

## **The Graduate Council**

### **September 18, 2019 meeting**

#### **Attendees**

Jonathon Anderson, Eric Ash, Jeanne Barcelona, Linda Beale, Karen Beningo, Abe Biswas, Suzanne Brown, Margaret Campbell, Alina Cherry, Christy Chow, Mary Clark, Steve Firestine, Ingrid Guerra-Lopez, Faith Hopp, Paul Johnson, Loreleigh Keashly, Todd Leff, Richard Marback, Mary Anne McCoy, Debra Patterson, Jami Pittman, John Rothchild, Preethy Samuel, Malathy Shekhar, Jeff Stanley, Sokol Todi, Jasmine Ulmer, Fred Vultee, Dan Walz, Mary Wood

#### **Absent with notice**

Yinlun Huang, Kafi Kumasi, April Vallerand

#### **Absent *without* notice**

Ramona Benkert, Paul Dubinsky, Sung Chung, Linda Hazlett, Peter Lucarotti, Ken Jackson, Cheryl Sommers

#### **Others present:**

Sondra Auerbach (Engineering), Mark Baskaran (Geology), Alisa Hutchinson (OTL)

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### **AGENDA**

- I. Approval of April minutes: attached**
- II. Report of the chair**
  - a. Graduate School review
  - b. Slate implementation
  - c. Graduate School website redesign
  - d. On-line PhD forms
- III. New business**
- IV. Responsible Conduct of Research Training Fall 2019 (Todd Leff and Sokol Todi)**
- V. Committee Reports**
  - a. Executive Committee
  - b. New Programs and Program Review (NPPR) (Todd Leff, chair)
    - i. Establishment of a Master of Arts in Geology (non-thesis option)
    - ii. Master of Science in Environmental and Sustainability Engineering
    - iii. Discontinuance of the Master of Arts with a major in Rehabilitation Counseling and Community Inclusion
    - iv. Master of Studies in Law with a concentration in human resources
  - c. Academic Standards Committee (Sharon Lean, chair)

- VI. Graduate Admissions (Sherry Quinn, Director of Graduate Admissions)
  - VII. Recruitment recap (Shantelle Cavin, Graduate Programs Outreach Specialist)
  - VIII. Academic Senate Liaison (Linda Beale, President of the Academic Senate)
  - IX. Adjournment
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## MINUTES

*A motion was made and seconded to approve the April 2019 meeting minutes.*

### Report of the chair

The Dean reported on key projects. They include the release of the Graduate School Review Committee's final report, which had been shared with the council. It was noted that the survey conducted by the review committee had a low response rate. The Dean asked the Graduate Council for any reactions or comments and encouraged everyone to reach out at any time with additional suggestions to improve the support the Graduate School provides to the campus community. Communication protocols were next discussed and the Dean said efforts were underway to establish clearer communications with deans and associate/assistant deans and clarify the Graduate School's service areas. Another project to create on-line forms for PhD students is in full swing. The web site redesign continues to update the structure and improve its utility. Another key project is the SLATE implementation. Graduate School staff are meeting with school/college liaisons to ensure alignment between individual program s/c and program needs and Slate design and development, as well as input to ease the transition. Finally, the search for a new Graduate School Dean is estimated to begin in the next month or so.

### Graduate Admissions report

Sherry Quinn reported that two additional service providers in addition to WES are now evaluating academic records of international students applying to graduate programs. This will provide additional efficiencies and gives applicants options. In addition, new deadlines have been established for flexibility. Students will now receive a credit for paying for this service of \$160 in the first semester they enroll rather than the second. Karen Beningo asked what happens if the evaluation service is late in providing a service and a student misses the deadline. Beningo noted a lack of responsiveness for students in chemistry and biology. Quinn said problems and processing delays with the service providers should be brought to her attention. Sharon Lean said international students are well aware of the best service to use based on their needs. For example, the service provider ECE has been beneficial for students coming from India.

The discussion turned to fall 2019 admissions. Quinn reported that PhD enrollments increased by 19% while master's enrollments dropped by 16.7%. There was brief discussion about the fact that incoming PhD students would not be counted if they were using a change of status

form vs. an application. The drop in master's enrollments follows national trends. Dan Walz commented that the high employment numbers might also be driving master's enrollment down.

### **Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) workshop**

Sokol Todi said 242 students participated in RCR training on September 7, 2019. He reported changes were made to the workshop's format to ensure it was relevant to all disciplines. Additional faculty from the social sciences and humanities presented and the afternoon concurrent sessions were discipline-specific. There was some discussion on the minimum face-to-face hours required by federal funding agencies and the variations in departmental training across campus. Todd Leff said ideally departmental training should not duplicate the Graduate School's training. Fred Vultee noted that refresher training is required every four years. He asked if students in disciplines such as communication might be exempted from this requirement as they go into the fifth year of their PhD program.

### **Report from the Executive Committee**

Faith Hopp was named the new chair of the Executive Committee for 2019-20. She explained the role of the Executive Committee as stated in the Graduate Council's by-laws. She also mentioned that changes might be made shortly to the competitive GRA to make it more beneficial to students and advisers.

### **New Programs and Program Review Committee (NPPR)**

Todd Leff reported on three items from the September NPPR meeting. They include the establishment of a Master of Arts in Geology (non-thesis option) and a Master of Science in Environmental and Sustainability Engineering. The discontinuance of the Master of Arts with a major in Rehabilitation Counseling and Community Inclusion was briefly discussed. Paul Johnson explained that the program was switching from a major to a concentration.

