

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2020

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

1. Meeting called at 9:01
2. Approval of May Minutes, motioned by M. Lewis, seconded by J. Ruscher, all in favor
3. Shutdown Academia for Black Lives – grassroots movement to change business as usual within academia
4. Grad Council Meeting Dates for Summer 2020
 - a. July 8
 - b. August 12
5. Announcements
 - a. General University Updates
 - i. Town hall for graduate students last night, should be transcribed on the president's website
 1. Health center fee and insurance may be bundled for students who are on stipends
 2. International students are a cause of a lot of concern, particularly for new students who may not arrive in time for the fall.
 3. Classes are being moved to spaces that are bigger than needed as classes must be at 50% capacity
 - ii. Unemployment for graduate students
 - iii. Emergency aid for graduate and professional students
 1. Some schools, GAPSA have contributed
 - b. OGPS Updates
 - i. OGPS Newsletter
 1. Grad Council members will be on the list
 - ii. Advocacy for graduate and professional students with the administration
 1. Mike met with Solidarity about their concerns
6. New membership in Grad Council
 - a. Introductions: Craig Clarkson, guest
7. OGPS Orientation plans
 - a. Will be virtual
 - b. Need for representatives from SSE, SLA, and BMS
 - c. Can make our outline available
8. Registering international travel with Global Rescue

- a. Internal audit of travel is ongoing
 - b. Because grad students don't purchase most of their airfare through Concur, it doesn't happen automatically
 - c. It doesn't cost travelers anything
 - d. It should be done regardless of the country of travel, not just for "risky" locations
 - e. Itineraries that go across multiple places can create challenges
9. Incomplete (I) grading policy
- a. The registrar's office is concerned about consistency
 - b. An incomplete on a student's transcript can mean they are not in good standing
 - c. The I cannot be on the transcript indefinitely – it impacts student standing, and an I is not in good standing.
 - d. SLA has many similar requirements as the proposed policy but uses a lot of "should" rather than must. They feel that it is too similar to the policy for the undergraduates and that it also may infringe upon faculty governance if the registrar's office automatically changes grades. It may also present logistical issues if faculty aren't as responsive as they need to be.
 - e. In SPHTM, students are usually aware that there are issues based on advising earlier in the semester. The student knows it is their responsibility to have a plan to resolve I's if they can't be resolved within 30 days.
 - f. The context of CoVid – many of these incompletes are a result of student illness and this could go against the ethos of generosity and flexibility that we are trying to encourage.
 - g. Many of the things that would require an incomplete are not resolvable in 30 days, especially given that many courses might only be offered once a year, for instance. This year, many students have had to receive incompletes because their labs weren't open so they couldn't complete their work.
 - h. The consequences of an F on a transcript for graduate students are devastating, but an I on a transcript also indicates the student is not in good standing.
 - i. Is there something else that an I could change to that would similarly prevent graduation but not be an F?
 - j. Overwhelming support for something that extends the time and converts I's to something other than an F. It would not allow them to graduate. Perhaps the time line is 2 years for PhD student and 1 year for a master's student.
 - k. In BMS, at the point of taking prelims, the faculty review the students' transcripts and make sure that everything is in order
 - l. We will take this back to the registrar and see if there are auditing or accreditation concerns
 - m. Can this be tabled until after the worst of the CoVid crisis has passed?
Alternatively, it might actually be good to clarify this now since so many students and faculty who may be using incompletes more right now.

10. Biomedical Sciences – Pharmacology MS course change
 - a. Students have been asking for a better foundation in patho-physiology and physiology in this course. This proposal is to add extra content.
 - b. It changes the course to have about 10% more material that is not graded.
 - c. This change may not be able to be in effect for Fall 2020, but could be for Fall 2021. Students were admitted to the course under the old curriculum. How will this be managed? If it is impossible to run two variations of the course, then it would be best to shelve this for a year.
 - d. Is it possible to offer this as an option for students to matriculate with one plan or the other?
 - e. Was replacing a 1-credit community service requirement that is unlikely to be feasible in light of CoVid.
 - f. Interim solution – a one-credit special topics to cover the extra material so that it's easier to decouple the requirements. There are valid pedagogical arguments for the additional material, which may allow this to work for this year.
 - g. If there are multiple versions, make sure that all faculty and advisors are onboard and understand what these criteria are so that the message is uniform.
11. US travel restrictions for graduate students
 - a. Based on the federal government. There is still a ban for graduate students from China who have had affiliation with the Chinese military (many undergraduate institutions in China have some element of the military embedded).
12. Summer hiring for graduate students
 - a. There may be a lot of new roles for graduate students
 - b. Talk to Student Employment in HR
13. Use of Duolingo English Proficiency Exam
 - a. M. Cunningham did some research. Other universities may use DuoLingo for undergraduate admission in addition to the TOEFL. They are not using it at the graduate level due to the lack of subscores.
 - b. Equivalency that was demonstrated by DuoLingo was only demonstrated for undergraduates.
 - c. TOEFL is now also available remotely. It is more expensive, but it is proven to be more reliable for graduate education.
 - d. We advise that it not be used for graduate admissions right now.
14. Meeting adjourned at 10:26, motioned by S. Hassig, seconded by D. Blake