MINUTES
The Graduate Council
November 18, 2020
Via Zoom

Members Present: Ron Bramhall (ex officio), Robin Clement, Ihab Elzeyadi, Felicia Gutierrez, Beth Harn, Burke Hendrix, Andy Karduna (ex officio), Hauxin Lin, Kate Mondloch (ex officio), Fabienne Moore, Dorothee Ostmeier, Ellen Peters, Jeremy Piger, Julia Pomerenk (ex officio), Joan Rocklin, Leslie Straka, Frances White (ex officio), Chelsea Wright, Hong Yuan, and Annie Zeidman-Karpinski (ex officio)

Members Absent: Marina Guenza,

Graduate School Staff in Attendance: Jered Nagel, Tara Kaiser

The meeting was called to order at 3:31pm. The October 2020 minutes were approved as distributed.

Update from the Dean

- GE Funding Extension
  - The Provost Office is close to finalizing a plan
  - GE allocations have been given to all units
- Current Graduate School efforts:
  - Working on providing resources and training for campus partners, some of which are related to anti-racism and DEI initiatives
  - Sponsored webinars on topics such as mentoring during a crisis, mental health issues for grad students, identity based support training for Latinx and black students
  - Holistic admissions
    - Developed a document on best practices for holistic admissions.
    - Working with Julie Posselt to conduct a 2-day workshop in the spring. Audience is still to be determined.
  - Revised annual program reports to include disaggregated data on completion rates by demographic categories
  - Put together working group to focus on issues of diversity and inclusion, starting with CAS Deans and Department Heads
  - Discussing student mental health issues with GTFF
  - Grad Student Advisory Council
    - Met to discuss mental health and how to best share resources
    - Aim to make sure these issues are acknowledged across campus

Work Plan for the Senate’s Anti-Racism Resolution

Graduate Council Chair, Robin Clement, provided a brief overview of this resolution and noted that a member of the Graduate Council will be asked to serve on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which is charged with determining ways to support the University’s obligation to educate future students on issues of anti-racism. She also suggested that Council invite someone to attend an upcoming meeting to facilitate discussion on these issues and what actions could be taken. Some suggested guests included Padma Akkaraju and Spike Gildea, both of whom have demonstrated success in rolling out initiatives within their respected departments. Professor Clement also shared information received from Elliot Berkman that outlines a Senate initiative that involves establishing an anti-racism academy for senators and committees, including Graduate Council. Berkman also plans to host similar curriculum around various departments.
Professor Dorothee Ostmeier emphasized the importance of having continued training in this area, rather than a single workshop. Professor Fabienne Moore also stated that there needs to be concrete plans and goals that are realistic and symbolic, rather than just holding discussions on the rhetoric of diversity. She brought up the issue of the pioneer statues that had been torn down by my students. Perhaps the University could commission artwork from someone from a diverse ethnic background to replace the statues. Professor Ihab Elzeyadi suggested turning it into an engaging competition as a means of healing.

Though this idea was well received, Professor Burke Hendrix reminded everyone that the plans should focus on more on areas specific to Graduate Council, such as procedural changes or ensuring that admissions or curriculum are not biased.

Master’s student, Felicia Gutierrez, voiced her concern that the University Senate, as well as various councils around campus, are mainly white dominated spaces, which causes a disconnect when asking for voices from those who have been historically excluded. Though this is not something that can change overnight, it is important to be mindful of that fact.

**Music Theory Pedagogy Specialization**

Assistant Professor in Music Theory, Drew Nobile, joined the Graduate Council meeting to discuss this proposal. He explains that this specialization allows students/composers in any music program (except theory) to gain pedagogical skills to be able to teach music theory and keep up with current trends in the field. Having recently eliminated the mandatory supporting areas for doctoral students, there has been great interest in this specialization as it will help students in other aspects of the field besides music itself. It also has fewer credit requirements than a concurrent degree, and is transcriptable.

Professor Nobile further explained that the skills exam will test skills, like basic piano and sight-singing, that are necessary to teach courses. This exam is offered ad hoc with people who take comprehensive exams and will be offered in the first week of every term. The specialization also includes a 1-credit practicum to make sure that students have some experience teaching music theory. He adds that music theory students and most composers have a GE in music theory, but those who do practicum will observe a class, have a lab section to teach one day a week, and conclude with a writing project about their experience.

The Graduate Council could not vote on approving this speculation due courses still undergoing the regularization process. Once those issues are resolved, the Council will vote by email.

**Review of Senate Policy US18/19-09 - Process for Undergraduate and Graduate Council Approval When Courses are Not Finalized**

There has been a recurring issue regarding the delay of program proposal approval due to courses being held up in the regularization process. In an effort to alleviate this problem, the policy had been updated to allow programs to move forward and be taught under generic numbers while concurrently undergoing the regularization process. UOCC representative, Frances White, explained that entering programs into CourseLeaf allows their committee to keep better track of where courses are in the regularization process, and also which programs are using unregularized courses.

When asked why courses must be regularized, Professor White explained that unregularized courses are only to assist with learning outside the realm of normal curriculum. They have not been reviewed by an accredited committee and could be taught by someone with no background check on their content. Going through the regularization process and gaining the proper accreditation ensures that appropriate credit is given for appropriate activities, and therefore maintains the credibility of the degree.

Several professors on the Graduate Council have voiced their difficulty in using and navigating CourseLeaf which they believe deters many individuals from making sure their program is in compliance.
Associate Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Ron Bramhall, noted that the training materials for CourseLeaf are currently being updated, and he is working on providing more software support. UOCC could also be available to consult departments on an as needed basis or if a program is found to be out of compliance.

The Council adjourned at 5:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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                      Fabienne Moore
                      Graduate Council Secretary