

University Graduate Council Minutes

Tucker Hall, 104

January 12, 2018

Council Members in Attendance

Dr. Nicholas Bolden, Chair (COLS)
Dr. Ellen Roberts (AA), Associate Provost
Dr. Kevin Burgess (COLS)
Dr. John Finley (TCOB)
Dr. Saoussan Maarouf (COEHP)

Dr. Illaria Scaglia (COLS)
Dr. Margie Yates (COEHP)
Dr. Scott Harris (COA)

Ex-Officio Members:

Dr. Ellen Roberts, Associate Provost (AA)
Dr. Tina Butcher, Interim Provost (AA)
Ms. Kristin Williams (EM)

Topics

Item 1: Welcome, Lunch, and Approval of Minutes.

- Dr. Bolden called the meeting to order and the council approved the December minutes with revisions.

Item 2: Closed Meeting: Approval of Graduate Faculty.

- The Graduate Council approved 5 for provisional graduate faculty status and one application was returned with a request for additional information.

Item 3: Combined Meeting: The following topics were discussed with Council members, Graduate Program Directors, and members from College Graduate Appeals' Committees:

- Continuous Enrollment Policy for Thesis and Dissertation Hours (Approved by the Graduate Council in December 2017)
- Thesis and Dissertation Grading Policies (IP, I, S, U, A-F)
- Consequences of Unsatisfactory Grades
- 0-Credit Defense
- Getting Students Off Of Provisional Admission Status
- Provisional Graduate Faculty Chairing Dissertation Committees

Item 4: Announcements:

- Dr. Roberts announced that the Graduate Council will consider the discussions when developing further policies.

Notes from Discussion

Continuous Enrollment Policy (Approved Dec. 2017 by the Graduate Council)

A graduate student who is working on a thesis or dissertation must register for Thesis or Dissertation hours each semester after initially enrolling in the course. Graduate programs that offer variable hours of credit for the thesis or dissertation should guide students to register for the number of hours of research that is consistent with a realistic appraisal of the amount of work to be done as well as the extent of faculty involvement and use of university resources required. A realistic accounting for graduate student credit hours helps support quality graduate programs.

Students do not need to enroll in the summer if they will not be working with faculty or using university resources unless summer is the term in which the student will graduate.

Discussion

- Dissertation and Thesis courses should offer variable credit hours
- Possible policy for minimal fees for students taking one hour for Thesis and Dissertation hours
- There could be different ways to approve exceptions. What processes are in place at the University level to approve exceptions?
- The process could include the College's graduate committee or council.
- Students should be required to sign up for a minimum of one hour- each semester until a successful defense
- What should be a stopping point for continuous enrollment? Programs can create a more rigorous policy, including how many total credits a student can possibly sign up for Thesis or Dissertation hours.

Grading Policies for Thesis and Dissertation Hours

- Some programs give S or U, while other programs give A-F grades. Agree that grading policies should be left up to the program; however, the policy should be consistent for all tracks in a program.
- A syllabus or document stating expectations and grading policy must be documented and given to the student.
- In Progress grades tend to be a problem. There seemed to be consensus that it is better to give an Incomplete with a deadline than an IP.

Consequences of Unsatisfactory Grades

- At this time, most programs don't have a policy stating consequences of unsatisfactory grades. A "U" does not impact the GPA.
- It was suggested that programs develop policies indicating consequences of unsatisfactory grades.

"0" Credit Defense

- There was a consensus that a "0" credit defense is a good idea. It would be helpful to the registrar, as well as, to the advisor.

- It was recommended that when a student registers for a “0” credit defense, he or she would also sign up for a minimum of one hour for Thesis or Dissertation.

Getting Students Off of Provisional Graduate Status

- Advisors are not changing the status of students from provisional to regular when appropriate.
- It was suggested that there is a report in SIS to assist program coordinators in identifying students who are on provisional status.
- A recommendation was made to place a PROV HOLD on students’ records when they are admitted provisionally. This hold will alert the advisor and student of his or her status.
- It was also suggested that program coordinators need to keep a list of the reasons students are placed on provisional status in order to make a judgment as to whether they should have their status changed.

Provisional Status Graduate Faculty Chairing Dissertation Committees

- A request was made to think about the possibility of a provisional status graduate faculty member chairing a dissertation committee.
- If a part time faculty member who was on provisional graduate faculty status could meet the same standards as a full graduate faculty member (except the full-time employment status), would it be appropriate for him or her to chair a committee?
- A concern was raised that provisional faculty are most likely part time faculty who may not be around until the dissertation is completed.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Margie H. Yates