



Graduate Council

2-3:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 18, 2020

<https://wayne-edu.zoom.us/j/92885072116?pwd=RHYxcWhKMctXSWtWUitBM0t3RFpPdZ09>

- I. Report of the Chair**
 - a. Review and approval of October 2020 minutes (page 2)
 - b. Graduate Faculty Task Force

- II. Executive Committee, Fred Vultee, chair**

- III. New Programs and Program Review (NPPR), Todd Leff, chair**

- IV. Academic Standards, Sharon Lean, chair**

- V. New business**

- VI. Graduate Admissions (Sherry Quinn, Director of Graduate Admissions)**

- VII. Report from the Graduate Council Academic Senate Liaisons**
 - a. Linda Beale, President, Academic Senate
 - b. Sharon Lean, Budget Committee
 - c. Ed Cackett, Research Committee
 - d. Paul Johnson, Student Affairs Committee

- VIII. Adjournment**



Graduate Council

2-3:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 21, 2020

Notes from the October 21, 2020 meeting

Attendees:

Jonathon Anderson, Jeanne Barcelona, Linda Beale, Joan Beaudoin, Abe Biswas, Suzanne Brown, Amanda Bryant-Friedrich, Ed Cackett, Christy Chow, Stephen Chrisomalis, Mary Clark, Christine D' Arpa, Paul Dubinsky, Steve Firestine, Paul Johnson, Loraleigh Keashly, Chera Kee, Poco Kernsmith, Ming-Chai Lai, Sharon Lean, Todd Leff, Richard Marback, Mary Anne McCoy, Golam Newaz, Debra Patterson, Bijal Patel, Sherry Quinn, John Rothchild, Preethy Samuel, Malathy Shekhar, Sokol Todi, Jasmine Ulmer, Fred Vultee, April Vallerand, Dan Walz, Mary Wood, Attila Yaprak

Absent:

Jeff Stanley (excused), Ken Jackson, Weisong Shi

Guests: Paul Beavers (School of Information Science)

Minutes

Report of the Chair

The Dean asked if the Council had any additions or changes to the agenda. There was none. She asked if there were any corrections or additions to the September minutes. There was none. She began her report by noting the email from the Provost announcing a mental health day for next week. She said she would send an email to all graduate students to encourage them to find some time for self-care. They are busy with teaching, research and other duties. She then discussed the September listening session with PhD students as part of a CGS initiative looking at mental health. She said a blanket invite went to students asking them to apply for the sessions. 68 students applied, 36 were selected and 24 actually participated. There were 20 from social and behavioral sciences and humanities and 4 from STEM. It was a concern that only four STEM students ended up participating in the session even though many more had

signed up. Five key themes emerged from the session. The first is that students do not have a mechanism for reporting a deteriorating relationship with an advisor. The second was that advisors are not well trained in departmental and graduate school policy and procedures. Further, they are not culturally competent and aware of imposter syndrome, implicit bias and microaggressions. There is silencing around seeking mental health treatment and work-life balance. Third, advisors do not communicate in a timely fashion. There was lack of clarity about expectations for lab work, publications and obtaining grants. This is getting worse during the pandemic, slowing progress to degree while increasing anxiety. The fourth is that upper administration and faculty are not aware of issues students grapple with including financial hardship, worry about finding a job, and lack of affordable childcare. The fifth is the loss of social support during the pandemic. Students feel isolated and adrift.

The students did identify ways to address these concerns. First, create a mechanism where students can report problems with an advisor to a third party. They recommended advisor training on policies, mental health and work-life balance, as well as imposter syndrome and implicit bias. They would like clear expectations early on with key deliverables identified. They are concerned about the lack of goals and timeframes. They want us to survey them at least once a year to identify their key concerns and challenges. As an umbrella organization, they want the Graduate School to provide them with opportunities to connect. As part of this project, we also talked to mental health providers on campus to learn more about graduate student concerns. The report from Wayne State will be part of a larger report compiled by the CGS. Last week there was a convening of graduate school deans to discuss findings. The Dean said she spend eight hours total in the convening. She said it was disturbing to hear about the issues graduate students are facing across the country.

