

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 3, 2024

Members/Alternates Present:

Godev, Concepcion, Chair – Languages & Culture Studies
Allan, Craig – Geography and Earth Sciences
Brown, Dace – Public Health Sciences
Cooper, Liz – Bioinformatics and Genomics
Cox, Kyle – Educational Leadership
Dow, Alan - Mathematics and Statistics, former alternate
Gall, David – Art & Art History
Johar, Monica – Bus Information Sys and Operations Mgmt
Libby, Garrison – Atkins Library
Montanaro, Erika – Psychological Science
Mukherjee, Pinku – Interim Dean, Graduate School
O’Bruba, Ashley – GPSG Student Representative
Troutman, Jay - Chemistry
Xu, Terry – Mechanical Engineering and Engineering Science

Also Attending: Coffey, Lauren – Graduate School
Hall-Hertel, Katherine – Graduate School
Watson, Johnna – Graduate School
Wyse, Matt – Faculty Governance

I. Report of the Chair – Concepcion Godev

A. Approval of the May 7, 2024, Meeting Minutes

- Chair Godev asked for comments or corrections to the May 7, 2024, minutes. There were no comments or corrections. Chair Godev asked that only those members who were on the Council at the time of the May meeting vote. Craig Allan, CHESS member, motioned to approve the minutes. Dace Brown, CHHS member, seconded. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of those members who were on the council for the May meeting. All others abstained.

B. Approval of the August 20, 2024, Meeting Minutes

- Chair Godev asked for comments or corrections to the August 20, 2024, minutes. There were no comments or corrections. Dace Brown, CHHS member, motioned to approve the minutes. David Gall, Arts + Architecture member, seconded. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

II. Report of the Graduate School Dean – Pinku Mukherjee

- Dean Mukherjee stated that she did not have anything to report at this time, and turned the floor over to Johnna Watson, Associate Dean of the Graduate School.
- Johnna Watson reported that total student enrollment for the university is 31,091.
- Graduate student enrollment is 6,223 students, down 1 ½% from last year. Master's student enrollment is down 61 students and doctoral research student enrollment is down 29 students, marking the lowest enrollment in 4 years.
- New master's international student enrollment is down 158 students. One reason that international student enrollment is down is the increased difficulty for students to obtain OPT after graduation. Another issue is that the U.S. dollar is strong, which makes the cost of a graduate education more expensive. STEM PhD programs are also accepting more students from Iran. It takes Iranian students longer to obtain a visa, which can cause issues. The enrollment team has spoken to these programs about diversifying the new student population.

III. Discussion Topics

A. Graduate Faculty Policy Recommendation - Departmental Nominations of non-tenure, full-time faculty to Regular Graduate Faculty Status - Katherine Hall-Hertel

- The Graduate School oversees faculty appointments. There have been requests to make exceptions allowing associate faculty to serve as chairs of dissertation committees. Associate faculty are not allowed to vote on curriculum or serve on the Graduate Council.
- The Graduate School researched graduate faculty at 5 peer universities. There was variability in graduate faculty.
- The Graduate School proposes a new process by which associate graduate faculty can be nominated to chair dissertation committees, serve on Graduate Council, and other tasks performed by tenured faculty, since many associate faculty members are doing research and publishing.
- The new process will require the department, not the Graduate School, to make exceptions for associate faculty to perform tasks usually reserved for tenured or tenure track faculty, such as serving on Graduate Council.
- Annette Parks pointed out that all new regular and associate faculty members are appointed for 3 years at first, and then reappointed for 5 years.
- Dace Brown asked if a faculty member has only worked with undergraduate students, but wants to work with graduate students, will they have to wait until they are teaching graduate students to be allowed to perform these tasks. Katherine Hall-Hertel confirmed that yes, they must first prove that they can engage with graduate students.

