

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2015

Present: R. Adderley, A. Childress, M. Cunningham, G. Didier, B. Mohan, G. Morris, L. Pratt, A. Robison, C. Rodning

Absent: R. Ager, C. Dunn, K. Elfer, A. Enami, M. Foa, S. Grayson, M. Herman, M. Vail

M. Cunningham calls the meeting to order at 8:35 AM.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes

G. Morris moves to approve; R. Adderley requests an amendment of the final bullet point to “Duties for graduate students and faculty should be clearly defined.” The Council votes unanimously to approve with amendment.

2. Appointment of Vice Chair

The Vice Chair’s role is to serve as the central contact for Graduate Council during the external PhD Reviews and compiling their comments. This appointment has been moved to vote at next meeting, when more council members are present.

3. Graduate Council Constitution

The current constitution says that members serve staggered 3 year terms; R. Adderley proposes that the constitution be amended to say “they shall serve staggered terms up to 3 years; representatives may be re-appointed after 3 years.” This amendment has been approved.

4. Masters of Science in Clinical Research: SOM and SPHTM

Dr. Krousel-Wood expressed concern that there were two Clinical Research programs and that this may cause confusion for students: one in the School of Medicine and one in the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. In the School of Medicine, the Clinical Research program is designed for MDs; students who have the degree from PHTM wouldn’t be eligible to apply as they don’t have an MD.

The Graduate Council agrees that the name does cause confusion and does not need to be reviewed. They suggested amending the diplomas to reflect the school they were received in. ***(Since the meeting, the SPHTM decided it will alter the name slightly and submit the name change to Graduate Council for consideration at an upcoming meeting.)***

5. 2015-16 PhD Reviews

For the 2015-16 Academic Year, the following programs are being reviewed: Anthropology, City, Culture and Community, Latin American Studies, Latin American Studies/Art History, and Economic Analysis and Policy.

Based on the 2014-15 external reviews, OGPS is implementing structural changes that should make the process more efficient. This is a formative review process that should be helpful to the programs in identifying strengths and weaknesses; this review process does not impact whether the program will be cut from the university. Last year, centralized feedback was received on university-wide diversity plans.

6. Master's Review Schedule

The 2017-18 academic year will begin the Master's Review Schedules. The Graduate Council will create guidelines for the self-studies and the programs will be reviewed internally. The studies should cover tracking of students post-graduation and retention rates.

7. Graduate Workshops + 3 Minute Thesis Competition

B. Mohan shared an overview of the new university-wide programming on career workshops and seminars for graduate and postdoctoral fellows.

Tulane will be hosting its first 3 Minute Thesis Competition; within three minutes, a student needs to be able to explain their research to an educated, but lay audience. There are two information sessions: September 18th and October 9th.

8. Research & Grant Writing Seminars:

The Graduate Council thinks that perhaps more coordination needs to come from the schools to offer grant writing training.

G. Morris suggests the schools utilize the student bodies to teach; for students who have received grants, the BMS office coordinates a workshop led by the students for the student. This could provide OGPS an opportunity to work with GSSA and GAPSA in the spring semester.

9. Graduate Student Evaluation Checklists for departments

Graduate students are not receiving feedback from their departments on their progress as a graduate student within their department. If each student had a physical checklist that was reviewed with their advisor, this may mitigate many issues between students and their advisors.

A. Robison will send out a tentative draft to the Graduate Council for review and discussion at next month's meeting.

10. GAPSA Listserv + Oversight

As a result of a conversation with Dusty Porter, it was discovered that GAPSA's listservs are not including all graduate and professional students. The oversight of GAPSA (Graduate and Professional Student Association) comes from Student Affairs, not OGPS. However, this causes confusion as GSSA (Graduate Studies Student Association) is advised by OGPS.

11. Campus Campaign Planning Committee

M. Cunningham is serving on the Campus Campaign Planning Committee; this is associated with the new campus campaign being rolled out by the university. One of the proposed goals is endowments for graduate student fellowships. Graduate fellowships are included within the broader language of endowed professorships.

12. OGPS/Graduate Council Goals for AY15-16

OGPS oversees postdoctoral fellow as well as graduate students. OGPS has successfully set a 5 year term limit for all postdocs; after 5 years, a postdoctoral fellow should be moved into a staff position, like a research scientist. All postdoctoral fellows, regardless of research or teaching position, are all identified Postdoctoral Fellows. They will have their own staffing category at WFMO.

Diversity Plan for Graduate Programs: M. Cunningham will attend the Dean's Meetings to discuss diversity planning with the schools and how they can develop them for their schools and departments/programs.

The Graduate Council goals will be re-reviewed and finalized by the next meeting.

M. Cunningham moves to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 AM; G. Morris seconds the motion.