

Minutes of the Graduate Council Meeting

Wednesday, November 30, 2011

Present: Tom Albrecht, Hank Ashbaugh, Cooper Battle, George Bernstein, Michael Bernstein, Diane Blake, Tysheena Charles, Dick Culbertson, Jill Daniel, Holly Flora, Mike Mislove, Brian Mitchell (acting chair), Carol McMichael Reese, Gilbert Morris.

Absent: Mike DeMeo, Tom Klingler, Frank Jones, Laura Levy

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

1. Introductions

New members of the Graduate Council were introduced. The Provost gave a brief welcome and reiterated the charge to the Graduate Council.

2. Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

B. Mitchell distributed a handout that was used at the October 29, 2011 meeting of the Directors of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Admissions Officers that served as an overview to the newly-created Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (OGPS). He outlined the responsibilities of the office, as well as the responsibilities of the schools and programs. Much of the office's initial efforts will be on policy development and standardization. M. Mislove commented that there are a number of issues related to graduate and postdoctoral studies that the programs would like some guidance on. He especially welcomed institutional coordination of English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction for international graduate students.

3. New Graduate Records Examination (GRE)

The new scoring format for the GRE was discussed. B. Mitchell circulated selected pages of a presentation given by the ETS representative at the October 29, 2011 meeting. The new scale will be from 130-170 instead of 200-800 as in the previous test. G. Bernstein mentioned that there was a PDF document of the concordance table for conversion of scores between the old and new systems. B. Mitchell will distribute this concordance to the Graduate Council.

4. Minimum Degree Requirements

Excerpts from the Graduate Studies section of the current University Catalog were distributed. A summary of the current Ph.D. degree requirements was discussed, including registration status (continuous, full vs. part-time), residency requirements, credit hour requirements, prospectus and thesis requirements, and tenure time clock. G. Bernstein suggested that schools and programs should be able to impose more stringent guidelines if they wish. D. Culbertson questioned whether the current 7 year tenure requirement is realistic given the current time-to-degree statistics. There was a general feeling that 7 years was reasonable, as long as there was an appeal process. Having candidates revert to full-time tuition after 7 years was also discussed. B. Mitchell requested that the Graduate Council review the current set of minimum requirements and be prepared to develop a formal policy at the next meeting.

Pending approval 11-30-2011.

5. Doctoral Program Review Schedule

A draft schedule for review of doctoral programs was distributed by B. Mitchell. J. Daniel noted that Neuroscience was missing from the list, and that Psychology and Cell and Molecular Biology should probably be grouped with Neuroscience in the review process. G. Bernstein said he was glad to see History grouped with the other Humanities disciplines, but recommended that the categorization of History as either a Humanities or Social Science discipline at other institutions be reviewed. M. Mislove inquired as to when the last reviews were performed. B. Mitchell noted that the Liberal Arts disciplines were last reviewed in 2004, and that the scheduled reviews of the Sciences and Engineering were disrupted by Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent elimination of the Graduate School. There was general discussion on the composition of the review committees, but no final determinations were made. B. Mitchell asked the Graduate Council to review the schedule and provide him with additional information on upcoming professional accreditations so that these visits could be considered in the schedule. An attempt will be made to finalize this schedule quickly so that programs scheduled for review in 2012-13 have sufficient time to prepare.

6. Spring Meeting Schedule

The most convenient dates and times for Spring meetings was discussed. It was determined that Wednesday morning were the best time for everyone. B. Mitchell will circulate the dates of Spring meetings.

Seeing no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.