

**Graduate Council Meeting Minutes  
September 10, 2014**

Present: J. Alm, A. Childress, M. Cunningham, E. Floyd, S. Grayson, M. Herman, S. Lantz, M. MacPherson, G. Morris, S. Overstreet, E. Poe, A. Robison, E. Svedsen, M. Vail

Absent: M. Foa, L. Pratt, F. Rabito

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 AM by Michael Cunningham, Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research and Acting Chair of the Graduate Council.

- 1. Introductions**
- 2. May Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve minutes by J. Alm; seconded by A. Childress and M. Herman

- 3. Graduate Council Goals for 2014**

**PhD Program Reviews for 2014-15:**

The following PhD Program Reviews will be held in the Health & Behavioral Sciences programs: Biomedical Sciences; Cell and Molecular Biology; Ecology & Evolutionary Biology; Neuroscience; Psychology; Public Health & Tropical Medicine; Aging Studies. If council members have recommendations for Committee Members, please let M. Cunningham know so he may approach them in the upcoming months.

**Graduate Cost of Attendance:**

OGPS will be working with the schools to set up a Cost of Attendance chart for each school. This is needed for many reasons: OGPS has encountered issues with graduate students who are unable to take out federal loans as their stipend is equal to the presumed cost of attendance. There are challenges facing International Students and their ability to have the correct amount of funds prior to arriving when we do not have a standardized cost of attendance.

**Graduate Insurance Review:**

The current graduate student health insurance policy may need to be revisited based on last year's PhD Review Committee recommendations; the committee recommended that the university subsidize the health insurance costs to 100% for full-time graduate students on a TA or RA stipend. B. Mitchell requested an increase in budget that is currently under review by university administration.

- 4. Graduate Council Recommended Goals:**

The Graduate Council has suggested visiting the following topics in the upcoming year.

- Master's Program Reviews: these could be internal reviewed and during the years there are no PhD Reviews scheduled.

- Acalog: OGPS will continue to rely on the Graduate Council, Deans, and Department Chairs to assist in keeping the Graduate Catalog up to date. Course descriptions continue to be collected at this time.
- There is current not a university-wide rule about full-time students on stipend holding external or internal job positions. Some programs or schools have internal policies; the council will debate whether there should be a university-wide policy.

## **5. Postdoctoral Fellow Status, Benefits, & Hiring**

OGPS would like the graduate council's recommendations and feedback on the status of postdoctoral fellows; currently there are fellows who have been in their positions for over 10 years. OGPS would like feedback in requiring IDPs as part of the hiring process, as well as establishing maximum term limits for fellowships.

## **6. OISS Compliance: Verifying English Proficiency and Financial Support University-Wide**

Every department verifies the English Proficiency and available funding for all international students; OISS verifies that this has been completed for each student for federal compliance.

OISS is recommending that there is a standard method for the departments to use to verify this data, as currently each program and school uses different tools and mechanisms. Establishing consistency will ensure that, in the event of an audit, all international students admitted have been done so correctly.

J. Alm asks – does this mean that we would want to standardize a minimum TOEFL score across the university? We do not believe that implementing these procedures would require a university-wide minimum score.

K. Magner will be at next month's meeting to answer questions about what standardizations are needed.

## **7. Election of a Vice-Chair**

J. Alm has nominated S. Overstreet. M. Herman has seconded the motion. S. Overstreet has accepted the position of Vice-Chair for the 2014-15 year.

The Graduate Council will review the Constitution for the next meeting, with the goal of seeing whether or not to update or change any rules.

## **8. Other Issues, Topics & Suggestions**

The Graduate Council Constitution will be reviewed by council members for any amendments that may be needed for the October meeting.

M. Cunningham adjourned the meeting at 9:00 am.