Linda Beale asked if advisors have seen these responses. The Dean said the information would be compiled into a summary from the CGS, which can be shared with the graduate community. Sharon Lean said follow-up should include the broad spectrum of advisors. The Dean noted that much of the concern surrounds the direct relationship between a PhD student and an advisor and one that can be most problematic. She added that training may not be the only solution and that we should address the root cause. She noted that mentors are dealing with stress as well during COVID-19. Malathy Shekhar asked if the students were master's and PhD students. Only PhD students were invited since the focus was on the advisor-advisee relationship. The Dean noted that master's students might have a different set of issues and concerns than doctoral students. Ed Cackett said training sounds like a good idea, but the worst offenders would not attend training. The Dean noted that we know our colleagues and ourselves and it would be ideal if we could address these issues anonymously. She asked the Council why there are some faculty who have difficult relationships with students and don't communicate. Steve Firestine said the role of the entire advisory committee is critical and what the entire committee decides. He said the fact that the entire committee decides and not just

the advisor gives students some comfort. He said looking at the structure of the committee might be helpful in helping students with mental and programmatic challenges. He said there should be some checks in place for advisors who put their own interests ahead of students. The Dean noted that if students are not in a good place, it may take much longer to complete a degree, and the university pays more since they are here longer. She noted it's not just about the touchy, feely emotional part of being kind and taking care of students, but also from a business perspective. Happy employees are more productive and happy students are better researchers.

GEOC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The conversation turned to a MOU presented to the administration by the GEOC. The Dean said a response is being prepared. They have raised four primary issues. The first is extended funding and COVID relief. The second is an extension of deadlines for degree completion. The third is the employment of international graduate students. The fourth is sick leave without retaliation. For the first item, we are encouraging students to take advantage of the mechanisms in place such as the CARES Act as well as emergency funds that may be in their academic areas. The students say they have spent their own money on things they need to work remotely. We are asking students to apply for funding or request reimbursement from their academic units. They have requested that we provide each GTA with a grant. The Dean said we don't see this happening as this would amount to a large sum. We are trying to give them more information regarding the extension of time to degree and let them know that we don't negotiate academic issues and that this clearly is an academic issue. In terms of employment of international students, this presents difficulties with political implications and work agreements. Other institutions have hired third party entities to pay students abroad. Wayne State has not decided to take this approach, and it's very complicated, even for the students. In terms of the sick leave, they have protections like most other employees, however the possible retaliation is a big part. We have told them that the administration does not support retaliation in any form and they should use the process for formal and informal reporting. Beale asked if these students were aware of the computer equipment that was offered to undergraduates by the Dean of Students. The Dean said tech support was not an issue, but they were concerned with office space. Many do not have desks. Cackett asked about the time to degree extensions. The Dean said the policy is to consider each extension on an individual basis. Lean suggested we separate the time extensions from the funding issue. She said our limit is seven years and funding is six. Being flexible with the time extensions is contingent on having an additional year of funding for most students. She added we have reviewed time extensions regularly on a case-by-case basis and we have not turned down any since the pandemic. The only time students have been turned down is if they are in the 12th year of their program. She said we work with students and programs to make sure there's also a plan for completion. We are willing to relax requirements during COVID. An example of that is having the prospectus defended before the first extension. She added that we should think

more about the funding issues separately. The Dean said we might need to identify various sources for those who need more than one semester.

Formation of task force on graduate faculty appointments and renewals

The Graduate Council was asked by the Dean to recommend composition of the task force. She would ask the task force to make recommendation on the utilization of different categories of graduate faculty membership, as opposed to the one category we have currently. We should do this with the understanding that these categories should be helpful to students putting together a committee. She would like to see full and associate membership. Also, an adjunct category, which allows those functioning outside the academy to offer their assistance. We could also include a special membership category. She said the term of appointment is five years. Is this too short or long? Another discussion was on the formation of a membership committee to review applications and renewals.

