

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

March 25, 2020

M. Cunningham, J. O'Brien-Brown, D. Blake, M. Zender, A. Childress, L. Pratt, M. Lewis, L. Dornier, G. Morris, C. Pealer, T. Albrecht, C. Fee, J. Ruscher, B. Mohan, V. John, K. Haugeberg, C. Ducat, A. Sacramento, J. Jayawickramarajah

1. Meeting called at 9:00 am
2. Approval of February Minutes, change the title to "Minutes." Motioned by A. Childress, J. Ruscher seconded, all in favor.
3. Announcements
 - a. General University Updates
 - i. Undergraduate who had been isolated as tested negative for CoVid-19
 - ii. Fewer than 400 students on campus (not including Deming), about 1800 are still living in New Orleans off campus, most of whom are graduate or professional students.
 - iii. Grade policy for undergraduates in graduate level courses (4+1)
 1. This is not a policy change but a temporary change, which is why the deans made the decision. No blanket policy for undergraduate students in graduate courses (6000 level).
 2. Will these choices be made school wide? No, 4+1 program wide. Currently the policy is no for graduate courses, but we're not sure 4+1 course were discussed.
 - iv. Law School is going to a similar pass fail system for larger classes
 - v. Architecture is planning to extend the option to graduate students
 - b. OGPS Updates
 - i. We're meeting regularly
 - ii. Briana is still meeting with students
 - c. Emergency aid for graduate and professional students
 - i. Will send out link
 - ii. Grants of about \$400, GAPSAs contributed \$40,000
 - iii. Some grants are for joint resources, such as tax advice for international students
 - d. Temporary policies for dissertation and master's thesis defenses, also applies to capstone projects that would have a committee
 - i. Remote participation
 - ii. After the student completes, there is a form saying that the student has successfully completed. This form is turned into the graduate office of each school. It can be electronically signed.

- iii. For students who do dissertations, they still must upload their final project to Proquest.
 - iv. All dissertations and theses must be archived with original signatures on the front page. We set a preliminary deadline of within 30 days, this could be extended
 - v. If schools need it to certify degrees, they can use that form saying that students have completed rather than the final copy of the dissertation/thesis.
 - vi. MFA students still need to submit CDs
 - e. Travel grants
 - i. Still working as though the university will be up and running in the summer
 - ii. Graduate Students are being made whole if need be. Summer funding cycle has not started
 - iii. Postdocs are being made whole if need be. Summer funding has closed, many postdocs with promising conferences applied
 - iv. COR grants (not for graduate students, general update). Money will not roll over to next year if unused this year
 - v. LB grants (not for graduate students, general update). Applications were received but haven't been processed. Review will hopefully be done within the next month
 - f. PhD Reviewer visit cancelled
 - i. Motion to move all PhD reviews back one academic year to accommodate the coronavirus disruption. T. Albrecht motioned, Gil seconded, all in favor
 - ii. This year's review has been postponed until Spring 2021
 - iii. We'll revise the schedule online
 - iv. We'll probably ask departments to provide a one page addendum
 - g. PhD and Master's Hooding Ceremony, 5/15, 11 am
 - i. Still planning on having the ceremony
- 4. Grad Council Meeting Dates for Spring 2020
 - o April 15
 - o April 22 – Directors of Graduate Studies/Graduate Admissions Officers
 - o May 13 – if needed
- 5. School of Medicine, Biomedical Sciences: Bioinformatics Proposal
 - a. 2 year masters program in biochemistry and bioinformatic sciences
 - b. There is concern from the provost about the bioinformatics title since the proposal is light on the bioinformatics content
 - c. This is an adaptation of the biomolecular and biochemistry master's program since faculty are including a lot more bioinformatics in their research

- d. There is one required bioinformatics course and students will be strongly encouraged to take a second course, but it is elective
 - e. All students will be doing bioinformatics research in the second year, so though the didactic curriculum looks light, they will be doing a lot of the material. It's not clear in the proposal, however, that their research would be bioinformatics. If it is included in the proposal that the other courses have shifted substantially towards bioinformatics, that could help
 - f. Have they looked at other bioinformatics programs and seen what they do with courses?
 - g. BMS could talk to the Computer Science department to see if there are courses that they could work with (talk to Ramgopal Mettu and Sam Landry). Ram is listed as affiliate faculty for the program, but none of his courses are listed
 - h. Dean Hamm and Dean Foster (and Dean LaVeist if applicable) will need to talk about this if students are taking courses across schools, since masters students can't freely take courses across schools due to tuition issues. Make sure to get any agreement in writing.
 - i. Background from Gil Morris: It is clear that most researchers across SOM are doing more research that involves bioinformatics
 - j. If BMS can add more of the didactic information, we will hold an electronic vote on the proposal
6. Question about research as an essential function?
- a. Grad students can still come to work to do research, provided they are following social distancing protocols
 - b. LBC is open? The building is open, functioning as a work space that is socially distant with no gatherings or events. It provides an option for students that don't have internet at home to attend their courses. The Commons is being kept open for students who are still living on campus. Only a certain number of students are allowed in at a time, food is for take out only.
 - c. Security has been increased on both Uptown and Downtown campus to help prevent theft while fewer people are on campus
7. PhD time to degree
- a. There will be no blanket clock-stoppage. If any student is in a program longer than 7 years, there's already a conversation between the department and school. If a student's research is disrupted by this, then it can be addressed at that point
8. Meeting adjourned at 9:59, motioned by J. Ruscher, seconded by M. Lewis