Executive Council of Graduate Faculty

Minutes for 15 September 2017

Present: Dean Michael C. Roberts (Chair), Norman Akers, Mahasweta Banerjee, Apurba Dutta, Marie-Alice L'Heureux, Ahreum Maeng, Scott Reinardy, Milena Stanislavova, Michael Werle (Ex Officio), Herb Tuttle, Assistant Dean Amanda Ostreko (Staff), Amber Roberts Graham (Staff)

Absent: Thomas DeLuca, Debra Hedden, Paul Scott, Margaret Kelly, CLAS Representative for Social Sciences

Also present: Z. J. Wang, Bruce McEnroe

Called to Order: 14:01

Announcements

- Welcome back!

    1. Welcome to New Members:
        (a) CLAS representative for Social Sciences is still being identified
        (b) Music — Debra Hedden returning for a new term
        (c) Journalism — Scott Reinardy returning for a new term
        (d) Engineering — Herb Tuttle joining us

- Policy Updates

    - Last Year's Initiatives:
        * The new policy codifying Application Fee Uses has been published.
        * GS also published clarifications of current processes and practices concerning Graduate Certificates. These align the policy with KU's expectations for degree-seeking graduate admission.
    - Over the Summer:
        * GS published an update to the English Proficiency policy for admission, to align it with a new process adopted by the AEC for fall 2017.

- Graduate students are facing some adverse situations as this year gets started.

    - Appointment processing delays will mean that several hundred new hires for fall 2017 will not be paid on time.
        * The delays have disproportionately affected graduate students.
        * Pay advances will be made available to those affected. Graduate students should watch their emails for more information.
    - Student Senate failed to fund the Graduate Student Scholarly Presentation Fund.
        * This fund is supported by matching amounts from Student Senate and the Office of Research.
        * The application for funds was not submitted to Student Senate last year, so it was not reviewed or funded.

  * Student Senate says the money was reallocated to other initiatives during the budgeting process.
  * Student Senate has passed a Will of the Senate to fund this initiative next year but it is not binding.
  * The funds offered by the Office of Research had already taken a cut, as well.
  * The end result is that, in years past, GS has had $100,000 to allocate each year. This year, GS has $40,000 to allocate. We will award half during the fall application cycle and half in the spring.
  * GS has taken over responsibility for filing the paperwork to get the money in the future so this doesn't happen again.
 − Student Senate also failed to fund the Graduate Student free printing at Watson library as part of last years budgetary process.
  * This is the second substantial failure of Student Senate to serve the needs of their graduate constituents this year.
  * Graduate students are now activated and upset that, despite making up 25% of the fee-paying student body, they do not see 25% of those fees allocated to their initiatives.
  * GS hopes graduate students will exert influence over the Student Senate in the coming months to make allocations more equitable and consistent in the future.
 − There is also some good news for graduate students and graduate education at KU.
  * Part of Mr. Self's final bequest to the institution will provide funding for graduating KU seniors who enroll immediately in a graduate program at KU.
    · This funding is available to students in any field.
    · The funding cannot be awarded to those who do not continue immediately into a graduate program (e.g., those who take a gap year to gain work experience).
    · The bequest is $4 million, which should generate approximately $138,000 in awards each year.
    · GS is in the process of drafting formal procedures and requirements.
    · Mr. Self was less precise in his demands for this funding so we have some latitude to use it strategically.
    · Dean Roberts asked the council whether they would recommend awarding more students with lower dollar amounts or providing more money to fewer students.
    · GS expects that this funding will primarily benefit master's students and programs.
 − Council Discussion:
  * The Council asked how they should proceed in advising students about travel funding.
    · Students should still be encouraged to apply for the Graduate Student Scholarly Presentation Travel Award as long as it is available.
    · There is no more funding available for fall 2017.
    · GS is considering ways to collect data about the unmet need.
  * The Council asked whether there is graduate student representation on the Student Senate.
    · There have traditionally been very few.

