

Minutes of the Graduate Council Meeting Wednesday, April 10, 2013

Present: Tom Albrecht, Jim Alm, Diane Blake, Faycal Falaky, Heather Frost, Frank Jones, Brian Mitchell, Gil Morris, Greg Oldham, and Stacy Overstreet.

Absent: Hank Ashbaugh, Cooper Battle, Tysheena Charles, Holly Flora, Mike Mislove, and Leann Meyers.

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

1. Approval of the February Minutes

The March meeting was cancelled due to the PhD Review Committee visit. Minutes of the February meeting were unanimously approved.

2. Health Care Subsidy

The Student Health Care Subsidy policy that was tabled at the last meeting was re-introduced for discussion. The only change in the policy from the previous meeting is that the health insurance fees for the AY13-14 year were updated.

B. Mitchell proposed approving the policy as is to formalize current practice. This policy is based on a former Graduate School policy that carried over after the dissolution of the school. Most schools follow it, but there have been questions as to whether or not it is formal university policy. If approved, it will be a formal policy for schools to follow.

Approval will have no impact the Graduate Council's ability to change or revise the policy in the upcoming year. The Graduate Council can revisit the policy in October, when it can have a broader discussion about the options for the following academic year.

The subsidy will impact master's and PhD students who are on Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, and some Fellowships. Post-baccalaureate students who are not covered on stipends are not subject to this.

A motion to approve was made and seconded. The policy was unanimously approved. It will be posted on the OGPS website.

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3. MS in Microbiology

A proposal to establish a Master of Science degree in Microbiology was presented. The Biomedical Sciences Steering Committee has approved the degree proposal. This would not be a new degree program, but rather a major within a degree that Tulane is currently authorized to offer. There are therefore no accreditation issues with the creation of this program.

G. Morris mentioned that in the past, the Biomedical Sciences program has offered such an MS to PhD Students who may not already have one; this proposal would formalize the coursework that the Master's students may receive. The majority of courses currently exist, but there may be new courses introduced. External candidates can apply for the MS program alone. They will not receive stipends, but will pay full tuition.

A motion to approve was made and seconded. It was unanimously approved.

4. PhD Program Reviews

B. Mitchell reported that the PhD Program External Review team came to campus in March and enjoyed their stay. They were an excellent, efficient team and submitted their final report on schedule. The final report has been circulated to the Graduate Council. Each program report was individually written, and they were compiled to create the report (hence variations in style and format).

Each individual reports will go to the departments and their Dean along with Graduate Council recommendations. Departments will receive the introduction and the comments on their particular program. The Dean and departments will then be able to send comments on the report to the Provost.

B. Mitchell encouraged the Graduate Council to focus their comments and recommendations on the key academic and programmatic issues rather than on resources. Example: *The TA stipends could be larger (okay) vs. central administration needs to provide more TA resources (too specific).*

We received feedback from the committee that there was "not enough information to review the programs accurately." In the future OGPS will follow up one month after sending the external team information to make sure they have the resources needed prior to the site visit.

Some members of the Graduate Council expressed a need for a clearer framework of the process: why are we doing this, what is the specific outcomes of the external team's visit, what are the goals and the potential outcomes that come from this review? Prior to the next round of reviews, the Graduate Council will look at the written instructions

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and see how we can make this information clearer; e.g., by placing the process, procedure, and rationale up front.

There was some discussion on the appropriate “look back period” for documenting student outcomes. S. Overstreet mentioned that Psychology uses a 5 year period, but also runs an alumni survey to help provide additional data for a longer period of history. B. Mitchell commented that the look back period should not precede 2005 as programs may be very different in the post-Katrina decentralized graduate education environment.

Jim Alm offered to collect comments and recommendation by April 30th and compile them on behalf of the Graduate Council in a report to the Provost.

5. AY14 Meeting Schedule

The following meetings were tentatively set for the 2013-14 Academic Year:

September 11, 2013

October 9, 2013

November 13, 2013

December 11, 2013

February 12, 2014

March 12, 2014

April 9, 2014

6. Thank you for your service!

Outgoing Graduate Council members were thanked for their service. OGPS will send a reminder to the Deans that elections for open slots must be held prior to the September 2013 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:00 a.m.