

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

November 11, 2020

M. Cunningham, L. Lukkarila, J. O'Brien-Brown, J. Clarke (substitute for C. Fee), M. Lewis, D. Blake, A. Reusch, M. Russo, A. Childress, L. Dornier, G. Morris, F. Wietfeldt, K. Haugeberg, V. John, T. Cole, V. Oliveros, C. Pealer, K. Andrinopoulos, T. Albrecht

1. Meeting called at 8:31
2. Approval of October Minutes, corrections: page 2, vaccine trial is in SOM, not BMS, item 10 name change was biochemistry and applied bioinformatics. With edits, motioned to approve by F. Wietfeldt, second by D. Blake
3. Grad Council Meeting Dates for Fall 2020
 - a. December 9
4. Announcements
 - a. OGPS Fellows – three fellows, from SLA, SSE, and BMS. They can help us connect to the graduate population
 - b. The meeting invitations are private, but the information is not. Please make sure you're taking back information to your schools
 - c. COVID exit testing for graduate students. The university wants to make sure that we test students before leaving so that we don't send infected students off. Before students leave, they should get an email to schedule a test
 - d. Spring 2021 Semester reopening
 - i. All that is concrete right now is the schedule
 1. No spring break, but there will be days off scattered throughout the semester
 - ii. Will most likely look quite a bit like the onboarding for Fall 2020
 1. Grad students often stay later and return earlier than undergraduates, so we want to make sure they are accommodated
 2. Buildings may not be put into the winter settings because there will be a lot of prep for Spring
 - iii. Onboarding new and returning grad/professional students – make sure there is some kind of equivalent for new students. For OGPS served students, let us know and we can make sure they are added to the OGPS online orientation
 - iv. Update on travel ban and international students. As of now, there are no changes to the general university ban on travel. If you need an exception, you should email Ana Lopez in Academic Affairs. Our hope is that next semester we'll be able to loosen this. First time graduate students are still a challenge to pay as RAs or TAs if they have not been to the US. If a

student is working remotely, we are working with General Counsel to review any international students who are going to be working remotely. TAs were fairly likely to be approved, RAs are less likely because of data exportation laws.

- v. Is there a particular testing protocol for students who reside in New Orleans? They should still be tested before the end of the semester. Buildings and labs may be open for work. Please give your associate dean a list of which students will be on campus between the semesters.
 - e. Council for Graduate Schools virtual conference 12/2-12/4. Because it's virtual, we hope it will be more accessible. If more than 3 people attend, the registration is \$199 per person. If you're interested in going, or if someone from your department is, please let us know.
5. Three Minute Thesis – November 18 at 1 pm
- a. Competitors from SLA, SSE, BMS, and SPHTM.
 - b. Great opportunity to spread graduate education, and see what is being done across the university
 - c. Prizes for the winner and the people's choice
 - d. The winner goes on to the regional competition at Southern Conference of Graduate Schools. Tulane has had a student win the regional competition
 - e. LA Graduate Deans want to have a Louisiana competition in the spring
6. Graduate/Professional School Grading Policies
- a. Information request. We have a grading policy where if a student gets a B-, it's automatic probation. If they get 2 B-, then the department has to justify why the student should continue. Less than a B- doesn't count for credit.
 - b. What are other schools doing? Do Cs count toward credits?
 - c. Graduate school is not just about passing classes/proficiency, but about mastery.
 - d. Redistribute grade policy?
 - e. Business school grades on a curve. Set that the average is B in a core class, B+ in an elective, so it is absolutely possible to have a C.
 - f. Law school average is just below a B+, but the range goes from C- to A+. Ds and Fs are given. Law School registrar will send to OGPS
 - g. We may need to add exceptions for the professional schools that do have exceptions. Will come back to this in the December meeting.
7. BMS: New MS program in Medical Bioinformatics. Approved by BMS steering committee and dean. No question. Motion to approve by L. Dornier, C. Pealer seconded. All in favor.
8. GRE is optional for fall applications. Programs that decide not to use it must provide rationale and track their data. If programs think that the GRE is the barrier, you must track this and whether it changes anything. Data nationwide doesn't bear this out. There is a sunset clause for 5 years from now.

- a. Without the GRE, other unconscious biases can come in. GPAs change depending on the type of school.
 - b. If a program needs help with holistic admissions, M. Cunningham can help.
 - c. Holisticadmissions.org is available to help with some resources (this source is provided by the GRE) (post on OGPS website)
 - d. Program has the authority, with their dean's permission to make the GRE optional
 - e. Can we send out the four things we're supposed to collect to track for departments going GRE optional?
 - f. If there are faculty who want to speak with the GRE board, Mike can put that together.
9. Motion to adjourn at 9:05, motioned by F. Wietfeldt, seconded by T. Albrecht, all in favor.