- · Last year there were 3 representatives and 8 open seats. This year's events have increased interest among graduate students and the seats are filling quickly.
- · There is a paid Graduate Affairs Director who manages and facilitates graduate student involvement and initiatives in Student Senate. Disinterest and high turnover among those who hold this position have contributed to the difficulties and exerted a destabilizing effect.
- · There is also a Graduate Student Advisory Board that can engage with Student Senate to advocate for graduate students. GS meets with this body once each semester. Historically, this group has been minimally active or involved.
- · The other body that might exert pressure is the GTA Union. Due to labour relations concerns, GS cannot talk with the union at all.
  * The Council asked how interested graduate students should proceed.
    - · The best place to start is the Student Senate website.
  * The Council asked what is being done to address the delays in appointment processing and pay.
    - · Several offices across campus are working together to implement short-term resolutions for delayed pay and tuition support, inaccurate billing, insurance eligibility, and other concerns.
    - · GS is participating in these efforts and discussions.
    - · GS has been invited to participate as a stakeholder in a post-mortem evaluation project that plans to submit a formal report by mid-October.

Review of Minutes

- 12 May 2017
  The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

New Program Proposals

- Graduate Certificate in Computational Fluid Dynamics

  - *Representative: Z. J. Wang*
  - Dr. Wang introduced a new Graduate Certificate proposal in Computational Fluid Dynamics and fielded questions.
  - This certificate program offers a credential indicating proficiency in a tool widely used across several engineering disciplines. It is expected that engineers in Kansas City will show considerable demand.
  - Admission criteria are set equivalent to the admission criteria for degree programs in Aerospace Engineering. Hours completed as part of the certificate may be counted toward a master's, so the department envisions using this program as a recruiting and retention tool.

    1. The Council reviewed this proposal in the spring.
    2. This version responds to the Council's previous feedback and the proposal is here for re-review.
    3. The Council discussed admissions criteria and opportunities for collaboration with other units, such as Math, in offering future coursework.

    4. The Council recommended a friendly amendment to revise the admissions criteria and require only a 3.0 minimum GPA, removing reference to the student graduating in the top 50% of their class. Dr. Wang accepted the friendly amendment.

- Graduate Certificate in Structural Forensics

  - *Representative: Bruce McEnroe*
  - Dr. McEnroe introduced a new Graduate Certificate in Structural Forensics and fielded questions.
  - This certificate program requires a minimum GPA of 3.0 in an engineering field for admission.
  - To complete the certificate program, students must earn a B or better in any 4 courses from the list provided.

    1. The Council discussed whether this certificate would demonstrate the level of professional expertise that should be expected from this certificate.
    2. The Council discussed enrollment caps, regularity of course offerings and scheduling, and potential competition from area universities.

- Graduate Certificate in Water Resources

  - *Representative: Bruce McEnroe*
  - Dr. McEnroe introduced a new Graduate Certificate in Water Resources and fielded questions.
  - This certificate program requires a minimum GPA of 3.0 in an engineering field for admission.
  - To complete the certificate program, students must earn a B or better in any 4 courses from the list provided.

    1. The Council discussed the number of faculty involved in teaching these courses as well as course availability and scheduling.
    2. The Council recommended a friendly amendment to enumerate all faculty involved in teaching these courses.
    3. Dr. McEnroe accepted the friendly amendment.

Policy Revisions

- Dean Roberts outlined GS's top review and discussion priorities for 2017-2018

  - Mediated Attendance at Graduate Examinations
    * GS has collected information over several years concerning how these situations are handled.
    * We would like to update the policy to reflect the academic realities of the twenty-first century.
  - Conversion of Incompletes to Fs for Graduate Students
    * USRR recently changed the regulations concerning Incomplete grades for undergraduate students. If still unresolved after one year, Incompletes convert automatically to Fs or to a provisional grade entered by the instructor.

