbers of international students requesting application fee waivers. The language on the Graduate Admissions website refers applicants seeking waivers to the department to which they are applying. R. Kreuz recommended departments add fee waiver request guidelines or information to their websites.

D. Baker shared that Chemistry grants quality-based fee waivers to 10-12 applicants per admission cycle. Applicants request waiver via a form on the Chemistry department website. R. Kreuz asked D. Baker to share the rubric with him. H. Sable asked about granting fee waivers based on financial aid eligibility.

R. Kreuz asked for any other new business. There was none.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for February 27, 2023.

R. Kreuz called for a motion to adjourn, which was made by J. Lariscy and seconded by E. Delavega. The meeting was adjourned at 3:56.

Prepared by S. Warren with notes from R. Kreuz and edited by R. Kreuz.