



Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2020

Location: Storrs Hall, Conference Room WW16

Subject: Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Hector Aguila, Mary Anne Amalaradjou, Marina Astitha, Gerardo Blanco, Christopher Blesso, Karen Bresciano (*Ex Officio*), Preston Britner, John Chandy (Sub for Helena Silva), Yongku Cho, Kenneth Couch, Jose Cruz, Caroline Dealy, Anne Delany, Amanda Denes, Kimberly Dodge-Kafka (UCHC Alternate), Jeffrey Dudas, Niloy Dutta, Megan Feely, Anne Gebelein (Sub for Samuel Martinez), Martin Han, Amir Herzberg (Alternate), Kent Holsinger (*Ex Officio*), Barbara Kream (*Ex Officio*), Nicole Landi, Jacqueline Loss, Jeffrey Ogbar, William Ouimet, Barbara Parziale (*Ex Officio – Secretary*), Dan Pejril, Chadwick Rittenhouse (Alternate), Joel Salisbury (Alternate), Cristian Schulthess, Kathy Segerson (*Ex Officio*), Ellen Shanley (Alternate – for Valerie Duffy), David Solomon, Ron Squibbs, Matthew Stuber (Alternate), Steven Szczepanek, Rebecca Thomas (Alternate), Judith Thorpe, Charles Towe, Penny Vlahos, Xiaojing Wang, Andrew Wiemer, and Suzanne Wilson.

Absent: Richard Anyah, Daniel Bolnick, Zeljko Boskovic, Jennifer Dineen, Anna Dongari-Bagtzoglou, Victoria Ford Smith, Mitch Green, David Gregorio, Michelle Judge, Todd Kravet, Elaine Lee, Charles Mahoney (Moderator), Nancy Naples, Jeff Ogbar, Heather Read, Victoria Robinson, Anji Seth, Prabhakar Singh, Richard Sosis, Gregory Sotzing, Jiong Tang, Rachel Theodore, Damaris Thuita (GSS), Anastasios Tzingounis, Mark Urban, Bing Wang, and Edward Weingart

Guest: Aida Ghiaei

1. Agenda item number one (1) – Call to order. The meeting of the GFC for January 29, 2020 was called to order at 3:04 pm.
2. Agenda item number two (2) – Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the November 20, 2019 meeting of the GFC were presented. There was a motion to accept the minutes offered, which was seconded and the motion was adopted in favor by all members present. **Agenda item number two (2) was passed unanimously without dissent on a show of hands.**
3. Agenda item number three (3) – Announcements from the Dean.
 - a. Post Doc Collective Bargaining was approved at 5:00 am on December 17, 2019. At the time of this meeting the agreement was in the process of being ratified by the Post Doc's. It would then move up to the Board of Trustees and then on to the state.

- b. UConn President Thomas Katsouleas met with The Graduate School administrators, staff and the Executive Committee members on Thursday, January 23, 2020. President Katsouleas discussed how important it is to double research over the next few years and how The Graduate School will play a large roll.
4. Agenda item number four (4) – Report from the Graduate Student Senate. The representative from the Graduate Student Senate was absent so there was no report given.
 5. Agenda item number five (5) – Old Business. At the November meeting the elimination of A+ grades was discussed. At this meeting it was once again presented for consideration and voting. The following change to Section VI.A.a of the GFC by-laws would be made if approved:

Grades and Grade Point Formulas

Explanation	Final Grades	Grade Points
Distinction	A+	4.3
	A	4.0
	A-	3.7
Good Quality	B+	3.3
	B	3.0
	B-	2.7
Below Expected Standard	C+	2.3

A motion was made to adopt the above change to Section VI.A.a of the GFC by-laws, which would implement the elimination of A+ grades in the fall 2020 catalog. This would apply to all students. (A+ grades previously given would remain.) The motion was seconded and approved by a voice vote with one member opposed. **Agenda item number five (5) was approved by a voice vote with one member opposed.**

6. Agenda item number six (6) – New business – presented for discussion:

- a. Proposal regarding change in grading for Grad 5950/5960 and 6950/6960 from S/U to letter graded. Very often faculty are hesitant to give a student a “U” grade since it triggers possible dismissal. The student’s record then shows an “S” grade as if they are performing satisfactorily when in fact the faculty member may not be impressed with their work but does not necessarily want to dismiss the student. Eventually if the professor wishes to dismiss the student it can be difficult because the record does not show that the student was under-performing and it appears that a dismissal was based on only one semester of poor performance. A discussion of how this would work and whether a student’s GPA would be affected followed. It was noted that it would be a good idea to have a paper trail such as an annual report from the Major Advisor on any of these courses. The discussion wrapped up with the decision to take the proposal back to the departments to get some idea of how the constituency feels about this proposed change.
 - b. Discussion regarding the potential of lapsing incomplete grades after one year, possibly with an “IL” or “XL” notation. The policy now states that a student has 12 months to complete a course that has been given an incomplete grade. A discussion ensued regarding time limits, extensions, GA implications, advising issues, etc. The discussion wrapped up with a request to take the idea back to the departments to get some feed-back on the issue.
 - c. Discussion of possible changes to the dismissal process. The existing process timeline makes it very challenging to complete the fall process before the start of the spring semester, which can impact the student’s bill, GA assignments, visa status, payroll, etc. The discussion considered many questions. Do we want a separate process for grade-triggered dismissals vs. dismissals triggered by other things? If so, should grade-triggered dismissals still involve a formal hearing process, or be “administrative”? Should we develop a “probationary” status? Should we have grade-triggered dismissals after both fall and spring, or only after spring semester? It was suggested that the GFC members discuss this with their department and to bring feedback to the next meeting.
7. There was a motion offered for adjournment, which was seconded. The motion was passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 4:43 pm.
 8. The next regular meeting of the GFC is scheduled for March 25th in Storrs Hall, Conference Room WW 16.