

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2021

1. Approval of December Minutes
 - a. Approved unanimously
2. Grad Council Meeting Dates for Spring 2021 – always second Wednesday of the month
 - a. February 10
 - b. March 10
 - c. April 14
3. Announcements
 - a. Spring 2021 Semester reopening
 - i. Onboarding new and returning grad/professional students
 - Reminder that everyone needs to be oriented, especially wrt testing, mask protocols, and other covid-related requirements
 - If they're a new student who falls under OGPS's purview, inform us so that we can add them to the Canvas course for access to our orientation materials and other resources
 - Special focus on masters students who may be new to campus
 - ii. Update on travel ban and international students
 - We have more students who are here this spring in person who were remote in fall
 - For TAs and RAs, students still have to have a US bank account and approved I-9, other requirements. Departments need to approve anyone who is working remote. More complicated if they are an RA, but this is essentially the same as it's been in the past semester. Coordination with HR and general counsel's office may be needed.
 - iii. COVID entry testing for graduate students, also staff and faculty
 - Encouragement to get tested as early as possible because appointments will fill up with undergrads when they return
 - Grad students will be tested more often this semester, surveillance testing. If a person is symptomatic, then they should go to the doctor as a first point of contact.
 - If students are local, they can get tested on campus
 - b. Deadline for sending in materials for Grad Council review – 1st Wednesday of the month
 - i. Please note that we need materials at least one week before our meetings to allow people to be able to review them before we meet
 - c. International student group within the Counseling Center
 - i. Lauren L met with them and grad student leaders. She noted that there are a couple of offerings – dissertation support group and stress reduction group – specifically for grad students. Counseling Center is looking into expanding some of this graduate focused support.
 - Mike noted that there are uptown and downtown counseling centers

- Also that they will start groups if they have a guaranteed group of people interested who will attend
 - ii. Lauren L. noted that there are some counselors specifically interested in and experienced with international students, including some who speak languages other than English
- d. Canvas sites – OGPS, OGPS Academic Support, OGPS Career Support
 - i. OGPS general course is for everyone we serve, general resources, including online orientation materials
 - ii. OGPS Academic Support – Lauren’s course – workshops, appointments, resources for academic needs
 - iii. OGPS Career Support – Briana’s course -- workshops, appointments, resources for career needs
 - iv. This semester, because of requests from students to minimize notices they get, we will have a single announcement on Monday mornings. This will highlight that week’s workshops and any other events; secondarily will note grad student-specific programming e.g. library, counseling, OISS
 - v. If any Grad Council members want to be added to the OGPS general course, please inform Lauren and she will add you. Same thing if there are faculty colleagues that want to be added.
- e. OGPS Workshops for Spring 2021
 - i. These will be posted on our website soon
 - ii. Students will be directed to details and registration in the relevant Canvas course
 - iii. We will have a list of all the workshops for the semester soon – this will be shared with everyone (incl GC) within the week
 - Vijay J. requested a flyer with a brief description to be able to share with current prospective students
 - Lauren L. and Briana M. confirmed that we expect we can have this ready by Friday; Diane B. would like to share with prospective students on Fri.
 - iv. Katherine A. is working on putting up web pages with resources for their doctoral students, so please share resources with her, especially wrt people writing their own bios.
 - Mike noted that often this is program-specific; some are very extensive, others just lists
- f. Conference of Southern Graduate Schools/Conference of Historically Black Graduate Schools Virtual Conference (February 23-26); registration is free
 - i. Both meetings, which are always held concurrently, have free registration this year
 - ii. Region goes from TX to VA/MD
 - iii. If you would like to attend, let us know and we’ll help coordinate registration
- g. Work on the NSF-NIH Survey of Graduate Students and Postdocs in Science and Engineering has begun. Impacted departments have begun to be contacted and OGPS appreciates all assistance in completing this important survey.
 - i. This info feeds into AAU analytics

