

Minutes of Graduate College Council Meeting
February 15, 2020

Unapproved as of March 4. To be presented for approval at March meeting.

Attendees (assessed from Zoom screens): Rossi, Parcels, Riordan, Martin, Wang, Laux, Zide, Kwansa, Griffin, Miller, Hutchison, Slibernagel, Davis, Okoye, Racicot, Bais, Kendus, Safiyah, Caplan, Thomas, Pic, Perry, Hagovsky, White, Ford, Rechsteiner, Healy, McAfee, Lenhoff, Botello, Braun, Johnson, Bank, Irvine, Kane, Biswas, Xiao, Zurakowski, Wei, Buckley, Shatsky, Dobler, Daniels, Purciello, McConnell.

1. Meeting convened at approximately 3:30PM
2. Approval of agenda and Minutes
 - Minutes amended to show Karin Silbernagel and Shuo Wei attended December meeting. Typo noted in Item 6.1, an "e" should be added.
3. Dean's report (Lou Rossi---see his slide for more details)
 - Working groups for Strategic Plan implementation are underway.
 - Applications, admits, and yields for graduate programs overall are up. Programs should keep aware of developing trends, considering especially the match of offers and resources.
 - Dean is working with Graduate College organization to align team setup with Strategic Plan, as well as fill gaps caused by hiring freeze, retirements, etc. One point is to clarify roles as they are displayed on web pages, etc. See slides for new organizational setup. New structure is already reflected on the website.
 - UD might hire Mentor Collective Services to provide a base level of service for all graduate students. Consultations continue on this question.
 - COVID-related matters update re vaccines. DE has about 250,000 people in Categories 1A and 1B. Given current supply flow, it will take until about May to vaccinate those groups.
4. Graduate College Council Committees (Mark Parcels—see his slides for more details)
 - 4 colleges have nominated representatives for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Standing Committee. Others requested to do so as soon as feasible.
 - Council survey results on possible additional standing committees being established show a slight majority in favor. Comments from survey have been disseminated to Council.
 - Re Data Committee, there are some opinions that this is an administrative function. Re Online Ed Committee, some think it should be an ad hoc committee. There is a theme of comments that faculty are over-burdened with committee work.
 - Opinions broadly seem to support need for attention to the named areas, but only a small majority believe that Standing Committees are the way to help.

- Chair suggests to move forward to develop ad hoc committees of interested, skilled, and enthusiastic faculty to address clearly defined goals. Chair would like to work with Executive Committee to develop details on how to proceed (i.e., membership, activities to undertake).
 - Chair plans to move ahead in that way, and establish ad hoc committees.
5. Graduate Students' Report (Jessica Thomas)
- Lerner and CAS representatives are needed.
 - Need for ombudsman raised. Positive reactions from Council members were expressed, including from the Dean. It was noted that Faculty Senate considered this a couple years back, and the resolution being unclear. The Chair will communicate with Faculty Senate to learn more.
6. Standing Committee Reports (see slides for details)
- Interdisciplinary Curriculum Committee (Richard Braun)
 - Committee meets weekly
 - Committee will have By-Law change recommendation at next meeting
 - Student Life (Amy Griffin)
 - Committee is working to partner with Graduate Student Government
 - Mental Health efforts were feasible (e.g. emPOWER)
 - Committee will advocate for mentorship skill training, and other issues where appropriate (e.g., shuttle bus service shortages)
 - Comment from Dean: More mentorship is needed for us to be competitive for large grants
 - No resolutions to bring forward now.
 - Awards (LaRuth McAfee)
 - Reminders on timing of 21-22 Awards cycle (see slides)
 - Awards is has worked to adjust deadline so as not to be too early for some programs or too late for others—trying for a combination of deadlines that can work well
 - Listings of nominations and offers by various programs shared (see slides), including info by demographics
 - College Liaison Report: Arts and Sciences (Emily Davis—see her slides for details)
 - Data and outcomes summary—see slides.
 - Programs vary greatly in size in the cross-section
 - Funding limits are challenging programs
 - Discussion of minimum graduate seminar size limit, which is making staffing difficult
 - Source of rule unclear (University level? If so, “unevenly” enforced)
 - Could Graduate College advocate for adjustments that might help programs?
7. New Business
- Richard Braun notes that Interdisciplinary Curriculum Committee anticipates bringing by-law changes next meeting, consistent with statement in his earlier report.

8. Adjourn at 4:42PM