

## Executive Council of Graduate Faculty

Minutes for 30 September 2016

**Present:** Dean Michael C. Roberts (Chair), Norman Akers, Mahasweta Banerjee, James Daugherty, Thomas DeLuca, Apurba Dutta, Marie-Alice L'Heureux, Ahreum Maeng, Scott Reinardy, Paul Scott, Milena Stanislavova, Sara Wilson, Assistant Dean Amanda Ostreko (Staff), Amber Roberts Graham (Staff)

**Absent:** Monica Biernat, Sherrie Tucker, Michael Werle (Ex Officio),

**Also present:** Amanda Kulp, Xingong Li

**Called to Order: 13:59**

### Announcements

- Enrollment Numbers: Graduate is up!
  1. Primarily in the online programs in the Schools of Education and Business
- Hooding is Ticketed and Registration is Required
  1. Please start early with reminding and preparing students.
  2. All graduates will be limited to a maximum of 4 tickets. GS will not distribute leftover tickets or take requests for extras.
  3. GS may share any leftover tickets proportionally with the deans of the schools and College. They may choose to allocate the leftovers how they want.
  4. GS will begin sharing information with departments and students later this fall and continue regularly through the year.
- Chancellor Gray-Little asked GS to specify its funding priorities to KU Endowment
  1. Numerous faculty and administrative bodies have recently emphasised the importance of improving support for graduate students.
  2. GS identified the following as areas of importance for funding through KUEA's efforts:
    - (a) 4-year fellowships including stipend and full packages of tuition and health insurance benefits to recruit and support URM graduate students;
    - (b) Funds to provide professional development, retention, and ongoing support activities, including skill building workshops and networking events. These can be important for all graduate students, but are essential for marginalized students to support through to success;
    - (c) Funds for transition and bridge programs for graduate students representing URMs to have early experiences and success in graduate school (e.g., in the summer preceding the first semester);
    - (d) Funds added to the Graduate Student Emergency Fund for unexpected expenses to stay in graduate school for retention (especially when family resources may be less available);

- (e) Funds to support Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU), with a particular focus on experiences for URM groups in the humanities and social sciences; these will build the pool of potential graduate applicants for the programs in which they gain REU experiences.
  - (f) Funds for special professional development and career events organized by the graduate students' initiative for enhancing their own education and training.
- GS will be proposing changes to how KU handles need-based tuition grants
  1. GS was asked to evaluate options for how to use these funds more strategically to support recruitment and retention.
  2. Currently, allocations are made solely on a need calculation made several months before the beginning of classes and can be taken away in the event students secure other funding types like GTA appointments, which no one wants to do.
  3. GS is exploring several options for how to use these funds more strategically to support:
    - (a) Recruitment and retention of URM graduate students;
    - (b) Supporting students in units with historically lower funding opportunities;
    - (c) Supporting students in units with historically higher debt loads.
- Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey
  1. Results are being distributed to deans and department chairs.
  2. Results include quantitative data and verbatim comments in response to open-ended questions.
  3. GS has already begun hearing feedback that these results are discouraging and hurtful in some cases.
  4. Please take these seriously: they were, on the whole, thoughtful and articulate even when saying things we may not want to hear. It is vital that we approach these as real and genuine perspectives on students' lived experiences.
  5. As programs go through program review, their materials will be updated with the most recent available GSSS data, so for most that will be the 2016 data.
- Policy Progress
  1. 18-Hour Rule
    - (a) GS put together additional information and data to support Professor Chappell's original proposal and submitted it to the Provost's Office for review.
    - (b) It is currently in the Provost's Office for financial viability assessment.
    - (c) It has been received with great enthusiasm. This is one of the most positive and enthusiastic receptions of a proposal that GS has taken down the hall in a while.
    - (d) Council members received a copy of the version shared SVPAA with Stuart Day.
  2. Parental Accommodation
    - (a) We have received feedback from HRM and ISS - minor changes
    - (b) That feedback has been addressed and the draft has been circulated to OSFA, OUR, SIS, AAAC, and some school-level graduate staff for additional feedback.

