

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

MEETING: February 26, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: T. Brewster, S. Brown, E. Choi, A. Daily, E. Delavega, D. Downey, W. Duffy, J. Lariscy, T. Maclin, J. McCutcheon, A. Mickelson, E. Nelson, S. Pollard, H. Sable, K. Saghafi, C. Santo, F. Vivar, T. Watson, B. Zheng

MEMBERS ABSENT: E. Groenendyk, V. Rus

PROXIES: N/A

PRESIDING: R. Kreuz

1. Approval of the minutes from the January 29, 2024 Council meeting

E. Delavega made a motion to approve the minutes. E. Nelson seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

2. Reports from meetings with the Graduate School

February 2 UCGS meeting:

a) Double (and triple dipping) with graduate certificates

Dean Tollefsen has formed a subcommittee to address this issue. Some students are getting multiple graduate certificates for taking the same courses, and in some cases, there is no difference between a program's degree requirements and the certificate. She identified this as an issue in Computer Science, Data Science, Social Work, and MSIS (Master of Science in information systems, in Fogelman). Students should be able to double dip only 20% of their credit hours.

This may create problems for accreditation, and it came up as a problem with the UofM's ABM programs. Colton Cockrum will meet with the subcommittee to help set policy, and something will need to be added to our catalog to address this.

b) Subcommittee on probation and termination

Dean Tollefsen has formed a subcommittee to explore these issues. Both of these have been at high level of both since 2020. We need to dig into the data to find out why. Is it due to an increase in the number of graduate students? Is it an issue in only some programs? Are there certain courses that are tripping our students up?

We also don't have the same information for tracking probation status that's available at the undergraduate level. The UG level uses the term GPA for standing; a term GPA below 2.0 puts them on probation. The Graduate School only has data on *cumulative* GPA, so we don't really know who is at risk. We need to tie probation to term GPA rather than cumulative GPA.

Currently, our policy is that a cumulative GPA for more than two semesters might trigger termination. The subcommittee will research policies at other universities, such as suspension and termination, and determine how such policies could be instituted here.

Ryan Crews will pull data and communicate this to departments, and Darla will initially join the subcommittee. CAS will be represented on this subcommittee by S. Warren. Ideally, they will have a set of recommendations by August.

c) **New Catalog and Catalog proofs**

The 24-25 catalog will be released in early March. Proofs will be sent as soon as they are available. Departments need to check them immediately and carefully to make sure there are no issues.

Dean Tollefsen urged departments to start thinking about next year's changes in April so that when the forms are available in August, they will be ready for submission.

If any departments are considering new certificates, concentrations, or degree programs, they must talk to Dean Tollefsen first. She can help to identify potential issues at the very beginning. Loop Dr. Kreuz in early as well so that he can keep Dean Parrill informed.

February 14 College Director's meeting:

d) **Digital Badging**

MK Tyler, the Director of UG Student Leadership and Involvement, gave a presentation about digital badging and credentialing software developed by Milestone. The University currently has a three-year contract for this service.

This system could also be used for graduate certificates, although it wouldn't appear on student transcripts. It could be a way to acknowledge achievements or certain skills. Multiple badges could be combined into credentials. Students would keep their badge profiles after graduation.

There would be tight control over badge creation, and the program allows them to be issued in bulk. This is being done at the undergraduate level for the dean's list, those who participate in weeks of welcome, and for Frosh Camp counselors.

Milestone has been acquired by Blackboard, which is a large, established company. Digital badging has become prevalent in the IT and business worlds, so employers understand this system and may even expect applicants to have them. R. Kreuz can put anyone interested in more information in touch with MK Tyler.

e) **Criteria for full-time graduate status**

Dean Tollefsen hosted a graduate student funding Q&A, during which she reviewed the criteria to be in place in the fall for who counts as a full-time graduate student. It is important to define this precisely, since subsidized health benefits will be offered to this group only. There is now a web page that makes funding and funding guidelines clear.