*A motion was made to approve the discontinuance and seconded and approved.*

Next, Todd Leff introduced the master's of study in law. He said the NPPR Committee first began discussing the new master's in October 2018 and asked the Law School to provide syllabi that are more detailed. The syllabi were provided over the summer and the NPPR approved the proposal in September 2019. The new master's is designed for working adults, will be taught entirely on-line and will use adjunct faculty with the exception of the core courses, which will be taught by full-time faculty. The program is 30 credits total, with 12 credits in the core courses.

John Rothchild said these kinds of master's programs are becoming increasingly popular across the country. He introduced Allysa Hutchinson from the OTL who will help design the



courses. It was noted that the Law School does not currently offer on-line courses. Jami Pittman asked about recruitment, and Rothchild responded that Michigan would be the primary recruitment focus. The discussion turned to the desired enrollment for the program. Rothchild reported that the largest program in the country has 200 students. He said the bottom line is that the program must be financially viable and that 10 students would be acceptable as the program launches. He noted that marketing the program would be expensive.

*John Rothchild leaves the room for the Graduate Council vote.*

*Todd Leff called for a motion. The motion was made and seconded with all voting in favor of the master's of studies in law.*

### **Academic Standards Committee**

Lean reported that the committee would hold its first meeting in October. One of the first orders of business is the application of master's credit to PhD programs for those who have earned credit at WSU or outside of WSU.

### **Recruitment Recap**

Shantelle Cavin reported on the Open House on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. There are currently 41 participating programs. Over 100 students have registered and several units will host their own breakout sessions this year. Turning to other recruitment events, Beningo asked if there was any information on yield from recruitment events. Cavin says SLATE will help with tracking since it enables us to look at the lifecycle of a prospect to determine which events have the best ROI. She also mentioned Graduate Student Appreciation Week, which takes place April 6-10, 2020. Events at each school and college are being planned for that week.

### **Graduate Council/Academic Senate Liaison**

Linda Beale reported that the Michigan House-Senate conference report contains a .5% increase in the annual state appropriation for Wayne State. This is the lowest increase among the state universities and compares to a 2.1% increase for CMU, 1.8% for GVSU and 2.7% for LSSU, leaving Wayne State the only Michigan university not restored to its pre-2011 state appropriation amount. The rubrics of the state funding formula put Wayne State at a severe disadvantage because they focus on undergraduate education and do not reward graduate degrees or sufficiently recognize the positive impact of university research. Rothchild asked if improving six-year graduation rates would result in increased appropriations. Beale responded that the six-year rate is almost flat this year—it will be difficult to achieve such substantial increases as in the move from about 27% to almost 48%. She predicted that we would continue to be underfunded by the state and members of the Board of Governors are not likely to

support significant increases in tuition to compensate for limited state appropriations. Against this backdrop, a steady diet of cuts, a lack of hiring and shrinking programs is likely to continue.

In terms of school/college budgets for the coming fiscal year, the Mike Ilitch School of Business received the largest increase. However, dollars continue to be shifted from the schools/colleges to administrative units. Some top administrators saw a 30% salary increase, with average percentage increases for administrators over the last two years significantly larger than for faculty and academic staff. The Budget Planning Council made various recommendations to President Wilson, including recognizing through budget adjustments that some administrative divisions are less efficient and less productive than others, which he did not accept. Although schools and colleges continue to struggle to hire faculty and maintain priorities, the OVPR received a \$2.5 million increase in its annual budget, and \$1.6 million was allocated for discretionary increases for non-represented employees.

Beale then turned to three academic freedom concerns that were the topic of a July 23, 2019 memo from the Academic Senate's Policy Committee to President Wilson. The first concerns the Internal Audit office where an anonymous tip launched a full-scale investigation into an employee's use of campus parking over four years. In this case, there was no "burden of production" requirement of the initial inquiry to determine if the allegation was substantive. The employee in question was called to the Internal Audit office and asked to justify each day that she had not utilized on-campus parking.

The second case involved a gag order from a department chair, issued with the dean's support. An external investigator was brought in to examine potential Title IX violations and other misconduct on the part of a male faculty member. Students had created a blog and put a flyer quoting Desmond Tutu in the department's hallway due to their frustration with the faculty member's alleged behavior. The flyers were removed and the department faculty, staff and students were told all flyers now required the chair's approval. In fact, the chair issued a gag order on any discussion of the issues. Faculty and students felt their rights of expression had been violated.

The third and final case involved a financial aid manager who decided to resign and sent an email to his co-workers about what he regarded as inappropriate behavior in the office. The whistleblower's email was forwarded to some members of the Academic Senate Policy Committee in light of discussions about Title IX and bullying in the context of the Climate Survey. Within one hour of receipt of the email, it was deleted university-wide. University administrators admitted that it had been deleted, claiming that it was "borderline offensive." Beale said while the email clearly was critical of certain administrators, it was not malicious or offensive and clearly not in violation, even by the sender, of the university's user policy. Shortly after the deletion, emails came from Senior Associate Provost for Student Success Monica Brockmeyer and Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management Dawn Medley praising the employees that the whistleblower had criticized. It appears that Dawn Medley requested that the email be deleted by C&IT to stifle discussions on the matters addressed in the email.



**WAYNE STATE**

Graduate School

This is clearly a violation of academic freedom as administrators deleted and censored substantive whistleblower content, without even consulting General Counsel on the issue. These three issues have been addressed at Policy Committee meetings with the Provost and in memos to the President. Further, a meeting with the President was held on August 26, 2019 to address these concerns. A motion to censure the individuals for the gag order and whistleblower email deletion was put forward at the September 11<sup>th</sup> Academic Senate meeting and will be voted on at the Academic Senate on October 2, 2019.

**The meeting adjourned at 3:36 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. Wood  
Program Director, Graduate School