She would like to get nominations for the task force by November 11th. Another question is should membership be limited to Grad Council members? Vultee said the Executive Committee discussed the importance of opening it up to adjuncts and graduate students. Sokol Todi mentioned including PhD students, research track faculty and affiliated faculty from Henry Ford Health System. He said diversity at multiple levels would be important. Shekhar asked about the size of the committee. The Dean said the Executive Committee could make that decision once the nominations are in. She confirmed that task force members could be anyone who is involved with graduate level education. Lean said should we limit the task force to those involved in doctoral level education. She noted that those who supervise master's students don't need graduate faculty status. The Dean said the goal is to get input from those who are currently outside of the structure to see if we need to broaden the number of categories. She said graduate courses are graduate courses. It's important to include people at the master's level. Beale suggested that half the people have graduate faculty status and the other half represent a range of people who provide graduate level education. Mary Anne McCoy said clinical faculty would be useful too. Loraleigh Keashly said the task force would reconsider the fundamental questions of what does it mean to have graduate faculty status and why it is needed. The Dean agreed with Keashly's statement. Firestine brought up renewals and said it's important to have a good representation of members with grad faculty status because of the renewal issue. Shekhar asked if new categories would apply to new faculty appointments or renewals. The Dean said we will not take away someone's status in midstream, but as people apply or renew they would fall under the new system. Dan Walz said the first renewal should be left to the S/Cs. The Dean said there would still be a lot of control over the process at the S/C level. McCoy said it is difficult to find out who has grad faculty status. The web site with graduate faculty was located and placed in the link. The Dean again asked for nominations by November 11th. This will be brought back to Grad Council on November 18th. The task force

will designate a chair. The task force will present their recommendations to Grad Council at the January 13th meeting.

GTA concerns regarding face-to-face instruction

The Dean said she has received complaints from GTAs that students are not wearing masks and there is not enough PPE. She asked Bijal Patel, the student rep on Grad Council, if she had any information. Patel did not since classes she is familiar with are on-line. She would reach out to other students for input.

Executive Committee Report

Fred Vultee said EC discussed PhD application deadlines and the merits of standardizing them. He said there are advantages to early deadlines to get top students. He next discussed GPA requirements for AGRADE programs and said there was discussion about suspending the GPA requirement. More data will be collected on GPAs for students in the programs. He mentioned new DHS regulations for international students and that OISS will attend a future Grad Council meeting to update us following the election. The Dean mentioned recent benchmarking on PhD application deadlines which will be emailed to Grad Council. She said AGRADE is an important mechanism for getting students into graduate education and we will examine the GPA requirement and look at a more wholistic review process. Vultee said suspending the GPA requirement may be wise during the pandemic. The Dean mentioned the international student concerns and said it's important we keep track of policy changes on that front.

New Programs and Program Review

Todd Leff said a new concentration in creative writing for the MA in English was approved by NPPR. There are four discontinuances from the College of Education that require Grad Council approval:

- i. College and University Teaching Certificate, Learning Design and Technology, College of Education
- ii. EDD, Learning Design and Technology, College of Education
- iii. Education Specialist Certificate, Learning Design and Technology, College of Education
- iv. Online Teaching Graduate Certificate, Learning Design and Technology, College of Education

He said these programs had low and declining enrollment, but significant administrative burdens. All students in these programs will finish winter 2021. Paul Johnson added there has been 16 years of declining enrollment at the College of Ed in graduate programs. He was surprised initially that online teaching certificate was recommended for inactivation during the pandemic. He said enrollment was primarily from WSU employees. Very few complete the program and the OTL has increased its offerings

of online teaching. Beale asked if other markets were filling the need for on-line teaching and if we had not marketed them successfully. She also asked about the EdD program. Johnson said the EdD program is primarily for those in K-12 and there wasn't an interest. The department wants to focus on the PhD program, which has more of a research focus. Johnson said he did not know if the online teaching certificate was ever broadly marketed and if other universities were offering similar programs with better enrollment. The Dean reiterated Beale's concern and said online teaching would be very valuable to students going into the academy. Johnson did note that enrollment dropped when a cognate was made optional. He added that lack of faculty has hampered their ability to offer courses and that 20 courses have been discontinued lately.

A Zoom poll was launched for a vote on the discontinuances. They were approved with 24 affirmative votes.

Academic Standards

Lean reported the committee met October 2nd and reviewed a graduate faculty status case. Dissertation credit hours were also discussed. The question is can the four 7.5 blocks be offered in another format. For example, can we offer 10/10/10 for accelerated students who can complete in three semesters. Members of the committee are gathering additional input from their colleagues and we also would like Grad Council to provide input. The committee will produce a white paper and submit it to the Executive Committee. The Registrar and Provost's office have asked for clarification in the bulletin regarding AGRADE status towards degree. A recent case involved a student who counted AGRADE credit for all three degrees. Everyone agrees triple dip should not be allowed. This happens because the college reviews the master's plan of work and the PhD plan is reviewed by the Grad School. So, they can look perfectly fine. She asked if Academic Standards should deliberate on the AGRADE GPA requirement. Vultee said they should take a first look at this issue.

