

Date: Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Location: Webex due to pandemic

Subject: Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Mary Anne Amalaradjou, Richard Anyah, Marina Astitha, Janet Barnes-Farrell, Christopher Blesso, Deborah Bolnick, Zeljko Boskovic, Kristin Bott, Karen Bresciano (*Ex Officio*), Preston Britner, Kelly Burke, Yongku Cho, Mustapha Diaby, Jennifer Dineen, Hannah Dostal, Valerie Duffy, Niloy Dutta, Kristie Farrar, Megan Feely, Martin Han, Kent Holsinger (*Ex Officio*), Todd Kravet, Barbara Kream (*Ex Officio*), Julia Kuzovkina, Charles Mahoney (Moderator), D. Betsy McCoach, Royce Mohan, Kenny Nienhusser, Michael O'Neill, William Ouimet, Barbara Parziale (*Ex Officio – Secretary*), Dan Pejril, Chad Rittenhouse, Victoria Robinson, Joel Salisbury, Irio Schiano (GSS), Kathy Segerson (*Ex Officio*), Anji Seth, Victoria Smith, Ron Squibbs, Helene Swede, Matthew Stuber, Penny Vlahos, Michael Willig, Alexander Woodward, Peter Zarrow, Ping Zhang, and Yuping Zhang.

Absent: Kenneth Couch, Jose Cruz, David Embrick, Nathan Fiala, Susan Glenney, Mitch Green, Rahul Kanadia, Jacqueline Loss, Michael Morrell, Ovidiu Munteanu, David Pierce, Eugene Pinkhassik, Alexander Russell, Helena Silva, Prabhakar Singh, Aditya Tadinada, Rachel Theodore, Judith Thorpe, and Andrew Weimer.

Guests: Suzanne Wilson

---

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 January 27, 2021 was called to order at 3:02 pm.
3. Agenda item number three (3) – Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the November 18, 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. Report from the Graduate Student Senate. Due to winter vacation there was nothing new to report.
5. Agenda item number five (5) – Old Business (for voting) There was nothing pending at this time.
6. New Business (for discussion)
  - a. Revision to Requirements for Advising by Emeritus Faculty. As Emeritus Faculty it seems unnecessary to require the submission of curriculum vitae in order to be a major advisor. Most members are in agreement that the phrase “requires submission of a curriculum vitae” is not necessary. A motion was proposed to revise Section VIII.A.j of the GFC by-laws as follows:

A member of the University of Connecticut's Graduate Faculty who has retired from active service may be considered for appointment as major advisor for a newly-admitted master's or doctoral student. Application is made to the Executive Committee of The Graduate School and requires ~~submission of a curriculum vitae and~~ the endorsement of the appropriate department or program head. The retired faculty member must present substantial evidence of ongoing research and scholarly activity in the field. Separate application is required for each newly-admitted student for whom a retired faculty member wishes to serve as major advisor. Such appointments are made by the Dean of The Graduate School with the advice of the Executive Committee.

This proposed motion was discussed. GFC members were asked to discuss the motion with their departments, for possible vote at the next GFC meeting.

- b. Clarification of limits on repeating courses. In the Graduate Catalog the statement reads that a student "may repeat a course without seeking permission in order to earn a higher grade." The discussion centered around revising the statement to read "may repeat a course once in order to earn a higher grade." A motion was proposed to revise Change Section V.C. of the GFC by-laws as follows:

No student shall receive credit for the same course twice, unless repeating the course is specifically authorized in the Graduate Catalog, as in a variable content course. Courses with the same number that cover the same course content cannot be counted more than once for credit. However, a student may repeat a course once previously taken up to two times without seeking permission in order to earn a higher grade. When a student repeats a course for which repeat credit is not specifically authorized in the Graduate Catalog, the student's transcript will indicate a grade, but no registered credit, for the repeated course.

When a course is repeated to earn a higher grade prior to completion of a degree, in the computation of the grade point average, the registered credit and grade points for the highest grade shall be included in the GPA calculation. ~~and the registered credit and grade for the lower grade shall remain on the transcript, but shall be removed from the GPA calculation.~~ When a student repeats a course after receiving a degree, the new grade will not affect the student's GPA as recorded on the transcript.

~~When a student repeats a course after receiving a degree, the student's transcript will indicate a grade, but no registered credit, for the repeated course.~~

A student must have major advisor permission to repeat a course that is listed as a prerequisite or co-requisite for any course that the student has passed.

This motion was discussed. GFC members were asked to discuss the motion with their departments, for possible vote at the next GFC meeting.

- c. Clarification of Requirements for "Master's Along the Way." Currently there are four different ways to earn a Master's degree. These paths include the standard Plan B without a thesis and Plan A with a thesis. A student may also earn a Master's along the way to a PhD degree or by moving to a terminal master's if the student is not going to continue to complete the PhD program in which they were enrolled. The key question raised is whether

receiving a master's along the way by passing the doctoral general exam should require 30 credits of content coursework or simply 30 credits (including research credits). The general sense was that it should require 30 credits of content coursework. The GFC agreed that Dean Holsinger should develop language to clarify this in the requirements for PhD students getting a master's degree, with the new language being presented for discussion and possible voting at the next GFC meeting.

7. NRC grade discussion. The Senate Scholastic Standards Committee recognized that with the Covid 19 challenges it might be appropriate to have a code other than a "W" for the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semester. Students are concerned about how a "W" will look on their transcript when Covid issues were possibly the cause. NRC for "No record – Covid" has been suggested instead of the W. There will be no difference in the action taken but is thought that the NRC will look better than a W. The question that arises is whether, if approved by the Senate for undergraduates, such a grade should also be available to graduate students.
8. Announcements from the Dean of the Graduate School, Kent Holsinger.
  - a. Reminder: Changes to the Graduate Catalog must be submitted by February 1, 2021.
  - b. Reminder: The grade of A+ has been eliminated for graduate students.
  - c. The Plenary Session was recorded and will be available soon.
  - d. In late 2020 Congress passed the second Covid Relief bill which included some money for UConn to help close the remaining budget gap for this fiscal year. UConn will continue to face structural changes for fringe benefits for the next several years. The state would like UConn to not increase the tuition next year but a lot will depend on if the block grant will be held at the same amount.
9. There was a motion offered for adjournment, which was seconded. The motion was passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 pm.
10. The next regular meeting of the GFC is scheduled for February 24, 2021 via Webex.