

# Executive Council of Graduate Faculty

Minutes for 2 November 2018

**Present:** Thomas DeLuca (Interim Chair), Debra Hedden, Tien-Tsung Lee, Yan Li, Joshua Miner, Andrew Short, Mike Wilkins, Michael Wolfe, Assistant Dean Amanda Ostreko (Staff), Amber Roberts Graham (Staff), Jessy Carolina Ayestas Hernandez (Staff)

**Absent:** Dean Michael C. Roberts (Chair), Marie-Alice L'Heureux, Tarun Sabarwal, Ed Scanlon, Sherri Tucker, Herb Tuttle, Michael Werle (Ex Officio)

**Also present:** Ray Pence, Kristine Latta,

**Called to Order: 14:02**

## Announcements

- Dean Roberts is currently out of the office on medical leave. Professor Tom DeLuca chaired this meeting of the Council.
  1. Dean Roberts will be leaving at the conclusion of his appointed term on 31 December 2018.
- The GTA MOA negotiations demonstrated a need for two work groups to convene. These work groups are now meeting to review the GTA Term Limits policy and to develop procedures for the new GTA Grievance Resolution Committee.
- The Office of Graduate Studies committed, last year, to consider revisions to the English Proficiency policy in stages.
  1. The first stage was approved last year, removing any requirements for proof of proficiency from those who self-report as native speakers of English on the graduate admission application.
  2. Stage 2 will reconsider the kinds of proficiency documentation required from self-reported non-native speakers.
- The Registrar's Office is about ready to add the new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion question to the New Program Proposal tool. Once the question has been added, the Council will need to decide whether it reviews this information as part of its proposal evaluation and what criteria may be useful.

## Review of Minutes

- 28 September 2018  
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

## New Program Proposals

- Graduate Certificate in Studies in Equity and Social Diversity in the U.S.

– *Representatives: Ray Pence and Kristine Latta*

- Professor Pence and Dr. Latta introduced a new Graduate Certificate proposal in Studies in Equity and Social Diversity and fielded questions.
  - This is a collaborative program that has been in development for about two years. It offers three pathways for students who do not necessarily intend to pursue an academic career track. Rather, it is intended to provide greater understanding of these issues for those who will go on to work for non-profits and other employers seeking these skills and backgrounds.
  - It was modeled on a similar program at Tufts but no Big XII institutions yet offer this type of program.
1. The Council discussed the extent to which similar and related certificate programs in the College were involved in the development of this proposal and how their programs expect to coordinate and interact with this one. The development process established broad content coverage as a goal but necessarily had to limit the scope for the initial implementation. The Council also discussed the extent to which this proposal differs from the purposes and outcomes of certificates in related units.
  2. The Council discussed the enrollment requirements and structure for how courses would be organized into a cohesive educational experience.
  3. The Council inquired about the market research conducted to assess demand for such a program and the recruitment strategies the department plans to implement.

## **Policy Proposals**

- Seniors and Graduate Study (Co-Enrollment)
  1. Feedback from the schools of Engineering and Education and from the College was provided and discussed.
  2. The Council recommended incorporation of all suggestions prior to a second review in December.
  3. The Council discussed the rationale for allowing students to begin graduate work before completion of baccalaureate education and the advisability of opening this opportunity to a broader audience.

## **Discussion**

- Council Administration
  - Dean Roberts will step away from the Deanship at the completion of his full term on 31 December.
  - The Council discussed the role it may play as the Provost looks toward the next best steps for the unit and for graduate education at KU. They discussed past precedents when the Office of Graduate Studies has undergone transition. They also discussed viewing this transition as an opportunity to restructure the office to increase its effectiveness.
  - Graduate Studies staff notified the Council that the staff were scheduled to meet with the Provost the following week.
  - The Council noted that all major research institutions and nearly all aspirational peer institutions have a centralized unit overseeing graduate education.
  - The Council expressed a desire to participate in conversations with stakeholders to articulate a larger vision for the office and partner with the future dean to pursue that vision.

- The Council expressed interest in a conversation directly with the Provost in December if there is potential for significant departure from business as usual.
- Use of plagiarism-check software for theses and dissertations
  - The Council discussed the advisability of adopting such technology for major graduate milestones. They recognized that it is probably a good idea but expressed concern about who would be responsible for defining acceptable standards.
  - The Council inquired about costs incurred by software adoption and staff time requirements.
  - The Council requested information about models currently in use at other institutions, hopefully for further discussion in December.
- Conversion of Incomplete grades to Fs
  - The Council discussed pursuing a revision to U.S.R.R. that would clarify the conversion of I grades to Fs after one year should only apply to undergraduate students.
  - The Council agreed there is a big difference in the meaning conveyed by an I and an F.
  - The Council discussed the frequency with which professors and staff relied on the eventual conversion of an I grade to motivate a student otherwise reluctant to finish incomplete course work.
  - The Council discussed the current process to petition for a retroactive W grade (rather than the converted F) when situations warrant.
  - The Council wondered about current volumes, potential financial aid implications, and the variety of interpretations of I and F across the schools, and the relationship between this process and academic leaves of absence.
  - The Council advised prioritization of other policy initiatives before further work on this topic.
- Academic Integrity initiatives
  - The Council revisited the topic of whether KU should adopt a policy specifically addressing academic integrity issues in graduate education.
  - The Council expressed strong support for this initiative and requested information about model policies at peer and aspirational peer institutions.

**Vote**

**5 minutes**

- Graduate Certificate: Studies in Equity and Social Diversity in the U.S. – Council voted to revisit this proposal in December and requested additional information to address their questions.
- Policy: Seniors and Graduate Study (Co-Enrollment) – Council voted to revisit this proposal in December

**Adjourned: 15:41**