MINUTES
The Graduate Council
May 20th, 2020
Remote Zoom Meeting

Members Present: Autumn Shafer, Ron Bramhall (ex officio), Dane Christensen, Robin Clement, Ihab Elzeyadi, Burke Hendrix, Rachael Klaiss, Andy Karduna (ex officio), Kate Mondloch (ex officio), Fabienne Moore, Dorothee Ostmeier, Elizabeth Peterson (ex officio), Jeremy Piger, Julia Pomerenk (ex officio), Leslie Straka, Angie Whalen, and Frances White (ex officio)

Members Absent: Michael Fakhri, Marina Guenza, Aidan Kolar, Huaxin Lin, Phil Scher (ex officio)

Graduate School Staff in Attendance: Tara Kaiser, Jered Nagel

The meeting was called to order at 3:30pm. The April, 2020 minutes were approved as distributed.

Modification to D.Ed. Program in Educational Leadership

A major modification to this degree involves making a change from a 40 page dissertation paper to a 30-40 page publishable paper that must also include a poster presentation. The proposal argues that a capstone is more efficient in preparing students for academic outreach and leadership positions, where it leads to a poster presentation rather than a research paper. This program is designed for practitioners and working professionals where they can learn to research and analyze data for program evaluation within the workforce.

Director of D.Ed. program in EMPL, Julie Alonzo, joined the meeting to offer further clarification and respond to questions. Professor Burke Hendrix requested more information on overall flow of the program and nature of the 30-40 page paper. Julie explained that this program is geared to fit the needs of students’ professional aspirations within their roles as practitioners or teachers who are aiming to take on district or state administrative roles or pursue a doctorate. They will focus more on practical problems and making contributions to the field rather than theoretical problems, and the new dissertation format will have a solid focus on problems of practice. They will still use literature to identify gaps in research knowledge and use a methodological approach by gathering data. Professor Hendrix also voiced concern about appointing an institutional representative before they had a chance to establish thorough relationships. Julie clarified that they are looking for someone to commit to being an institutional representative once students have completed the first year of the program. They will then have a pre-proposal meeting at the beginning of the second year where the institutional representative would be present. Traditionally the representative comes from within the college, but not their department.

Professor Fabienne Moore asked Julie to explain what the poster evaluation will be like considering the work is done in small teams. Julie informed the Council that the group dissertation would have a broad topic that is researched by a group and that the actual dissertation and poster section would be an independent project that is more in-depth and on a specific subtopic. This portion mimics what is to be done in the workforce in regards to collaboration, building on ideas, and sharing rigorous research.

Julie Alonzo departed the meeting and the Council casted their votes. Professor Dorothee Ostmeier motioned to approve the proposal. Professor Ihab Elzeyadi seconded the motion, and the Council were all in agreement.

Realignment of Course Requirements in Architecture
This proposal had been discussed in a previous Council meeting but needed revisions before it could be voted on. Unregularized courses that had been listed as required have since been moved to an electives list.

Professor Ostmeier motioned to approve the revised proposal, Professor Hendrix seconded the motion, and the Council were all in agreement.

**Modification to Pass/No Pass Policy**

This proposal calls for instructors to enter letter grades for all students regardless of whether they have chosen the Pass/No Pass grading option. Graduate student Rachael Klaiss questioned how the backend process of entering grades worked, and Ron Bramhall confirmed that although instructors will enter letter grades for all students, if the student opted for P/NP, the system will recognize which letter grade will translate into pass or no pass. The student will still see the grade and the grade will be retained, but faculty will not have known which students opted for P/NP option. Students also have the option to switch back and forth between grading options.

Professor Moore wondered what the advantage is of faculty not knowing whether a student has chosen the P/NP option. Ron Bramhall confirmed that this process is simply to stay in line with undergraduate levels and to allow for a single process for which faculty enters grades.

Several Council members voiced concern that students who choose P/NP may operate with a lower level of effort than those who choose to have a letter grade. It has had an effect in group projects where students who choose to receive a letter grade do not want to be partnered with P/NP students. Some faculty would like to know which students opted for P/NP to know how to properly advise students. It was confirmed that they are, in fact, able to see how students have registered by viewing the class list in DuckWeb.

Professor Ostmeier motioned to approve the proposal and the Council were all in agreement.

**Update from Kate Mondloch, Interim Dean of Graduate School**

- In effort to expand services to more individuals and faculty advisors across campus the Graduate School has purchased a variety of webinars that people can participate in
- The Graduate School is sponsoring a summer writing program for students
- Our goal is to broaden discussion about graduate education and collaboration with Graduate Council
- The Graduate School has a plan to reboot its Faculty in Residence program which will focus on topics such as mentoring and advising, professional development, development of courses in interdisciplinary communications, and mental health and wellness
- Ways the Grad School focuses on the student: career coaching, wellness programming, teacher training with TEP, working with the GTFF to come up with ways to increase GE opportunities, newsletter, Grad Student Advisory Council meetings, exit interviews, office hours
- Future initiatives: career pathways approach that involves tracking students through obtaining a job, research mentorship fellowships, international peer advising, drop-in office for grad students

**Update from Dorothee Ostmeier, Chair of Grad Council**

- Professor Ostmeier will be attending Senate meeting and will provide an update on all activities and progress that the Graduate Council has been involved in
- In the future, the Council must be more active in brainstorming ideas on how to provide more for graduate students and improve their experience
- Graduate Council could promote fellowships to various departments and push for Deans to commit to co-sponsored funding to support graduate research
- Actively promoting Senate and College collaboration rather than competition
• Goal to model caring professionalism in mentoring and advising. Work-life balance should be more clearly addressed. They could recommend that advisors should step down from advising as soon as their priorities shift away from research commitments
• Goal to strengthen international collaboration
• Organize general brainstorming meetings regarding graduate education in the 21st century

**Impact of COVID-19**

Professor Hendrix asked Associate Dean Andy Karduna if there are any predicted changes or trends the Graduate School is anticipating in the upcoming academic year. His response is that there unfortunately is still too much uncertainty due to the COVID crisis such as enrollment numbers, converting to online learning, and delayed decision making. Kate Mondloch also confirmed that there will be budget cuts so we must think of creative solutions and best practices using other institutions as a model that we can present to the Provost when requesting funding. Students are concerned with tuition remissions, but we unfortunately don’t have any new resources at this time.

Professor Moore is worried that the budget for GEs is diminishing and that those positions that are left are going to be allocated to a similar direction, such as the Knight Campus or sciences. She wants there to be a commitment to have a fair distribution of GEs across departments because losing these positions greatly affects the programs. Kate Mondloch informed her that the only role the Graduate School has in these allocations is to advise departments based on the metrics provided by the Provost.

Rachael Klaiss brought up the topic of a job posting for a student representative on a joint task force, but the posting does not differentiate between undergraduate and graduate, which seemed unusual since the two categories of students would have entirely different experiences. She believes there should be representatives from both. Since the posting is still open, Kate will point this out to the necessary office.

Lastly, Kate Mondloch advised the Council that students who are having visa troubles are advised to consult with ISSS.

The Council adjourned at 5:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,