



Graduate Council (*via Zoom*)

2-3:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 15, 2020

Click on link below to connect:

<https://zoom.us/j/97013735500?pwd=WEVCZkE5Q1JmclRFSmQ2MC9pWkNNZz09>

Meeting ID: 970 1373 5500

Password: 091207

- I. **Approval of February minutes: attached on page 2**
- II. **Report of the Chair**
 - a. Winter 2020 Accommodations
 - b. Digital PhD forms
 - c. Tuition Reimbursement Proposal
 - d. Commencement Celebration
- III. **Committee Reports**
 - a. *Executive Committee* (Faith Hopp, chair)
 - b. *New Programs and Program Review (NPPR)* (Todd Leff, chair)
 - i. Streamlining and updating the approval process for new programs
 - c. *Academic Standards Committee* (Sharon Lean, chair)
- IV. **New business**
- V. **Graduate Admissions (Sherry Quinn, Director of Graduate Admissions)**
- VI. **Recruitment recap (Shantelle Cavin, Graduate Programs Outreach Specialist)**
- VII. **Academic Senate Liaison (Linda Beale)**
- VIII. **Adjournment**

Attendees:

Jonathon Anderson, Eric Ash, Jeanne Barcelona, Karen Beningo, Abe Biswas, Suzanne Brown, Margaret Campbell, Shantelle Cavin, Christy Chow, Mary Clark, Steve Firestine, Ingrid Guerra-Lopez, Faith Hopp, Yinlun Huang, Paul Johnson, Loreleigh Keashly, Sharon Lean, Todd Leff,

Simon Ng, Bijal Patel, Debra Patterson, Jami Pittman, Sherry Quinn, John Rothchild, Preethy Samuel, Malathy Shekhar, Jeff Stanley, Sokol Todi, J Chin-An Tan, Jasmine Ulmer, Fred Vultee, Mary Wood

Absent:

Ramona Benkert, Sung Gon Chung, Paul Dubinsky, Linda Hazlett, Ken Jackson, Kafi Kumasi, Peter Lucarotti, Richard Marback, Mary Anne McCoy, Jeffrey Potoff, Cheryl Somers, April Vallerand, Dan Walz, Yuning Wu

Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the February 2020 meeting minutes. The motion was approved.

Report of the Chair

The Dean reported that the Graduate School is fully operational and everything is being done on-line. A number of accommodations have been made to students for winter 2020 and a full listing of these accommodations can be found on the Grad School’s response to COVID-19 web page.

Among the accommodations are those to dissertation and prospectus defenses and qualifying exams. Additionally, students who have a 7, 10 or 12 year time limit may request extensions through the end of December 2020. More recently, a temporary grading policy for winter 2020 was developed and posted on-line. Margaret Campbell asked about those conducting research and how they can be accommodated. The Dean replied the Grad School will approach these cases with flexibility and understanding.

Paul Johnson raised questions about opting in or opting out of the grading policy and how that process works. The Dean said the web information drives students to contact their individual program to find out if they opted in. She said once a program opts in, the instructor must give those student who contact them the grade/no pass option. Sharon Lean said the policy was developed to mitigate harm to those students who may be struggling. The “N” option allows them to finish the course rather than withdrawing, in which case they are responsible for tuition. She said this policy does not indicate we are relaxing standards, but rather recognizes the challenges being faced by some of our students. The Dean noted that more accommodations will be posted to the page as we move through this crisis, particularly for those who conduct research in labs and others who have must complete degree requirements in face-to-face settings.

Digital PhD Forms

Lean reported that forms will go live today. Not all forms will be available immediately, but after careful development and testing, key forms will be available. A portal to make the forms even more user-friendly is forthcoming. The forms will be routed from student to academic service officer to graduate director. An email will go out this evening to associate deans, graduate officers and directors to let them know the forms are live. Johnson asked if a screen shot could be provided of the new forms. The Dean said a tutorial or FAQs document is being developed to provide support as we transition. Lean credited the Dean for this initiative and said the forms are user-friendly and intuitive. She asked the Council to submit feedback.

Tuition Reimbursement Proposal for Externally Funded GRAs

The proposed policy to pay tuition for GRAS so advisors do not carry the entire financial burden from their grants has been completed and submitted to four key university leaders: Steve Lanier, Keith Whitfield, M. Roy Wilson and Rebecca Cooke. Steve Lanier acknowledged receipt of the proposal, however there has not been an official response.

Commencement

Since the cancellation of the May commencement, S/Cs will host virtual celebrations. The Grad School will produce a one-minute video. There will be a personalized message from the Dean as well as communication over social media channels. The President and the Provost will offer pre-recorded comments for each of the S/C celebrations. Lean brought up that PhD student fees could be adjusted so that the cost of renting regalia could be covered for PhD students. She said it would be great if we could at least pay for the hoods for this year.

