

**Minutes of the Graduate Council Meeting
Wednesday, November 14, 2012**

Present: Tom Albrecht, Jim Alm, Cooper Battle, Diana Blake, Tysheena Charles, Faycal Falaky, Holly Flora, Heather Frost, Frank Jones, Laura Levy, Brian Mitchell, Gil Morris, Mike Mislove, Leann Myers, Greg Oldham, and Stacy Overstreet.

Absent: Hank Ashbaugh, Michael Bernstein

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Brian Mitchell, Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research and Acting Chair of the Graduate Council.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the October 10, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved.

2. Certificate Program in Technology Commercialization

The Certificate Program in Technology Commercialization that was tabled from last meeting was placed forward for approval. Prof. Marc Kahn from the School of Medicine was present to describe the changes in curriculum and answer questions. M. Kahn noted that the concern regarding the use of undergraduate courses for a graduate certified had been addressed by replacing the courses with graduate-level equivalents. He also noted that this change modified the total credit hours from 21 to 20 hours. He will modify the original document and re-circulate to the Graduate Council.

G. Oldham asked what would happen if the excess classroom capacity in the Business School courses goes away? He noted that although only 60 of the 80 seats are currently occupied, that future expansion in Business School programs could limit the number of available seats. M. Kahn stated that they had indeed considered this possibility, and that they would limit the number of students in the certificate program if necessary. The Graduate Council unanimously approved the certificate program, pending circulation of a document outlining modifications as described above.

3. Graduate Student Health Insurance Subsidy

Laura Levy, Vice President for Research, described the current practice for administration of a \$1,000 per year health care subsidy for students support with research assistantships on extramurally-funded grants. Sponsored Projects Administration (SPA) has been enforcing this policy that was originally put in place by the Graduate School. Several faculty members have complained that this subsidy is creating a hardship for them. SPA is asking for a clarification from the Graduate Council and OGPS as to whether this policy should be continued, revised, or discontinued. D. Blake noted that investigators in the School of Medicine currently pay \$2083 from grants for student health insurance subsidies, as a result of the fringe rate increasing from 5.2% to 9.2% over the last few years.

Approved February 13, 2013

Some GC members were of the opinion that the health insurance subsidy was necessary and not inordinately burdensome on the project budget. We do not suspect that NIH, NSF, or BOR grants have stipulations about providing coverage or whether they can be covered with those grant funds. Currently, only a small portion of graduate students uses the Tulane health insurance option; others may use their own resources. This may change more as health reform allows for students up to 26 to remain on their parent's insurance plans for a longer period of time. B. Mitchell recommended that all of these points be considered in the formulation of a new policy, to be completed by the end of the current academic year, but that in the meantime the practice instituted by the former Graduate School be continued. L. Levy was comfortable with this approach and welcomed the formulation of a new policy.

4. New Business/Announcements

- Ashley Robison was introduced as the new Senior Program Coordinator in the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- **Distribution of the 2011-12 PhD Annual Update.** Copies of the PhD Annual Update were distributed to GC members. It is also available on the OGPS website. G. Oldham asked why the GRE scores were for domestic students only. B. Mitchell replied that he did not know why, but would see if information on all students could be included in future issues.
- **Distribution of the 2012 PhD Program Review binders.** These self-studies have been created by each department under review. The external review team will be finalized by the end of the week. They will be visiting March 4 and 5, 2013 to meet with the individual departments and will provide written reports with their findings for the Graduate Council. Since the files are so large, there will be a Dropbox account set up with all of the self-studies available to read. A question was raised as to what was being requested of the GC at this point. B. Mitchell replied that the GC should read the documents and be prepared to provide a recommendation on the External Team report in light of the self-study reports.
- **Strategic plan circulated:** B. Mitchell asked that this document be treated as a very rough draft which will be developed for future use by the President and the Development Office when developing a major gift campaign focused on graduate studies (this does not include professional schools, as they are creating their own strategic plans). Please make notes and provide OGPS with feedback by the end of December. This document was previously sent out with the meeting reminder.
- **The Library Repository for Digital Theses.** The Tulane library has the option to search online for digital Tulane theses, but has not yet digitized hard copies of archival theses. OGPS will create a guideline or policy on whether TU's digital repository should be the primary place for uploading digital theses and bring it to the GC for discussion. Currently, theses are uploaded to ProQuest as well as the TU site. Do we keep them solely at TU or ProQuest, or both? Dr. Blake asked whether we could use software to check theses for plagiarism prior to submission. B. Mitchell indicated that we could consider this option. Technical details to think about where:

- Inclusion of all signatures prior to digital submission.
- Whose responsibility should it be to put it online: the students or someone within the department?
- Will students lose the ability to publish versions or edits of their theses after online publication? This could lead to the need of a quarantine period where it will not be released to the public.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

Next Meeting January 9th, 2013. The GC will begin PhD Reviews, and there will be policy documents to review.

Approved February 13, 2013