

**UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL
MINUTES**

March 09, 2023

10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

President's Conference Room

Council in Attendance:

Catherine Dunlop (Letters)
Brennan Reeves (Office of International Programs)
Jennifer Thomson (Faculty Senate)
Craig Ogilvie (Dean of The Graduate School)
Katey Franklin (Health & Human Development)
Amy Reines (Sciences)
Wade Hill (Nursing)
Sweeney Windchief (Education)
Heidi Koenig (Student Representative)
Michael Everts (Architecture)
Brian Rossmann (Library)
Stephan Warnat (Engineering)

Also in Attendance:

Abby Sophir (Graduate School)
Donna Negaard (Graduate School)

Absent

Jane Mangold (Agriculture)
Marc Giullian (Business)
Arts Representative

Meeting started at 10:00 a.m.

February 23, 2023 minutes

- Motion to approve by Reines, Everts 2nd, 10 pass, 1 abstention

Announcements

- **Update from the Dean**
 - Applications and admissions cycle
 - 1,830 for summer or fall, increase of 172 compared to last year (10% increase)
 - Approx 50:50 international to US applicants
 - 54% with admission decisions have gotten a positive offer, slightly higher than last year
 - International students being denied at twice the rate of US students
 - Big push in partnership with departments to get decisions out sooner, students who had yet not heard is at 43% this year versus 71% at this time last year
 - Q: How does offer rate compare to yield rate?

- Yield rate has been going down in the last few years
 - Q: How difficult is it for international students to get visa?
 - Rising approval rates in the geographic locations being targeted
 - Can put together a report, there are ways for students to get around long wait times by traveling to other countries
 - Q: April 15 CGS national agreement
 - Students with a financial offer can't be required to make a decision before that date
- **Faculty Senate update (Thomson)**
 - Department Head evaluation survey going on currently
 - Update from library: Change of subscription to Elsevier journals, still paid by library
 - Revisions to Student Safety Questionnaire- students will be asked about some misdemeanors in addition to felonies and must certify if charged after application to update the university; goal is to keep the campus safe
 - Dean Ogilvie: Presence of safety questionnaires has an impact on whether student actually applies; criminal justice system in US disproportionately impacts people of color, higher misdemeanor rate; very cautious of expanding this questionnaire to include misdemeanors; national conversations to remove this at the application stage and have admitted students submit answers before they arrive on campus
 - Thomson: Slight expansion of misdemeanors; Thomson can share the survey; senate not being asked to vote
 - Threats to QSA
 - Threat of mass shooting associated with an event, as well as anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-POC email
 - Dean Ogilvie: reached out to QSA to fast-track community mini grants
 - Police presence at events is standard for diverse populations

Old Business

- Appeal policy language (policy committee update)
 - Update from Subcommittee
 - Switched order to place decisions before exceptions
 - Suggestion to add sentence focused on ethics and fairness of process,
 - Donna: Student Conduct Code includes sample language,
 - Recommendation not to use the word 'ethics'
 - Suggestion to delete the sentence on the dean being the last appeal.
 - Q: Is it different if the advisor is the department head?
 - Donna: In these situations when it gets sticky, grad school works with the students
 - Q: Is it necessary to have a letter from the committee chair?
 - Reliant on committee chair to collaborate in these situations
 - Sometimes a new committee chair is assigned, in which case they would submit the letter
 - When student doesn't have a supportive committee chair, appeal would be paused to go through committee chair process

- Provide an appeal flow chart
 - Subcommittee will take on this task
 - Subcommittee will come back next week with updates, ready for a vote
- Learning outcomes for credits such as professional paper, thesis/dissertation credits (curriculum committee update)
 - Handout provided: Example from University of Alberta, bullet points can be used as guidelines for departments for course level outcomes
 - Description for these courses must be flexible and broad enough to capture a range of activities
 - Suggestion to use bullet points with: “One or more of the following should be completed...”
 - Q: How will this impact students?
 - Opportunity to provide clarity to students of what is expected
 - May be helpful to include language specific to the stage of research the student is in
 - Perhaps add in the ETD language about broad variety of epistemologies
- Non-Profit Certificate, level I proposal
 - Tabled, waiting on update
- Draft Policy on doctoral entrance exams (Ogilvie)
 - Approx half of doctoral programs have qualifier exams, results of which lead to some students being dismissed from programs. For most students, the quals delay their engagement in research.
 - Updates since last meeting
 - Added mathematics dept as having a qualifier
 - Included impact on AI/AN and Hispanic students
 - Rather than trying to define different exams, shifted focus to results → proposal is student can't be dismissed solely based on exam results
 - Departments can keep format of exams and use as a formative tool
 - Literature provided was about qualifier and comprehensive exams
 - Four departments have sent comments
 - When it comes to senate, Thomson asks for faculty on grad council to come speak to this rather than administrators
 - Hazing element-- in the year students are taking these exams, they are being accepted or rejected into a lab, causes significant stress for students, how to create protection for students and confidentiality in exam scores?
 - Student's faculty advisor and their committee would make decision on whether a student should be dismissed; students can underperform on formal exams, which can create a dilemma for the student's faculty adviser
 - Suggestion to frame the policy as giving PIs more autonomy
 - Warnat: Should be up to the supervisor to bring student up to the level they require, encourages strong relationship with supervisor
 - Next steps:
 - Send new version out to departments who have sent comments
 - Dean Ogilvie speak to department heads and gather their input on the policy. Also speaking to the physics department after spring break
- Political science 12-credit graduate certificate, nonprofit management (update)
 - Tabled

New Business

- Draft guidelines on Changing Advisor
 - Donna has a process that helps students change advisors, students may not know these steps and so the proposed guidelines can help.
 - GSLC feedback: Want confidentiality rights front and center, including links in policy
 - Donna cannot hold confidential conversations because of mandatory reporting, but privacy taken seriously.
 - She asks permission from student on how to proceed and who to talk to
 - Often involves coaching the student and explaining options.
 - Even with Title IX investigations, students have considerable autonomy on decisions.
 - Q: Challenge for international students to understand language
 - Suggestion to create an acculturation course, required for international students, about American higher ed power dynamics and the resources they have when issues arise.
 - Q: Who takes on the students that need new advisors?
 - Sometimes department head has to step in to help with these situations
 - Goal is to find someone to work with in the department, not precluded to get a research person off-campus
 - Q: How many students are going through this process?
 - At least 10 per year

Update from Subcommittees

Adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Next scheduled meeting – March 23, 2023
(Dunlap will be out of town, Reines will run the meeting)

Subcommittees

- Policy and Procedures Committee (Hill, Mangold, Everts, Rossman)
- Curriculum Committee (Reines, Warnat, Thomson, Reeves)
- Governance Committee (Dunlop, Giullian, Franklin, Sweeney)
 - Diversity Equity and Inclusion committee