Executive Committee

Faith Hopp recounted last week's Executive Committee and the conversation regarding candidacy and qualifying exams. Some students are taking 9991, yet have not passed their qualifying exams. Since some departments are delaying qualifying exams, these students reach a hard stop when they attempt to register for 9992. In some cases, students are simply behind and have not completed the exams, so it may not be the fault of the department. This presents a problem since these students may end up paying tuition, but may not finish the PhD.

NPPR Committee

Todd Leff proposed changes to the review and approval process for NPPR tasks. This is partly due to an anticipated increase in new proposals to accommodate curriculum and course changes as programs add online options during the COVID-19 crisis. This is part of an exploration to streamline NPPR activities and approval processes as a general effort to shorten the time it takes to launch new academic programs.

He outlined three specific options:

1. Review and vote virtually on all discontinuances, all revisions to existing programs, AGRADE proposals, and dual title proposals. Proposals for any new programs (PhD, Masters, Grad certificate, etc.) would be reviewed online but would be discussed in a synchronous meeting (either zoom or face to face).
2. Eliminate the current process of having the full grad council vote on NPPR recommendations. Due mainly to scheduling issues, this requirement adds significant time to the approval process. Currently, most of these proposals are approved with little discussion or evaluation by the Grad Council. Informing the full grad council about proposals for new programs and changes to existing programs would continue through a regular reporting system with a comment period, even if a formal GC vote was eliminated.
3. Convene a temporary NPPR “accessory” committee comprised of the dean, associate deans, the Registrar’s office and 12-month faculty for ongoing NPPR reviews throughout the summer.
4. In the long term, revisit the Graduate Council bylaws to assess where full Graduate Council approval is needed and where it is not.

Leff noted that most of the work and evaluation is conducted by the NPPR, and the Grad Council as a whole does not closely engage with the evaluation process. Simon Ng noted that the Grad Council may rubber stamp these proposals, but it may be premature to amend bylaws. Any amendments may require more serious and sustained discussion. Paul Johnson said the summer committee would be largely comprised of administrators and the faculty voice and shared governance would be diluted. Leff said that the summer committee would include 12-month faculty.

Karen Beningo asked about the anticipated number of new program proposals. She noted that faculty converting classes to on-line instruction does not require NPPR approval. She further asked why faculty would be submitting multiple proposals over the summer when most are not working. Leff said that the intent was to be prepared in case the situation rapidly changes, but that it’s possible we may be overestimating the number of requests we may see. Loreleigh Keashly said her faculty council meets in May, and she is not aware of a single new program being proposed. She suggested waiting a few more months before

moving ahead with restructuring the process. The Dean concluded that the consensus appeared to be that a summer committee may not be necessary at this time, but if the situation changes over the summer, the Grad Council will be consulted and this issue will be revisited. She also stated appropriate ways of streamlining the overall approval process will continue to be examined over the summer and shared with Grad Council in the Fall for further discussion.

Academic Standards

Lean displayed the revised documents for Graduate Director Responsibilities and Graduate Faculty Responsibility. She said she would convene the committee with some additional faculty with diverse perspectives to consider the dissertation credit block issue over the summer and a white paper will be produced. The Registrar's office may also be part of the conversations this summer. The Dean said that benchmarking of engineering programs has been completed and a copy will be sent around to Graduate Council for their information and that the Grad Council will be asked to revisit the issue in the fall.

Sherry Quinn, Graduate Admissions

Sherry reported of the latest data from OIRA. PhD admit numbers are down, however there is a 4/15/20 deadline for sponsored students, so we may see an uptick in that number. In terms of master's, there is a 3% decrease in applications, however the deadline to apply is still three months out.

In terms of COVID-19 accommodations, she reported that there are flexible application deadlines, extended academic evaluation deadlines, and the GRE general test and TOEFL exams are available to take at home. WSU now accepts the Duolingo English test as of April 1st and WES and SPANTRAN are still being used to evaluate the transcripts of international applicants.

SLATE is operational for winter 2021 and has been since February. Unfortunately, March training was postponed, but virtual training will be offered. Spring Summer 2021 will be open on April 30th

Shantelle Cavin, Outreach Specialist

Shantelle reported that 8 students attend the March 2020 10th annual research symposium as part of the Research Symposium Scholar Visit. She said the Graduate Student Appreciation week was a success with the dean hosting a coffee and a number of social media outreaches. She thanked participating faculty and said 100 T shirts were given away.

Lean said AGRADE scholarships are now available for fall 2020. The applications are due by May 8th and each program should have access to up to 10 scholarships. Several other scholarships are coming out shortly with varying due dates.

Open Discussion

Steve Firestine returned to the issue of lab work for MS and PhD students. He said he is concerned that students will not be able to fulfill graduation requirements given the current social distancing measures. The Dean said this issue is being discussed at Council of Deans and in other venues, with no clear cut plan just yet. Firestine said he is in a bit of a moral quandary in terms of admitting students to programs and noted that schedules could be instituted where people stagger their work hours. The Dean said there are discussions about rethinking of the physical work space. For example, offer two sections of one class or offer truncated semesters. Sokol Todi said schedules have been instituted in his lab to ensure the people are social distancing, yet remain productive. Firestine said only so much data can be crunched and at some point, students need to be back at the bench. He noted that accrediting agencies are being very rigid about the number of hours that students spend in the lab. Keashly said social distancing has a huge impact on her college, particularly art and music students. She noted that other disciplines are also being affected.

