

## Graduate Council Meeting Agenda

October 19, 2016

Present: Michael Cunningham, Jennifer O'Brien, Nathan Wendte, Gustavo Didier, Chris Rodning, Casius Pealer, Gilbert Morris, Alan Childress, Michael Herman, Kate Elfer

M. Cunningham calls the meeting to order at 8:32

### **1. Approval of September Minutes**

M. Cunningham moves to approve, M. Herman seconded the motion. All approve.

### **2. Announcement of Remaining Grad Council Meeting Dates for Fall 2016**

- November 9 – main thing will be review of masters programs, make sure that programs are tracking students, what do we want in these plans. Not as in depth as a PhD review
- December 14 – will wrap up and then plan for the Spring
- DGS/DOA Meeting on October 26

### **3. Meredith Smith (Title IX Coordinator) on the proposed Child Birth Leave Policy and the Planned Educational Leave Policy**

General Information: Most peer and aspirant schools have something like this in place. Duke and Northwestern are holding off so that they can use this plan as a bargaining chip in union discussions, but we're not planning on that.

PELP could include paternity leave, fostering, planned surgery for self or family. Childbirth is exclusively about giving birth. We recommend 8 weeks, but that's flexible, in case there's time needed before or after. Meredith thinks that's basically it. Deans were concerned about who covers their stipends, and it is the schools who will do it. If a school has a lot of need for leaves that year, there may be relief provided. There is no sense that people will take advantage of it.

Comment: Had a Chinese student who worked all through and came back immediately.

Cunningham: Some people don't have supportive PIs, this makes sure they know they have rights

Question: Was the language about up to 8 weeks changed?

Cunningham: Yes, and this wouldn't be handled by PI, but by student affairs, since PI shouldn't know about a student's health issues

Smith: If there was a complication that required more than 8 weeks, that would be a medically excused absence and that's a Title IX issue

Cunningham: This will be covered in orientation, our website, emails

Smith: If someone tried to do something about that, it would go to Title IX

Vote on leaves: All in favor

Final comment on implementation of policies in regards to issues around OGPS vs. Grad School.

Cunningham: Too decentralized to put in place policies easily unless it's the dean's issue.

Comment: Graduate School helped standardize. Cunningham: We try to

#### **4. Discussion and vote on the School of Medicine's new Pathology Masters program**

Biomedical sciences faculty voted and approved two new programs. We can approve this without getting SACS involved, beyond informing them

Morris: Pathology joined the other departments and added these programs. One is a two year, one is a one year.

Comment: TOEFL scores are only 72, which is pretty low.

Morris: I think that's the standard from other departments in the School of Medicine.

Cunningham: Make sure that you look into that, and be sure to talk to OISS about international students, ESL. It has been very helpful for SSE students, especially if they'll be TAs. Schools or students do have to pay for ESL.

Question: How is the experience? I've seen some grad students in my department who are beyond hope.

Cunningham: We try to get them to live in the global village, interact with others, social settings to practice.

Comment: It's possible to do a class early in the summer, joint venture with business and SSE or whatever

Unanimous vote in favor of master's programs

#### **5. Use of Banner for graduate Admissions**

Cunningham: The Office of Institutional Assessment collects all the information for outside reporting. Some schools use Banner, some don't. We need to know how many people apply, who was accepted, yield, demographics. Banner makes this easier and OIA would like to ask people to use Banner. They have real concerns about the data that we're getting and whether it's complete.

Comment: I want them to talk to our people, not me, I don't know why they're not using it.

Comment: We don't use it, since there is a substantial amount of visual information they have to submit, which makes Banner difficult.

Cunningham: We just need the data, not your method. We're not sure what they're keeping.

Grad Council recommendation: Either use Banner or make sure that data gets to Office of Institutional Reporting by a certain date.

## **6. Update on Postdocs**

Postdocs who are Tulane employees can only be here for 5 years. Postdocs don't receive the retirement contribution (most weren't using it, because many were leaving after 2 years anyways). The tuition waiver is going away (very few used it). Vacation: does not roll over, does not pay out at the end.

Template for hiring: General Counsel advised

Question: How will Postdocs find out?

Cunningham: they've been emailed and Brian Mitchell has spoken with them. There are implications for FLSA compliance including how you document what's training, what's work, which is something Mike has been working on. It's important that post-docs clock in for adequate work if they are non-exempt. They were intentionally not listed as exempt by the Feds.

Question: Isn't it a bad PR move to get rid of a fairly cheap tuition benefit?

Cunningham: This lowers the fringe rate for PIs of postdocs because benefits are lower. We did a comparison to other institutions, and they don't tend to offer it.

Comment: They tend to come to work with a specific PI. There are issues with grant funded postdocs, since they already have to come up with more money for salary and fringe comes out of that too.

Cunningham: This isn't changing, it will actually get revised up every year.

Comment: They just have to work 37.5 hours if they are non-exempt.

## **7. Update on FLSA and Tulane implementation**

Now employment categories as well as dollar amounts matter. People currently in the role will be grandfathered in. WFMO is moving on the assumption that it will go into effect for December 1, 2016, so they have to start on November 25. This will mean some salary differences for people transitioning from monthly to biweekly.

## **8. Upcoming events**

Donut Days start tomorrow, 10/20 at 9 am in Richardson 107

DGS meeting next Wednesday, 10/26 at 8:30 am in Kendall Cram

## **9. Final Questions**

Question: Can an interdepartmental program cross schools?

Cunningham: it still has to be based in a school, but it is possible to cross schools. Very few students have done it, we're looking in to the numbers of students pursuing this option.

Cunningham: Meeting adjourned at 9:15