



Date: Wednesday, February 26, 2020

Location: Storrs Hall, Conference Room WW16

Subject: Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Hector Aguila, Richard Anyah, Marina Astitha, Gerardo Blanca, Christopher Blesso, Karen Bresciano (*Ex Officio*), Anne Delany, Amanda Denes, Kimberly Dodge-Kafka (UCHC Alternate), Anna Dongari-Bagtzoglou, Jeffrey Dudas, Niloy Dutta, Megan Feely, Susan Glenney (Alternate), Martin Han, Kent Holsinger (*Ex Officio*), Todd Kravet, Barbara Kream (*Ex officio*), Elaine Lee, Jacqueline Loss, Charles Mahoney (Moderator), Barbara Parziale (*Ex Officio – Secretary*), Victoria Robinson, Kathleen Segerson (*Ex Officio*), Prabhakar Singh, Ronald Squibbs, Matthew Stuber (Alternate), Rachel Theodore, Judith Thorpe, Damaris Thuita, Charles Towe, Mark Urban, Susan Wilson

Absent: Mary Anne Amalaradjou, Daniel Bolnick, Zeljko Boskovic, Preston Britner, Yongku Cho, Kenneth Couch, Caroline Dealy, Jose Cruz, Jennifer Dineen, Valerie Duffy, Mitch Green, David Gregorio, Michelle Judge, Nicole Landi, Samuel Martinez, Nancy Naples, Jeffrey Ogbar, William Ouimet, Dan Pejril, Heather Read, Cristian Schulthess, Helena Silva, Victoria Ford Smith, David Solomon, Richard Sosis, Gregory Sotzing, Steven Szczepanek, Jiong Tang, Anastasios Tzingounis, Penny Vlahos, Bing Wang, Xiaojing Wang, Andrew Wiemer and Edward Weingart.

1. Agenda item number one (1) – Call to order. The meeting of the GFC for February 26, 2020 was called to order at 3:05 pm.
2. Agenda item number two (2) – Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the January 29, 2020 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. Dean Holsinger reported that testing centers throughout China have been shut down through the end of March as a result of COVID-19. The Graduate School is releasing applications to departments for evaluation without TOEFL, IELTS, or PTE English proficiency scores. We have always released applications to departments without GRE or GMAT scores, unless they are required for admission. Applicants who are recommended for admission must still provide evidence of proficiency before they can be admitted.

- b. Dean Holsinger also reported that somewhat more than 20 fellowships were offered across the Jorgensen, Harriott, and Crandall awards. The Graduate School anticipates that a reasonable fraction of offers will be declined and took that into account in deciding how many fellowship offers to make.
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) – New business –
 - a. A proposal was made to change the by-laws to clarify and resolve potential inconsistencies in the language regarding participation in the doctoral general exam. After discussion, a motion was made to adopt the following language to replace the current language in Section VII.J of the GFC by-laws:
 - i. *All Ph.D. students are required to pass a Ph.D. General Examination. A student is examined in the several facets of their field of study, not merely in the particular area of concentration. The examination may be written, oral, or both. Advisory or examining committees may give a series of cumulative examinations, to be taken at intervals over the student’s period of study. For practical purposes, the final part of such a series shall be regarded as “the General Examination.” The General Examination usually is undertaken when the student has completed at least 75 percent of the content coursework listed on the approved Plan of Study.*
 - ii. *Normally, the General Examination is under the jurisdiction of the student’s advisory committee. In this case, although other faculty may participate, the final decision as to whether or not the student has passed the examination shall rest solely with the advisory committee. However, the members of the Graduate Faculty in a student’s field of study can vote to assign authority to conduct and determine the outcome for all or part of the examination to a differently constituted examining committee. If a field of study has voted to assign authority over the general exam to a different committee, the final decision as to whether or not the student passed the examination rests with that committee. In either case, a minimum of five faculty members must participate in the general exam.*
 - iii. *After the examination, the Report on the General Examination, indicating the result of the entire examination and the names of all faculty members participating, must be signed by the members of the advisory committee and submitted to The Graduate School no later than the date of the submission of the Dissertation Proposal for final approval by The Graduate School.*

The motion was seconded. Because the motion was not presented at least two weeks in advance of the meeting, pursuant to GFC by-laws, the GFC first voted on whether to allow a vote to change the by-laws in this way. The vote to vote was approved by a voice vote. The GFC then voted on the above change to the by-laws language. The motion to change the by-laws was approved by a voice vote.

- b. A proposal was made to change the by-laws to clarify and resolve potential inconsistencies in the use of credit sharing for certificate programs. After discussion, a motion was made to adopt the following language to replace the current language in Section VII.B.a of the GFC by-laws:

- i. *A limited number of credits (up to 12 for degree programs and 6 for certificate programs) Up to 12 credits of graduate coursework taken while a student is an undergraduate at the University of Connecticut and used to meet the student's undergraduate degree requirements may also be included on the student's graduate plan of study used toward meeting the requirements for a graduate degree or certificate program, provided....*

The motion was seconded. Because the motion was not presented at least two weeks in advance of the meeting, pursuant to GFC by-laws, the GFC first voted on whether to allow a vote to change the by-laws in this way. The vote to vote was approved by a voice vote. The GFC then voted on the above change to the by-laws language. The motion to change the by-laws was approved by a voice vote.

6. Old Business

- a. 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.
- b. 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? Members gave feedback. No consensus was reached.

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 25, 2020. It will be conducted by WebEx due to the Covid-19 pandemic crisis.