February 22 Graduate Recruitment and Enrollment Advisory Board meeting:

R. Kreuz is serving on this subcommittee. Two important issues were discussed during their last meeting.

f) **Pilot recruitment program**

Dean Tollefsen is identifying programs that she believes could benefit from targeted marketing campaigns. The plan is to give priority to those programs that can accommodate a greater number of tuition-paying master's students. She has identified three programs to target: the English MA in Technical writing and 2 outside of CAS. During the meeting, the pros and cons of internal campaigns and hiring a marketing firm were discussed. The firm would devise very targeted communication to generate good leads.

g) **Inquiry forms in Slate**

There are over 100 unread inquiries currently in Slate. Apparently, there is no alert system for when new inquiries come in, so Dean Tollefsen asks that programs check bins frequently. You should send the information via Slate, and then cancel their registration. This clears the inquiry from the queue but keeps the person in the system.

Several members reported that they do not have inquiry bins, nor had they ever been made aware of this aspect of Slate. R. Kreuz will follow up with Dean Tollefsen and report back.

3. New Business

a) **Report from Morehouse College recruiting event**

D. Downey, E. Delavega, B. Zheng, and A. Daily traveled to this event in Atlanta three weeks ago. R. Kreuz asked for feedback and thoughts on future such events.

D. Downey created a QR code to capture student interest. She will be sending the student information via email to those Council members whose programs had interested students after the meeting. For future events, her recommendation is to create a shorter questionnaire about CAS programs. There was also interest in the UofM in general and programs outside of CAS, so a UofM provided QR code would be helpful.

A. Daily shared that it was a Graduate Program and Career fair, and the career fair section was in a more heavily trafficked area and very separate from the graduate program section, which caused them to be easily missed.

B. Zheng agreed that their position was not advantageous and seconded Davia's QR code idea.

E. Delavega noted that we were lacking in the swag area when compared to other universities in attendance. She feels future events need to be represented by the university as a whole and not one college. They spent a lot of time fielding questions about other UofM colleges and programs.

b) **Ole Miss recruiting fair**

This event is coming up a week from tomorrow. CAS will be represented in Oxford by A. Daily for the humanities and T. Brewster for the natural sciences. If you're in those divisions, please make sure to get them handouts or swag.

c) **College Research Council**

On February 7, Associate Dean Brondo announced the creation of the CAS Research Council. This is something that the College has been planning for a while and will bring us to parity with the other colleges that already have them, and to align with the university's strategic plan goal #4 ("strengthen the research enterprise.")

The College is not trying to increase the departments' service obligations, so members will be elected from the College's three divisions, initially for 1- and 2-year terms. If you're interested in serving, Dr. Brondo's email included a link to a survey that must be completed by March 1. You can serve on both our Graduate Council and on our Research Council.

How this will affect the CAS Graduate Council: The official name of our council is the "College of Arts & Sciences Research and Graduate Studies Council," but it is primarily devoted to curricular issues and implementing Graduate School policies. This body does not do much with research initiatives, so it makes sense to have another body take on those responsibilities.

This body has been the group that makes faculty and graduate student awards. It makes sense to have the research-oriented awards run by the new Council, and the PDA committee and the Alumni Association Awards are two that would fit well with the new Council. We might still be asked to provide

committee members for those awards, since the Research Council will be smaller, but those details will be ironed out soon.

R. Kreuz asked that a name change be considered, which would involve dropping the word “research” from the name of this body. Please take this information back to your departments and see if there are issues that haven’t yet been considered. At the end of the March meeting, there will be time allotted for discussion and to see if anyone wants to advance a motion for a name change.

d) Future Meeting Times

For many years, these monthly meetings have been held on Mondays from 3-4. R. Kreuz is aware that this creates an issue for members who have after-school childcare responsibilities and would be open to shifting the meetings to mid-afternoons, maybe 1:30 to 2:30, or to 2-3. Several members of the Council expressed support for changing the meeting time, starting in the fall. At the March meeting, the Council will discuss further and make a final decision.

Marketing manager

The College has hired Kira McNeil, our first Manager for Marketing and Communication (this was announced to the faculty in an email on February 5). She comes to us after 12 years working with the Memphis Area Association of Realtors as their communications director. She’ll be working with just a few departments as she gets her bearings in our large college.

Adjournment: C. Santo made a motion to adjourn. H. Sable seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Minutes prepared by S. Warren with notes supplied by R. Kreuz and augmented with a recording of the meeting; edited by R. Kreuz