



Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020

Location: WebEx Online

Subject: Executive Committee (EC) of The Graduate School meeting minutes

Attendees: Judy Brown, Maria-Luz Fernandez, Mitch Green, Kent Holsinger (*Ex Officio, Chair*), Barbara Kream (*Ex Officio*), Charles Mahoney, Betsy McCoach, Barbara Parziale (*Ex Officio – Secretary*), Kathy Segerson (*Ex Officio*), and Penny Vlahos.

Absent: Jane Gordon, Elizabeth Holzer, Etan Markus, and Lynn Puddington

1. Agenda item number one (1) – Call to order. The regular meeting of the Executive Committee for April 15, 2020 was called to order at 3:00 pm.
2. Agenda item number two (2) – Presented for consideration and voting – Approval of the minutes. The minutes of the March 11, 2020 meeting of the Executive Committee were introduced. There was a motion offered to accept the minutes, which was seconded, and the motion was adopted in favor by all members present. **Agenda item number two (2) was passed without dissent.**
3. Agenda item number three (3) – Announcements.
 - a. The Graduate School Town Hall was held on Thursday, April 9, 2020 with approximately 220-230 students in online attendance. There were between six to eight students using the sign language link. There were many good questions so The Graduate School will be posting the Town Hall discussion on our website.
 - b. The Presidential Town Hall was held on April 14, 2020 with approximately 350 students joining. Most questions dealt with residential, fees, financial aid and funding.
 - c. As part of the new CARES act enacted by the government, UConn has been allotted \$20 million dollars with approximately \$10 million designated to address aid for students. Graduate Students will be eligible for a portion of the aid and it is possible some international students may also be eligible.
 - d. The GFC passed a temporary change to the grading system for the spring semester due to the Covid19 pandemic sweeping the country. Students may place their class on a Pass/Fail or Audit for the semester instead of letter grades. Students will make that choice after the end of the semester once they see their grade. However, once the decision has been made to either keep the grade or place the course on Pass/Fail or Audit, they cannot reverse that decision.
4. Agenda item number four (4) – Presented for consideration and voting – *Change in title for an existing area of concentration within MEng – “Civil Engineering” MEng.* The Civil and Environmental Engineering program already has an Environmental Engineering area of concentration within MEng that will continue to exist and concentrate on environmental

coursework. This request is to change the name of the existing Civil and Environmental Engineering area of concentration to simply Civil Engineering to better reflect the curriculum being offered which is structural and transportation coursework. After a brief review of the request there was a motion to approve the change. The motion was seconded and was then approved. **Agenda item number four (4) was passed unanimously.**

5. Agenda item number five (5) - Presented for consideration and voting – *Revise an existing course - MCB 5299: Current topics in Cell Biology*. This proposal is to switch to S/U grading and changing the numbering of the course to be consistent within the program. After a brief review of the request and the syllabus that were provided a motion was made to accept the change which was seconded. A discussion ensued regarding the request as well as the syllabus attached. The motion was then given provisional approval of the change as long as an appropriate syllabus is forthcoming. **Agenda item number five (5) was approved with revision of the accompanying syllabus.**
6. Agenda item number six (6) – Deans report and Discussion
 - a. Dean Holsinger asked how online courses were progressing. Members responded that the progress was good except for the trolling that occasionally disrupted the class.
 - b. Do Grad Students feel that they are being supported? There was a letter sent to the President, Provost and Vice Provost/Dean of The Graduate School with some demands for graduate students which was responded to soon after. Most questions concerned extension/time to degree, funding, Pass/Fail (which has already been addressed for the spring semester), whether courses are online in the fall and the increased sense of isolation caused by the pandemic.
 - c. Is the university putting together a task force to deal with this type of disruption in the future since there is a good possibility something like this could happen again? This was deemed an excellent idea by the members and will be an idea for the future.
7. Agenda item number seven (7) – New Business and Updates. There was no other new business or updates reported at this time.
8. There was a motion offered for adjournment which was seconded and the motion was adopted in favor by all members present. The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 pm.
9. The next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled for **September 2020 in the Giolas Conference Room.**

ADDENDUM

1. On May 5, 2020 an e-mail was sent out to members of the Executive Committee regarding a GPAR proposal which involves a change in the name of a graduate certificate (and the associated areas of concentration) in the School of Nursing. This change is required for accreditation purposes, since the accrediting body requires a very specific program name (to appear on the student's transcript) that is different from the current name. Because of the need for timely resolution of this, the proposal was put to **an email vote** by the EC. The e-mail requested a response of approval or not approved from the Committee members by May 10,

2020. The response to the voting request was unanimous approval by all members.
Addendum item number one (1) was approved by an e-mail vote with no dissent.