Graduate Admissions Report

Sherry Quinn presented a PowerPoint on Winter 2021 application and admissions data with a comparison to the same time last year. Overall, the doctoral applications are down 39% with a decrease of 43% for the research doctorates applications. Admits have increase 150% but that can be attributed to fall 2020 international deferrals that occurred in engineering, CLAS and pharmacy, where most programs do not accept winter applications. For domestic doctorates, applications are down 51% with a decrease of 65% for research doctorates. Admits are down 80%. For international research doctorate students, applications are down 36% while admits are up 380% and that can be attributed to fall 2020 deferrals. Overall, master's applications are down 58% while admits have decreased by 11%. For domestic master's, there is a 56% decrease in applications and admits are down by 17%. For international master's, the decrease in applications is 62% with a 4% increase in admits.

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Quinn then shared some observations on the winter 2021 admissions cycle. Although we are down significantly in overall applications, our overall admits have only decreased 4% when compared to last year. We are admitting at a much higher rate than the same time last year for winter 2020. The Winter 2020 PhD admit rate was 5.8% and today we are at 23.8%. This increase is due to the fall 2020 deferrals. For master's the Winter 2020 admit rate was 16.3% whereas Winter 2021 is at 34.9%. Enrollment yield for Winter 2020 was 67% for doctorate and master's. The Winter 2020 enrollment headcount for doctorate was 22; master's was 547. Winter 2021 acceptance targets to meet the previous year are 33 PhD admits (25 have currently been admitted) and 816 master's admits (212 have currently been admitted). She also said she has a significant amount of submitted applications for winter 2021 and a third have identified a program. She asked the academic units to take note of the applications in SLATE and assist the Grad School in reaching out to these applicants to see if we can move them along. Winter 2021 registration opens November 2nd.

She then discussed COVID-19 accommodations. The application fee waiver has been extended through fall 2021. Please advise applicants to submit electronically as we only collect mail twice from the office. Most international institutions are open and working remotely. For Fall 2020 international students requiring an academic evaluation from WES, ECE, SpanTran, let them know they do not have to make an in-person request for official transcripts. They should email their institutions to request transcripts be sent to evaluators.

The transition to SLATE was effective September 16th. To date we have engaged 360 faculty and academic staff in virtual training. Beale asked about the 380% increase in admits among international doctoral students. She asked if there is any anecdotal information about what percent of students we actually think will show up. Quinn said as soon as registration opens up, we will see that data. Lean added that in her meetings with OISS she's learned that students are managing to come to the U.S. Mary Anne McCoy did not receive the revised PowerPoint from September 2020 and the updated document will be sent to her. Steve Chrisomalis said there have been some tricky things about SLATE and how can feedback be provided. Quinn said the Zoom trainings and Canvas discussion board has brought concerns to light. Quinn asked anyone with specific concerns to email her. Chrisomalis said that in some departments there is no support staff so faculty is managing the whole thing and they did not attend training over the summer.

Report from the Graduate Council Academic Senate Liaisons

Linda Beale, President of the Academic Senate

Beale said she would focus on two key issues. The first concerns interdisciplinary hires. She said it ended up that people were hired as junior faculty and their tenure homes were

In 3-4 different departments. This caused concern that they would not get the support or create a collegial environment that they needed. There were big data and public health hires which were discussed in the Faculty Affairs Committee and with the Curriculum and Instruction Committee and then in Policy Committee. Interim Provost Clabo's response has been appreciated, according to Beale, as she is encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration, but realizes there has to be enough attention paid to hires within particular fields to maintain core foundational coverage and balance. There will be no interdisciplinary hires this year because of the budget situation. She said it's important to hear about the needs in the S/C and pay attention to foundational needs. Future interdisciplinary hires should be tweaked so the hires have a clear place where they belong. The administration is listening to faculty concerns in this area and trying to find a more appropriate balance.