The Dean proposed a follow up conversation among Graduate Council members who are interested in brainstorming and sharing ideas on how we can accommodate students who cannot complete required work virtually. A meeting will be held in the weeks ahead to begin that process.

Academic Senate Liaison Linda Beale could not attend the meeting, but submitted this written report to Graduate Council.

- 1) Registration coding for classes. We have been discussing with the Registrar and AVP Darin Ellis the need for modification of our registration materials to provide greater clarity about types of classes (asynchronous online; synchronous online—i.e., what most of us converted to via Zoom in early March; traditional; hybrid). Changes include adding a distinction between WEB (already used for online) and SYNC (for synchronous online) so that we can have sections that are clearly that. We also need a more complete definition, or ability to add clarifying description, about hybrid courses (some have only an exam online, while some have many segments online with just a few sessions in person). This will be especially important if we still have a number of courses being taught as synchronous online that would ordinarily be taught in person. We also need to think about a university policy to allow at least some faculty and academic staff to continue working at home in fall even if we are primarily back to

in-person, given the likelihood that the coronavirus will still be around (no vaccine expected until 2021 at earliest) and there will certainly be individuals that are particularly vulnerable and need to reduce exposure by working/teaching online (older, immune-suppressed, hypertensive, diabetic, etc.).

- 2) Student fees. There was no consultation with the Academic Senate (and no mention in the recent meeting of the Budget Planning Council) regarding the President's April 10 announcement that students will not be charged any "fees" for upcoming semesters. Presumably this includes registration fees, maybe some application fees (?), and the many different course fees (such as the fees for art supplies for certain art classes). It is not clear how this is intended to work—is the university subsidizing course fees or just assuming that they are not 'needed' if courses are still online? We will be asking for more information about this. (The BPC faculty members did strongly recommend that the budget allocation that has been made every year under Wilson for huge discretionary increases for higher-paid administrators (AVPs, VPs, Provost, president, etc.) be eliminated. That would be about \$1 million that could be saved to be spent to protect academic programs and students. President Wilson did say in the YouTube announcement that those high-paid administrative discretionary raises would be at least deferred and maybe eliminated completely. (This only applies to administrators that are paid above average for the university; it does not apply to the other non-represented staff.) I note that the Harvard President and Provost have also done that, as well as voluntarily take a 20% cut in their own personal salaries. I have not heard either Provost Whitfield or President Wilson yet suggest they would be willing to take cuts in their overall compensation (though the President's direct comp is considerably more than \$600,000 annually and around \$850k with deferred comp and all percs added in).
- 3) Academic Works. Policy Committee has heard that this program for allowing students to apply for certain awards and funding seems not to work, for either undergraduates or graduate students. Students have been discouraged from applying for awards and fellowships by the sheer difficulty of the process, and we have heard that some departments (Chemistry) have opted out of the university system. We will ask for more information on this at the 4/20 Policy meeting.
- 4) Inclusive Access. Last fall, the Academic Senate Policy, Curriculum & Instruction, Faculty Affairs and Student Affairs committees all reviewed a proposal by Tim Michael, AVP Auxiliary Services, and Jodi Young, Bookstore manager, to push students and faculty to adopt a "first day access" proposal that B&N was implementing nationally. We saw many problems, including pricing, inability to opt out easily, tying

up aid funds if students wanted to buy books elsewhere, and others. The Student Senate was also strongly opposed, and the university declined to enter into the program on the basis of that consultation. Accordingly, I was very surprised to receive an email about two weeks ago from Tim Michael telling me that the Bookstore manager would be sending an email to all faculty encouraging us to participate in a program called “Inclusive Access” which is remarkably similar to the earlier first day program, except that it doesn’t even promise that the price might be slightly below market value for the books purchased through it. There have been a series of exchanges noting the lack of consultation when the bookstore wanted to take advantage of the coronavirus impact to argue for getting faculty and students to commit to buying books through this program, and there continues to be both Academic Senate and Student Senate concern, seeing the plan as primarily being proposed to ensure profits to B&N and not to ensure (and maybe not provide at all) savings for students. We will be discussing this at the 4/20 meeting as well, as it seems to be similar to the Bartleby Learn debacle that we finally were able to dissuade the university and bookstore from continuing (though Tim Michael has yet to tell us whether they provided a notice to the students who had signed up for it, as we requested).

- 5) The Academic Senate Committees were consulted closely on the decisions about this unusual semester’s system for grading for undergraduate students and, while there is no perfect answer, we were able to influence decisions and were comfortable with the final decisions made on a variety of issues.

- 6) Policy is also interviewing the Graduate Dean candidates. One of the issues we have discussed in that context is the relationship between the Grad Council and the Academic Senate. This is an area that we will need to explore with the new dean, whomever that may be.

The meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary E. Wood
Graduate School Program Director