## Review of Minutes

- 26 August 2016  
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

## New Program Proposals

- Graduate Certificate in Geographic Information Science
  - *Representatives: Xingong Li*
  - Professor Xingong Li introduced a new Graduate Certificate proposal in Geographic Information Science and fielded questions.
    1. Professor Li offered an introductory overview and rationale for the proposal.
    2. The Council asked whether these courses are already required for degree completion or whether this certificate would represent additional concentration in an area that adds value to the standard degree.
    3. The Council asked whether certificates typically have this time limit for completion. They do not, but departments may stipulate time limits if they wish.
- Vote on Graduate Certificate in Geographic Information Science
  - The Council voted unanimously to approve the new certificate program.

## Program Review and Campus Labs

- Campus Labs Introduction and Tutorial
  - *Representative: Amanda Kulp*
  - Dr. Amanda Kulp lead the Council through the process of program review using Campus Labs.

## Administrative Discussion

- IRS Notice 2016-2017, Graduate Student Health Insurance, and the Affordable Care
  - 1. GS has been collaborating with HRM and other units across campus to get information to graduate students as soon as possible.
  - 2. IRS Notice 2016-2017 prohibits employer contributions to individual insurance plans, including student health insurance plans (SHIPs). This means our current method of subsidizing 3G health insurance is prohibited and the penalty for infraction is very expensive.
  - 3. Because this is a federal decision, universities nation-wide are affected.
  - 4. KBOR has worked with outside legal counsel to assess the alternatives. The KU Chancellor and all of the Regents Presidents formally notified KBOR that they support one of these alternatives: to provide eligible 3G employees with a salary adjustment.

5. Students, whether employed as 3G or not, will now have a choice between purchasing individual coverage through the KU SHIP or purchasing individual coverage through the ACA exchanges. Since international students are required to carry health insurance, they should be reassured that the SHIP will meet their immigration health insurance requirements.
  6. A campus-wide working group comprised of students, faculty, and staff is currently assessing how to implement a salary adjustment in 2017-18 to eligible graduate student employees.
  7. The Council discussed the changes that are taking place, where they are coming from, and their implications for graduate student employees, grants and PIs, departments, and schools. Discussion concluded with recognition that there are a number of unanswered questions and the working group composed to address these issues will work diligently to communicate information as it becomes available.
- FLSA definition of salaried employees and effects on 3Gs
    1. GTAs and GRAs will not be affected: they will continue to be treated as salaried employees because their primary relationship with the institution is academic and their teaching and research activities are required for their academic and professional development.
    2. GAs are affected: some will continue to be classified as salaried employees because their GA work experience is required for their academic and professional development (e.g., Higher Education students). The remainder of GAs will be converted to hourly employees and required to track and report their hours.
    3. We do not anticipate any other implications for GAs because of this change.
    4. Therefore, this requires a change to Graduate Studies policies that define and govern GAs. Updated policy language has been determined through consultation with HR and General Counsel.

## Policy Revisions

- Graduate Assistant Appointment Eligibility
  1. In response to the FLSA change, we have to revise how this policy defines GA appointments.
  2. We have taken the opportunity to also fold in some revisions to the job duty regulations that we had been working on through the spring semester.
- GRA, GTA, and GA Appointments: General Guidelines and Eligibility
  1. In response to the FLSA change, we have to revise how this policy defines GA appointments.
- The Office of the University Registrar will also update the Staff Rates policy.
- Doctoral Final Oral Exams
  1. We have begun soliciting feedback for three alternative revisions to the five-month rule. Council members received copies of these three alternatives.

2. GS invited discussion and feedback from the Council about which one to pursue further.
  3. The Council discussed the options' relative merits in terms of variability, consistency, and flexibility.
  4. The Council recommended adopting the shortest minimum interval proposed (one month) but adding an explicit provision by which departments may require a longer interval, up to five months, as provided by current policy.
- Vote on Policy Proposals
    - Following discussion of the implications, the Council voted unanimously to pass the proposed job-duty clarifications in the Graduate Assistant Appointment Eligibility policy.

**Adjourned: 15:14**

**Next Meeting:** 28 October 2016 — 2:00 pm in 210 Strong Hall