- ∗ When it passed, it was implemented non-specifically and now applies to graduate students. GS believes this was unintended and is inappropriate.
- ∗ GS asks the Council whether they would like GS to initiate proceedings to revise USRR through the appropriate governance channels.
- – Academic Forgiveness for Graduate Students
- – Professionalism for Graduate Students
    - ∗ GS has reviewed professionalism standards and policies at peer and aspirational peer institutions.
        - · Dean Roberts is participating on a committee for the Association of Graduate Schools to consider the topic. The committee will be presenting at the AGS meeting next week. The presentation slides have been included in the packets.
        - · GS asks the Council to consider what they would like to include in such a policy, and how general, comprehensive, or explicit they may want it to be.
    - ∗ GS has become aware of a few situations in which ethical concerns about a student's academic conduct arise after degree conferral but may bring into question the degree's legitimacy.
        - · KU's policies are unclear as to what we might or might not do in such situations.
        - · GS asks the Council whether they would like to further investigate the issue and draft a policy that makes provisions for such scenarios.
        - · GS has begun investigating how similar things are handled at peer and aspirational peer institutions but has found few codified policies. Most institutions seem to react as cases come up.
        - · The Council discussed the extent to which research supervisors are responsible for such things, how the advisor might catch problems, and the extent to which they might suffer repercussions.
        - · Some Council members are also working on this problem with their professional organizations. They agreed it is a thorny problem, particularly with less reputable publishers.
        - · The Council also discussed that any policy on the topic would need to accommodate those fields where dissertations are composites of previously published work.
- – Allowing 3G appointments at 1.0 FTE during summer sessions
    - ∗ Language currently in GS policy concerning maximum 3G appointment percentages for summer was implemented in response to a recommendation by HRM. HRM has since retracted the recommendation so GS will propose a policy revision soon.
- – Tuition Assistance Pool for GRAs (TAP)
    - ∗ The Council discussed current eligibility requirements and management processes, as well as what would be ideal.
    - ∗ GS will continue discussions with stakeholder units to see how the TAP policy might be improved or streamlined over the coming year.
    - ∗ The Council discussed KU's several campuses and the definition of prestigious fellowships.
- – List of countries where completing a degree indicates English Proficiency at the level required for graduate admission to KU

* GS is continuing discussions with the AEC concerning the list of countries enumerated in our policy as places where completion of a degree is sufficient to demonstrate the required English proficiency for admission.
        * This is in response to continued requests to expand the list.
    – HLC Requirements and changes to Graduate Faculty policies, privileges, and processes
        * GS is considering a redesign of how Graduate Faculty permissions are understood and granted at KU.
        * GS proposes eliminating broad categories made up of several overlapping responsibilities and, instead, granting one or more specific permissions to each member. For example:
            · Teaching Master's-level courses
            · Teaching Doctoral-level courses
            · Serving on Master's committees
            · Serving on Doctoral committees
            · Chairing Master's committees
            · Chairing Doctoral committees
            · Serving as Graduate Studies Representative on Doctoral committees
        * The anticipated benefits are three-fold
            · Increase faculty/departmental flexibility in appointing the right individuals to teach their students or serve on committees. This way, specific qualifications will correlate more clearly to specific duties and individuals with certain credentials won't be barred from all graduate involvement just because they're not qualified for a small piece of it.
            · Simplify GradFac nomination procedures for department faculty and staff
            · Simplify GradFac tracking and compliance reporting for IT and GS staff

* Initial Review: Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Oral Examinations

    – We have received a request to review the minimum interval allowed between a first (unsuccessful) and second attempt at the oral comprehensive exam.
    – The proposal reduces the minimum interval from 90 to 60 days.
    – The Council discussed the logic behind the selection of 60 or 90 days as a minimum.
    – The Council proposed alternate language to be proposed at the October meeting.

Votes

* Graduate Certificate in Computational Fluid Dynamics – passes with friendly amendment
* Graduate Certificate in Structural Forensics – passes
* Graduate Certificate in Water Resources – passes with friendly amendment