

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2020

M. Cunningham, J. O'Brien-Brown, S. Hassig, K. Haugeberg, L. Pratt, A. Childress, G. Morris, L. Dornier, B. Mohan, M. Zender, S. Mellman, T. Albrecht, V. John, D. Blake, F. Wietfeldt, E. Fee, J. Ruscher

1. Meeting called at 9:02, meeting was recorded through Zoom
2. Approval of March Minutes, motioned by L. Dornier, seconded by T. Albrecht, all in favor.
3. Grad Council Meeting Dates for Spring 2020
 - April 22 – Directors of Graduate Studies/Graduate Admissions Officers
 - May 13 – may be cancelled if we don't have enough material. That being said, there have been so many changes it should be kept in everyone's schedule
4. Announcements
 - a. General University Updates
 - i. Degrees will be conferred virtually on May 16 and commencement celebrations are being rescheduled for the Fall
 1. Mayor has said that all festivals will be cancelled for the remainder of the year. We are not sure what that will mean for our commencement
 - ii. The university has been doing a lot of modelling about what could happen in the fall – for instance, if we have to start late, start in a hybrid model, etc. We will share any information that we get.
 - iii. Town hall for graduate and professional students with President Fitts, tonight at 5:30 pm
 1. Biggest challenge is that graduate studies are so decentralized. Some schools give a lot of information, some don't. Many questions will be school dependent.
 2. The Board is also interested in how graduate and professional students are faring.
 3. Postdocs should attend the staff town hall tomorrow.
 4. No hiring freeze for postdocs or faculty. There is a temporary freeze for new hires for staff, but we're not sure how long it will last.
 - b. OGPS Updates
 - i. SREB Fellows have accepted – one is in Anthropology, one in Public Health. These are students who are underrepresented by national standards, get extra support, and funding

- ii. Advocacy for graduate and professional students with the administration
 - 1. Working with departments and schools about summer funding, and using money for travel to support grad students over the summer.
 - 2. A lot of fiscal decisions are based on academic deans, so we are trying to make sure that graduate students are considered.
 - 3. Provost is still holding off on a final decision about going GRE test optional. Students can still take the GRE and TOEFL online. We want to make sure that we are getting excellent students; if you don't have test scores immediately, we doubt you'll be asked for it, but we want you to be confident in your students. Public Health is test optional for the fall, Law has some amount of optionality. We may still ask for these scores later in the fall to get a sense of our students in a standardized way.
 - iii. Website to promote graduate programs that are still taking applications: <https://ogps.tulane.edu/content/welcome-office-graduate-and-postdoctoral-studies>
 - 1. Worked with Amjad Ayoubi of NTC to create options for undergraduates whose offers have been rescinded
 - 2. These are programs with rolling deadlines or extended deadlines
 - 3. Search engine will be unveiled in the next couple of weeks
 - 4. More 4+1 programs with other selective colleges and universities?
 - a. This could be combined with traditional master's degrees where students who have taken graduate level courses at non-Tulane institutions getting credit for those.
 - b. Concerns about double-dipping with credits used to complete the undergraduate degree and the graduate degree. We currently only allow 6 credits to count for both degrees. Credits beyond 120 can be applied to the graduate degree.
 - 5. We are starting to centralize some information about graduate studies due to the current situation
 - c. Emergency aid for graduate and professional students
 - i. Over \$50,000 has been awarded to date
 - 1. These are small grants; a webcam, help to travel home
 - 2. A lot of the funds for this came from GAPSA
 - ii. We need more support for graduate and professional students
5. Summer support for graduate students
- a. Fellowships for the summer
 - b. Medical students haven't been able to do all of their rotations. Tonette Krousel-Woods assured us that the faculty are working to make sure that all students get their hours

- c. Tulane medical students have been switching to Zoom Health for telemedicine
6. Vote on confirming that the academic deans can adjust grading policies for the Spring 2020 semester
 - a. Several deans have made these decisions for their schools
 - b. This is a retrospective vote of affirmation. Everyone has had to move very quickly and we want to confirm this for them.
 - c. Vote was conducted by Zoom, all in favor.
7. Zoom sessions from CELT have been very useful
 - a. Breakout rooms have been good
 - b. Waiting rooms have been useful for honor board hearings in the Law School
8. Online proposals
 - a. S. Hassig had a seminar for presentation and the dissertation defense itself and it worked very well. Everything went smoothly and recording was great.
 - b. BMS has had 7 defenses with excellent participation – 40 to 50 attendees in some cases
 - c. Breakout room was helpful to host the PhD defendant while the committee deliberated
 - d. Dissertations can be uploaded to ProQuest without the original signatures, and departments/schools can confirm that the student has met all requirements by email (they should copy all committee members on these emails)
9. Motion to dismiss M. Zender, seconded by L. Dornier. Meeting adjourned at 9:44.