- Kyle Cox, College of Education member, and Monica Jahar, College of business member, both asked for clarification of the 4th bullet point, which states that associate professors cannot chair more committees than the average number chaired by tenured professors in the department. Monica pointed out that this can vary from department to department. Katherine explained that the Graduate School doesn't want departments to rely on associate professors chairing more committees than tenured professors.
- Kyle asked for clarification on the research and publishing criteria, specifically if external funding will also be considered, since his department does not publish as much as other departments but does obtain more external funding.
- Chair Godev pointed out that this policy does not force departments to nominate associate faculty to these positions. It is up to the department to apply the policy. It is designed for departments that need flexibility. Dean Mukherjee added that the Provost asked why we are not allowing teaching and research faculty to be regular faculty. This will give departments the flexibility to allow faculty to serve in other capacities.
- Monica asked for clarification on the term "chair", specifically if this refers to chairing dissertation committees or faculty committees. Katherine responded that it refers to either and that associate faculty who are nominated can do anything regular faculty can do. Dean Mukherjee added that the "average" mentioned before refers to dissertation committees.
- Chair Godev stated that the next step is to take the policy to the colleges for a vote. She agreed to email the department chairs on behalf of the council. Katherine agreed to make the edits suggested at this meeting and present the revised document to Chair Godev.

B. Graduate Faculty Bylaws Review - Concepcion Godev

- Chair Godev reminded the council that the review of the Graduate Faculty Bylaws began last year.
- The first change reviewed was the addition that the chair of the Graduate Council must have been a member of the council for at least one two-year term. Monica asked if it must be two consecutive years. Chair Godev replied that sometimes issues do arise, but someone serving two non-consecutive terms and becoming chair would have to be the exception. Dace asked for clarification regarding whether the chair had to start their term immediately after their two-year term as a member, or if they could drop off the council and then become chair. Dace also confirmed that a council member could serve two terms and then be elected as chair.
- Katherine stated that currently council members are voted on by regular faculty members and associate faculty are excluded. Craig asked if associate faculty who are given regular faculty member status via the proposal presented by Katherine earlier in the meeting would be eligible to vote. Dean Mukherjee confirmed that they would be able to vote.

- Chair Godev suggested that the policy regarding vacancy be moved to a separate paragraph so that it is more visible. The policy states that if a vacancy occurs, the rest of the term will be filled by the alternate.
- Johnna Watson recommended adding that the council members are a conduit of information between the colleges and the council. The flow of information goes both ways.
- Chair Godev pointed out that if an alternate assumes the member role for more than a year, it counts as one term. If they serve for less than a year, they are still eligible to serve two consecutive terms.
- Chair Godev recommended replacing the word “Track” with “concentration”. Degreeworks using the term concentration, and Johnna pointed out that concentrations are listed on transcripts, but not tracks. Tracks was replaced with concentration.
- Chair Godev asked why the job description of the Dean of the Graduate School is included in the bylaws since this document is for faculty governance. Katherine recommended having a statement that the dean is an ex officio member of the council and then linking to the job description. Dean Mukherjee pointed out that the position of the dean is to provide updates when necessary.
- The amendments to the bylaws must be brought to the faculty via an open hearing and then voted on by all faculty. Chair Godev suggested voting by Google form since the bylaws allow for online voting.

IV. Course and Curriculum Proposals

A. Architecture, M.Arch., and Architecture, M.S., Dual Degree Program

Originator: Emily Makas, School of Architecture

Graduate Council Assignment: All Members

- Chair Godev stated that the comments on the proposal were positive. She did suggest that in Section C of the proposal the wording should be changed to reflect Graduate School policy which allows Duolingo as an English Language Proficiency Test. This is more of a general comment for the Curriculog proposal process rather than a comment for this specific proposal. Johnna commented that a similar change had been proposed but they were waiting until they had more data on Duolingo. Chair Godev told Matt to hold off on making any changes.
- Dace commented that she was not able to make comments in Curriculog and that one of the links was not working.
- A motion to approve the proposal was submitted by Craig Allan, member from CHESS.
- The motion was seconded by Dace Brown, member from CHHS.
- The proposal was passed unanimously.

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V. Other Business

No new business was discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:37 pm.

The next Graduate Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1, 2024, from 12:30 – 2:00pm in Reese 211.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Jones
Graduate Council Secretary