

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

MEETING: February 3, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: D. Baker, D. Burnette, R. Cohen, A. Daily, E. Delavega, S. Fleming, E. Groenendyk, J. Haddock, W. James, S. Keith, C. Powell, T. Roche, C. Santo, J. Scraba, X. Shen, O. Skalli, J. Topinka, M. Trapp, F. Vivar

MEMBERS ABSENT: none

PROXIES: none

Dr. Kreuz welcomed Francisco Vivar (World Languages & Literatures), who will serve on the Council during the Spring 2020 semester.

Dr. Kreuz reported that Ms. Tardugno is still on maternity leave.

Dr. Kreuz pointed out that on the updated agenda, the Special Topics deadline has been extended to February 11th. It took longer than expected to create the forms, but they are available online now.

1. Approval of the October 7 Graduate Council minutes

Dr. Kreuz asked if any changes or additions to the minutes were required. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve, which Dr. Delavega made and Dr. Daily seconded.

2. Course program of study, financial aid, and UMDegree

Dr. Kreuz reported that at the College Directors meeting on January 29, the possibility of federal audits for those receiving financial aid was discussed. What this means for graduate students is that the courses they take must be approved for a particular program of study.

This is being operationalized by the creation of UMDegree plans for graduate certificates and master's degrees. All the certificate programs have been finished, and work on the master's programs is nearly complete. The sticky issue is what to do about doctoral programs, which often have great flexibility with regard to coursework. That can be being kicked down the road to next year.

Other news from the College Directors meeting:

- a) GA allocations are being increased by 1.7% to account for the tuition increase.
- b) Graduate enrollment was up by 95 (2.4%) for the spring for the entire university.

c) the Graduate School's four counselors, who primarily dealt with data entry before UniCAS, have been RIFed. The Graduate School will rehire two of them to serve as counselors and fill the other two lines with staff who are needed to oversee the new process (such as systems specialists).

3. THEC degree program approvals

Dr. Kreuz reported that at the THEC meeting in Nashville on Friday, approval was granted for the DSW (SWRK) and the PhD program in PHYS. He thanked those who worked so hard to make these programs a reality.

4. COSSA representatives

Dr. Kreuz reported that last week, he forwarded a call to the social science chairs and Council reps from the dean of Arts & Science at UT Knoxville. She was encouraging faculty from the UofM to attend a social science advocacy day in Washington at the end of March. The event is organized by COSSA (the Consortium of Social Science Associations). The goal is to interact with state legislators. Jerry Watson from Social Work has agreed to attend.

5. New Graduate Faculty Status proposal

Dr. Kreuz reported that the Graduate School has been reviewing issues concerning graduate faculty status (GFS) over the past year. Earlier, a task force organized for this purpose proposed shrinking the number of GFS categories, and that has been done.

In addition, GFS is no longer required to teach graduate courses. SACS, the University's accrediting body, has its own set of criteria for that, and their rules are now followed for that purpose.

However, many on the Graduate Council felt that more substantive changes could be made. This semester, Dean Poston formed a larger task force, on which Dr. Kreuz is serving. The goal is to figure out ways to make the process less cumbersome for both the faculty and the staff, but that still ensures that students receive mentoring for their theses and dissertations from research-active faculty.

GFS at the UofM was originally implemented as a form of quality control, at a time, many years ago, when many faculty were primarily focused on teaching and were not research active. However, for the vast majority of faculty hired over the last 20 years or so, the assumption is that they will have significant research and mentoring responsibilities, so a mechanism designed to prevent non-research active faculty from directing dissertations has largely become irrelevant.

This raises the question of whether GFS is really needed. Roger Meier, the graduate coordinator in Civil Engineering, put in some time over the break to research how the university's peer institutions do this. To put it simply, everyone does it differently, and some have no GFS at all.

The task force met last Monday and came up with a radical restructuring of the GFS. It was presented to the College Directors last Wednesday, but only as a proposal. It will not go before the University Graduate Council until any changes deemed necessary have been made and everyone is comfortable with it.

The proposal is to have just three categories: Full, Associate, and External. Associate status will be the new default.

Associate status. All faculty who are hired with research or scholarship as part of their assigned duties (TT faculty) will automatically receive Associate status. They can serve on master's and doctoral committees, chair master's committees, and can co-chair dissertation committees. They do not have to apply for this status, and so of course there is no renewal process.

The failsafe to prevent non-research-active associates from chairing master's committees will be the committee appointment forms, since chairs have to sign off on committee membership.

Full status. Faculty who wish to chair dissertations must apply for GFS, as they do now. The criteria will be the same: six publications (or equivalents) during the previous six years. They will also have to apply for renewal every six years and show that they've had six publications since the last renewal. (This means that the renewal policy will have teeth once again. Over time, it has been watered down to "scholarly activity").

External status. This category is designed for committee members who are not UofM employees. They must hold a terminal degree in their field and may serve on master's and doctoral committees. No more than one external member can serve on any student committee. External status holders would not be allowed to chair or co-chair student committees. They also would not be allowed to serve on the University Council for Graduate Studies.

They would apply by submitting a CV, and the department would supply an explanation regarding the qualifications of the individual and the anticipated role they would play in the graduate program. These would be submitted to the relevant Director of Graduate Studies. External status would be granted for a three-year period.

This new system would greatly reduce the paperwork, record keeping, and effort that is now being expended on this process. For faculty in departments without doctoral programs, they would never have to submit any paperwork to obtain or renew GFS. And the renewal process for full GFS would now have teeth and ensure that doctoral students are being mentored by faculty who are maintaining active research programs.

Dr. Kreuz asked if there were any questions or concerns about this proposal. There was broad agreement that the changes would be welcomed.

6. Applicants from Iran

Dr. Powell expressed concerns that students from Iran are being denied entry to the US even if they have valid visas. If offers are made to excellent applicants from Iran who cannot enter the

country, then the university misses out on the chance to make offers to other well qualified students. Dr. Burnette suggested that departments should work with the Center for International Education Services (CIES) to address any issues that arise.

7. WebAdmit and Liaison issues

Dr. Daily reported that he was experiencing issues with applications that are incomplete because of pending transcripts. He has informed the Graduate School about the issue, but they are saying that it is an applicant issue. Other Council members reported having similar problems.

Dr. Trapp reported that her department was having problems with issuing reviewing assignments.

Dr. Cohen reported that a request to have students self-report their GPAs has not (yet) been added.

8. Timing of dissertation hours

Dr. Fleming asked for input with regard to how other departments handle the timing of dissertation hours. A common solution seems to be to attach the comprehensive exam to some other requirement that occurs earlier in the program instead of waiting until the dissertation proposal defense.

9. International GA credit hour requirements and visa status

Dr. Baker reported that students on F1 visas and who are ABD can drop down to one hour of credit for registration purposes. He verified this with Dr. Laumann in CIES. This has the potential for significant savings in departments with large number of international students.

10. Fellowship writing workshops for NSF GRFP proposals

Dr. Baker reported that he is working with Cody Behles in Research and Innovation to expand a program of writing workshops for NSF GRFPs (Graduate Research Fellowship Proposals) to departments beyond Chemistry. Last year, they had nine GAs and one undergraduate go through a series of workshops and submit GRFP grants. He would like to see this number increase significantly next fall, and for this effort to expand out to other departments. The assistance of other faculty would be greatly appreciated.

Motion to adjourn

Dr. Kreuz asked for a motion to approve, which was made by Dr. Roche. Dr. Trapp seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Minutes prepared by Roger Kreuz