- ii. Jennifer usually contacts staff within departments who work with these populations
- 4. CELT Graduate Student Pedagogy Program – first course starts Spring 21
 - a. 7000-level course
 - b. Open to grad students and postdocs
 - c. This is a credit-bearing course for grad students
- 5. Biochemistry and Molecular Biology program name change – vote needed
 - a. Mike noted that this name change was done over a decade ago, but the Registrar does not have a record of this, so this vote would be to make it official to reflect the way the program has been being referred to
 - b. Vijay J. noted a similar issue with chemical engineering; in 2003, they'd tried to make an official change with the Registrar's office and were told it was too difficult, so it never happened; suggests this may be a good time to look at other programs with similar situations
 - c. Diane B. noted that the SIP codes for programs can be helpful in making this change with the Registrar
 - d. Approved unanimously – motion passes
- 6. PhD Student Issues Task Force
 - a. If you would like to serve on this task force, please ID yourself to Mike or another staff person in OGPS
 - b. Grad students will be on this task force
 - c. National Postdoctoral Association Conference - April 15 – 16
 - d. Tulane is a member and this year they are offering a bulk rate, which we are considering
 - e. Let us know if you would like to attend and we'll take this into consideration in deciding about the bulk registration rate -- ogps@tulane.edu
 - f. We'll announce again at the Feb. Grad Council meeting
- 7. Recommendation from GC to the university's Senate Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) regarding completion of "I" on the transcript
 - a. Mike discussed this issue with the Registrar about removing the "I" from the transcript when a changed grade is submitted
 - b. This is not a SACS or a Dept of Education issue, it is a Tulane issue and policy, apparently from the 70s
 - c. Registrar informed Mike that they would need a vote to change this
 - i. If we want to take this to CEP for a vote, we need the support from faculty across the university; Mike would like to take this to the academic deans
 - ii. This may not be such a big issue for PhD students because their transcripts aren't often reviewed, but it can be for masters students who seek to do additional graduate work
 - iii. Fred W. asked if this would also apply to undergrads too; answer is yes. Mike has spoken with Lee Skinner about this matter and she is in favor of the change for undergrads
 - iv. It was Virginia O. who brought this forward last semester from SLA and Tom A. reiterated that SLA is strongly in support of this
 - v. Diane B. asked for clarification about what they need to do in terms of communicating with deans, etc. Mike can send forward the recommendation of Grad Council that this go for a vote with CEP. He will go to the academic deans and provost; will also include Lee Skinner.

- d. Approved unanimously – motion passed
- 8. Graduate/Professional Student Grade Policy – two votes
 - a. This policy does not include any of the professional programs throughout the university
 - b. SPHTM noted that they would still have PhDs and MSs included; they had just clarified that their professional programs wouldn't be covered by this policy
 - c. Tom A. noted that the incomplete policy above is part of this language; Mike stated that this would be removed from the policy if it passes a CEP vote.
 - d. SOPA would be able to have their own policy? Mike clarified that this would apply to all MS's, MA's, MFA's in any school.
 - e. Tom A. asked about if there is any info about how much time can pass/deadline on withdrawing; Mike said he doesn't think so -- this is a registrar policy that's university wide.
 - f. Vote #1 – To approve the revised grade policy – policy passed unanimously
 - g. Vote #2 – To remove from this policy the wording about incomplete grades, if CEP votes to make the change – policy passed unanimously
 - h. Katherine A. noted
 - i. This would go into effect in Fall of 2021, so anyone who starts a program before then, this won't apply to them; Mike confirmed that we cannot change requirements in the middle of someone's program
 - i. Tom A. requested a final, cleaned-up version be shared; Mike confirmed we will send it out to everyone
 - j. Diane B. asked if any current students would have this changed on their records; Mike said no.
- 9. Other questions
 - a. Katherine A. is wondering about travel funds for site visits that they'd applied for.
 - i. Mike said we'll communicate out about this within the next week.
- 10. Meeting adjourned at 9:15 AM.