



Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2020

Location: Webex due to pandemic

Subject: Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Mary Anne Amalaradjou, Marina Astitha, Janet Barnes-Farrell, Robert Bird, Christopher Blesso, Kristin Bott, Karen Bresciano (*Ex Officio*), Preston Britner, Kristie Cope-Farrar, Kenneth Couch, Jose Cruz, Jennifer Dineen, Hannah Dostal, Valerie Duffy, David Embrick, Megan Feely, Kent Holsinger (*Ex Officio*), Todd Kravet, Barbara Kream (*Ex Officio*), Julia Kuzovkina, Louise Lewis, Charles Mahoney (Moderator), D. Betsy McCoach, Royce Mohan, Michael Morrell, Ovidiu, Munteanu, Kenny Nienhusser, William Ouimet, Barbara Parziale (*Ex Officio – Secretary*), David Pierce, Diane Quinn, Chadwick Rittenhouse, Victoria Robinson, Kathy Segerson (*Ex Officio*), John Settlage, Leslie Shor, Helena Silva, Prabhakar Singh, Victoria Smith, Tammie Spaulding, Ron Squibbs, Matthew Stuber, Judith Thorpe, Penny Vlahos, Andrew Weimer, Peter Zarrow, Ping Zhang and Yuping Zhang.

Absent: Richard Anyah, Deborah Bolnick, Yongku Cho, Mustapha Diaby, Niloy Dutta, Nathan Fiala, Susan Glenney, Mitch Green, Martin Han, Rahul Kanadia, Jacqueline Loss, Michael O’Neill, Eugene Pinkhassik, Alexander Russell, Helene Swede, Aditya Tadinada, and Rachel Theodore.

1. The meeting was held on a Webex site due to the coronavirus.
2. Agenda item number two (2) – Call to order. The meeting of the GFC for September 23, 2020 was called to order at 3:01 pm.
3. Agenda item number three (3) – Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the April 15, 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 three (3) was passed unanimously without dissent on a voice vote.**
4. Agenda item number four (4) – New Business
 - a. Proposed changes to Procedural Provisions to various sections of the GFC by-laws. Because the document was so long, the members were given a copy of it with proposed changes. A motion to adopt these changes was presented for discussion. The motion will be presented for a vote at the next GFC meeting.
 - b. Proposed changes to Section II.B of the GFC by-laws. Some certificates and Post-Master’s degree programs have requirements that are equivalent to those of a comparable master’s degree. For those programs, the rules and regulations set forth in these by-laws for master’s degrees will apply to those certificate programs as well. A motion to adopt these changes was presented for discussion and seconded. The motion will be presented for a vote at the next GFC meeting.

- c. Proposed changes to Section II.D.a of the GFC by-laws. This section concerns the English proficiency for student's whose native language is not English. The proposal was to change the wording to "The acceptable means for establishing English proficiency are set by the Dean of The Graduate School in consultation with the director of the UConn American English Language Institute (UCAELI)." A motion to adopt these changes was presented for discussion and seconded. The motion will be presented for a vote at the next GFC meeting.
 - d. Proposed changes to Section VII.L.h of the GFC by-laws. This proposal concerns removal of the words "bearing original signatures" and adding "All members of the student's advisory committee must approve the final version of the dissertation" to modernize the process. A motion to adopt these changes was presented for discussion and seconded. The motion will be presented for a vote at the next GFC meeting.
 - e. Proposed changes to Section VII.L.c to remove language about the tentative approval of the dissertation to simply read "An oral defense of the dissertation must be announced publicly at least two weeks prior to the date of the defense." A motion to adopt these changes was presented for discussion and seconded. The motion will be presented for a vote at the next GFC meeting.
5. Items for discussion:
- a. Pass/fail policy for graduate students. After a lengthy discussion there was not broad support for the Pass/fail option for graduate students. Faculty should remind students that the "I" incomplete option is available.
 - b. Related/Foreign language requirements. Several programs have opted out of the language/related requirements listed in the GFC by-laws. There are some inconsistencies in the language for this requirement. A lengthy discussion ensued. It was determined that there was little support for keeping this requirement. However, if a department would want to keep it, they will need to spell it out explicitly in the graduate catalog.
6. Announcements from the Dean
- a. The Executive Committee has passed the following resolution:
 - i. The Graduate School Executive Committee recognizes the extraordinary challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and expresses its gratitude and appreciation to the University community for their perseverance under difficult circumstances. The Executive Committee also recognizes that disruptions associated with the pandemic may lengthen the time to degree for some currently enrolled graduate students beyond the time for which departments normally provide assistantships. The Executive Committee encourages deans and department heads to consider temporarily extending the usual time limits on assistantship support.
 - b. The Dean was looking for general templates from departments for annual progress reports that can be used to monitor and manage graduate student progress. If anyone has a template that they are willing to share, please forward it to the Dean.
 - c. The University Senate is currently considering a change to the spring 2021 calendar. Some items on the table are:
 - i. Beginning the spring semester remotely for two weeks instead of a two week quarantine, meaning all courses begin in the remote mode.

- ii. Start the semester one week later on January 25th instead of January 19th to reduce transmission of the coronavirus.
 - iii. Eliminate or move to later in the semester Spring break. If it is put at the end of the semester the rest of the semester would be completed remotely.
 - d. There was some confusion with respect to online only fee reductions for grad students taking Grad 6950 or Grad 5950 which are classified as on campus. These classes are for students who are working on their thesis or dissertation only. Students wanted these classes to be subject to the reduced fees since students who are enrolled in these courses may not be on campus. The Provost said no, because this could negatively affect international students who need to be actively engaged in the in person learning at UConn and therefore these classes have always been deemed as on campus.
7. There was a motion offered for adjournment, which was seconded. The motion was passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.
8. The next regular meeting of the GFC is scheduled for October 28, 2020 via Webex.