

GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

October 6, 2016, 1:21-2:47 P.M.  
Sage Hall 2210

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**Present:** Elizabeth Alderton, Kathleen Bauer, John Beam, Pete Brown, Eric Brunsell, Anna Filipova, Karen Gibson, Lori Halstead, Tonya Hameister, Phan Hong, Toni House, Erik Krohn, Deb Matulle, Ann Mickelson, Bonnie Nickasch, Alan Saginak, Nathan Stuart, Ashley Thompson, Cathy Toll, Judy Westphal

**Excused:** Jamie Ceman, Steve Dunn, Dale Feinauer, Fredi Giesler, Marci Hoffman, Christopher Iwuji, Brandon Miller, Christine Roth, Bob Stelzer, Greg Wypiszynski

**Guest:** Ryan Haley

The meeting was called to order at 1:21 p.m. by Phan Hong.

- A. Discussion of the September 15 minutes ensued. Clarification was requested about UW System's role in utility and fringe benefit savings. UW System gave campuses a broad directive on how to spend funds.

Elizabeth Alderton can serve on the Graduate Studies Travel Fund committee, but cannot serve as Chair this year. The September minutes were amended to remove her as Chair. Motion to approve the September 16, 2016 minutes as amended/Second: Alan Saginak/John Beam. Approved (17-0-0). Phan Hong charged the GSTF committee to put forth a new chair.

- B. Guest: Ryan Haley, University Budget Development Committee (UBDC). A draft of an operating manual was written and submitted to Chancellor Leavitt on September 30. UBDC spent the summer writing the manual, determining money flows and reasons behind them, and reviewing tuition costs (but not the allocation of tuition dollars). This draft is meant to serve as an outline to collect additional input for the remainder of the year, and final decisions will be made by the Chancellor. UBDC will supply mechanisms for how money flows, but will not dictate actual numbers or funds. This new budget will allow for strategic realignment of programs; funding can be allocated to better support underfunded areas.

Discussion ensued. Tuition allocations will be based on a combination of student credit hours and graduation rates. UBDC is responsible for designing a model from the Chancellor to the Deans. From there, the Deans have authority to decide how funding flows within their college. Concern expressed were as follows: the role of the Dean in funding and the role of faculty in making funding decisions. Financial documents will be open to all within a college (transparency), and will expose financial behavior. Also, an oversight committee comprised of administrative services and shared governance will be formed to serve as referees.

UBDC's process is to first request approval of their draft manual from the Chancellor. Then the draft manual will be dispersed for campus input. Please be involved and ask questions. The final step is the Chancellor's approval of an updated manual, which is planned for the end of this academic year. If the Chancellor approves, this model *could* begin July 1, 2017. This stage of the budget process is taking place at the same time (although irrespectively) as the University's strategic reprioritization. Please also note that reprioritization does not affect the budget process.

- C. Motion to approve the Consent Reports/Second: Judy Westphal/John Beam. Approved (16-0-1).

- D. Executive Committee:

1. The Graduate Council Chair position description has been revised, and will be available at our next meeting.
2. The Dean of Graduate Studies search will begin in December, and the new Dean will be in place by summer 2017. Jenny Watson is in charge of the search process, and she and Provost Earns will report a timeline at the November Graduate Council meeting.

3. Discussion ensued about the Graduate Faculty definition. The purpose of differentiating between faculty and academic staff is unclear. PhD holders appear to hold greater responsibility than non-PhD holders. Deans submit names of graduate faculty to the Office of Graduate Studies on an annual basis, but this distinction is not related to HR contracts, hiring, or pay decisions.

A suggestion to remove differentiation between masters-level and doctoral-level Instructional Academic Staff would eliminate the added responsibility to PhD or terminal degree holders. However, some faculty expressed a concern that less rigorous standards might negatively affect high-quality graduate education. Other faculty indicated that with current budget constraints, the use of adjunct and master's level IAS are important to departments. The Executive Committee will discuss edits to the definition to allow maximum flexibility while attempting to maintain rigor to achieve high-quality education.

4. Dean Cramer added ex-officio seats to the Graduate Council during her term; UMC, Student Affairs (Enrollment Management, specifically), and Administrative Services. Other groups have expressed interest, in particular, the Library. Inviting them as-needed was suggested; potentially adding scheduled guest visits to the annual calendar (i.e. November is the Library's month). Inclusivity is important, so inviting them is appropriate. All Graduate Council meetings are open, anyway. Including ex-officio seats bring further clarification to discussion, and does no harm to the Graduate Council.
- E. Independent Study Courses: A concern was brought up regarding the use of independent study courses to replace cancelled required courses in some programs due to low enrollment. In addition, these independent study courses were adopting the same syllabus across multiple students. In some programs, students submit and independent study with the cancelled course's syllabus, and multiple students are submitting the same syllabus. In others, students are being asked to write unique proposals that are based on the cancelled course's syllabus, but modified to fit their professional needs, which seems more consistent with the spirit of the IS course. Several faculty indicated that they have allowed students to take an IS course to fulfill requirements (e.g., if the course needed to graduate is not offered often enough or if the course is cancelled due to low enrollment); however, they indicated that each syllabus put forth is unique and a "blanket" syllabus was not adopted by multiple students. Council members argued that it is the responsibility of the faculty/department to offer solutions to these issues, however, there was concern that the use of IS to bypass required courses could be flagged for a potential audit. Members argued that faculty are not paid for independent study courses and choose to take on the burden to allow students to graduate in a timely manner. A suggestion was made that more strategic curricular changes could be planned for a longer term solution. Redefining an independent study course could help in the meantime. Members requested additional information regarding the specific issues with the use of IS.

Motion to adjourn 2:47pm.

Lori Halstead, Recorder.

Copies to: Graduate Council, Provost Lane Earns, Deans, OSA President, Office of Graduate Studies Staff