The second issue concerns the budget. We expected the BoG to vote on a budget in September. However, the proposal put forward depended heavily on staff layoffs. The BoG was not going to support this and felt it was too drastic. This was before we knew what the state would do with appropriations and concerns that there might be temporary short-term ways to address shortages as opposed to laying off in the middle of a pandemic when people are stressed about finances and supporting their families. The Academic Senate Budget Committee met with CFO Rebecca Cooke to discuss options other than layoffs. It is safe to say that the large number of layoffs originally planned was not a reasonable response. First, the state did not clawback \$10-20 million from the last fiscal year. And the state appropriation for higher ed will be flat rather than cut. Both of those are much better than we expected. Additionally, we don't have the big drain on funds of schools like UM from housing and auxiliary services. We are operating on last year's numbers right now. This comes with contractual compensatory increases, fringe benefit increases and debt service increases. Regrettably, there was a slight decrease in enrollment of about 2% more than we had hoped. A few months ago, we thought that transfers and freshman may choose to come here in higher numbers. We expect one of two options to cover these deficits, which includes about \$13 million. There is overspending with financial aid that has not been budgeted for. We expect the deficits to be covered in the short term by existing university reserves, including the \$30 million fund that we got through the bond issuance that wasn't committed to particular projects and other unrestricted reserves. There may be a proposal with short term funding reserves, but also some layoffs. There is a lot of uncertainty. The Budget Committee meets on Monday before the BoG meeting on Friday, Oct. 30th. Rebecca Cooke said they will not prepare a full budget book before the meeting as normally is done. We are unclear how much detail will be provided. And that too is worrisome.

The Dean asked how much we currently have in reserve and what percentage of this will be utilized. Beale said \$85 million of the last bond issue was to be used to refurbish State Hall, which was a priority for faculty. There will be no state funding for capital projects this year.

We will file a report on October 31st, but it's just a report not a request for specific funding. The \$85 million will likely be spent on plant projects. The amount of the \$184 million in unrestricted reserves isn't actually contracted out to be spent. Perhaps half is committed to different projects that are close to underway or for faculty start-up packages, which will not be taken away. So that leaves somewhere around the same amount that is not restricted to already planned projects. The President likes to have funding that he can dedicate to things that come up and so does the Provost. The pandemic is an extraordinary event that can easily be seen as something requiring access to reserves on a short term basis. If the pandemic is long-term, we can expect more cuts and a 5% cut to S/Cs, but not the 10% that was originally planned. Beale expects more attempts at budgetary reallocation for the next fiscal year if we can't get these things under control.

Ed Cackett, Research Committee

Cackett said the Research Committee met two weeks ago with a talk by the VPR. Steve Lanier spent his time taking about the COVID response. Lanier said things have been restarting and the OVPR visited 300 labs in 30 different buildings. The most complicated research to restart is human trials research and animal labs. OVPR is working through them and coming up with policies. Lanier said most labs are back in the swing of things and have routines in place, but not at full capacity. Cackett said he would pass along any operational issues to Lanier. The Dean asked if the labs were back at 100%. Cackett said most labs are not at full capacity because of social distancing. The labs are open, but there are not the same numbers of students pre-COVID. Todi asked if there would be an announcement on a protocol to request additional activity in a lab. Some have made this request and been given approval to increase activity. Cackett said he would ask that question. It was noted that some faculty members were advised to email OVPR with a revised plan and that approval was speedy. Todi said it would be more equitable if there was an official channel to ask for increased capacity. This is especially salient with our peers at 60% research capacity. He noted that universities in the South did not shut down and now we are competing for grant funds with places that closed very briefly, or not at all.

Paul Johnson, Student Affairs Committee

The Student Affairs Committee is exploring the use of Respondus software for use in online proctored exams. In conjunction with the Curriculum and Instruction Committee, there will be a discussion October 28th. Johnson said the Grad Council can share concerns with him. He said he used Respondus last week for doctoral qualifying exams with 12 hours of testing over two days. There are concerns about privacy. The software does 360 degree sweeps of the testing environment which could be a bedroom, living room or basement.

The Dean mentioned that in the chat it was posted that the CLAS associate dean for research has made available a form for revised plans for research, which was distributed to chairs.

*A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and seconded. The motion was approved.
The meeting adjourned at 3:41 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. Wood
Program Director, Graduate School