MINUTES
The Graduate Council
October 11, 2017
Graduate School Student Lounge, 111 Susan Campbell Hall

Members Present:  Lara Bovilsky, Shanka Chakraborty, Cecilia Enjuto Rangel, Stephen Frost, Erik Girvan, Sara Hodges (ex officio), Cameron Kay, Andy Karduna (ex officio), Seth Lewis, Jana Prikryl (ex officio), Nicholas Proudfoot, Phil Scher (ex officio), Aleesa Schlientz, Leslie Straka, Angie Whalen, and Hong Yuan

Members Absent: Alison Kwok, Hailan Wang, Mark Watson (ex officio)

Graduate School Staff in Attendance: Tori Byington, Kellie Geldreich, and Marcia Walker

The meeting was called to order at 3:30pm. The meeting opened with introductions of those in attendance. The September, 2017 minutes were approved as distributed.

Overview of Graduate Council Awards and Other Sub-Committees

Interim Dean Hodges distributed a handout that outlined the Graduate Council Committees and explained the role of Graduate Council members on these committees. Interim Dean Hodges asked Council members to send to Marcia Walker their rankings of the committees on which they would like to serve.

New Business

Proposal to Change the Curriculum for the Applied Information Management (AIM) Master’s Degree

Interim Dean Hodges explained that the AIM program has existed for 30 years and is now a fully online program. AIM has been administratively based in Portland through Academic Extension. The Graduate School grants the AIM degree, and the Graduate Council is the faculty advising committee for AIM. The Lundquist College of Business (LCB) and the AIM program are exploring whether LCB could incorporate AIM into their college and serve as the home for AIM.

Associate Professor Bovilsky asked how many students were currently enrolled in AIM. Academic Affairs Manager Geldreich responded that there were currently 18 students, and in the past, enrollment has averaged about 30 students.

Associate Professor Bovilsky noted that AIM’s course syllabus looked impressive. Interim Dean Hodges stated that people who take these courses are working business professionals looking to further their careers. Industry leaders hire AIM graduates and sometimes pay for an AIM student’s education.

Because the decision has not been made whether AIM will move to LCB, Interim Dean Hodges suggested that rather than discussing this at today’s Graduate Council meeting, Council members email their comments and suggestions about the curriculum changes to Academic Affairs Manager Kellie Geldreich.
Interim Dean Hodges distributed handouts of the UO Code of Responsibility for Security and Confidentiality of Education Records and Files and distributed proposed policy for departments who have graduate students serving on graduate admissions committees.

Interim Dean Hodges explained that last year the Graduate Council discussed the issue of graduate students serving on admissions committees in various UO departments. The Graduate Council drafted the distributed proposed policy.

Interim Dean Hodges went on to say that Departments who have graduate students on service committees, such as admissions committees, are not in violation of FERPA because the applicants are not yet UO students. In addition, graduate students are considered to be UO officials when serving in this capacity.

The question for the Graduate Council today is if this policy is appropriate and/or necessary. Some of the questions and comments from last year included:

- Are graduate students being exploited when asked to serve on these committees?
- Is it appropriate work? Some departments believe by being on these committees, graduate students learn how service in academia works.
- Is it fair for graduate students to know qualifications of future peers?

Academic Affairs Manager Geldreich said the Registrar’s Office was consulted, and they recommended departments distribute the UO Code of Responsibility to graduate students who serve on admissions committees. These graduate students would sign verifying that they have read, understand and will comply with the Code. A link to that Code of Responsibility is included in the current draft of the policy.

Associate Professor Frost asked how many departments have graduate students who serve on admissions committees. Interim Dean Hodges said there are at least three to four departments that are known, noting that these are departments that let graduate students read the admissions files. During the course of the meeting, some additional departments that use this practice came to light.

Professor Chakraborty said his department (Economics) has used this practice for a long time. The graduate students who serve on admissions committees are third-year students who have already completed their coursework. These students do not vote on whether students will be admitted. Only the graduate director and faculty vote on admissions.

Interim Dean Hodges suggested that the guidelines make it clear that graduate students would not participate in allocating slots for admissions.

Professor Enjuto Rangel stated that she was not in favor of having graduate students serve on admissions committees. She believes that faculty who are committed to working with incoming students are the ones who should be making admissions decisions. Professor Enjuto Rangel noted that there are other ways for graduate students to learn service skills besides evaluating other students.

Academic Affairs Manager Geldreich suggested that before the Graduate Council issues a policy eliminating graduate students from serving on admissions committees, it might be good to seek more information from those departments who employ this practice.

Associate Professor Frost said he would be worried if the Graduate Council was eliminating long-standing processes of Departments. He asked if this was even something that the Graduate Council should be acting upon.
Assistant Professor Girvan suggested changing the language of the draft policy by explicitly stating that faculty are responsible for making admissions decisions.

Associate Professor Proudfoot asked if the Graduate Council was attempting to solve a problem that doesn’t exist or create rules that no one has asked the Council to create.

Associate Professor Bovilsky suggested that the guidelines be changed to incorporate Assistant Professor Girvan’s language and that departments who are affected be allowed to give input to the Graduate Council before any vote is taken. Interim Dean Hodges agreed and stated that this would be tabled until next month’s Graduate Council meeting. In the meantime, the Graduate School will solicit information from Departments who use this practice.

**Graduate School Programming Updates and Feedback Solicitation**

Professional Development & Career Planning Manager Byington distributed a handout of Graduate School Workshops for 2017-18 and noted that these are also listed on the Graduate School website.

Manager Byington reported on some of the changes made this year and events that the Graduate School is sponsoring:

- International Graduate Student Orientation was a one-day event this year.
- Orientation and the CBA-mandated training was combined into one event with positive feedback from the students.
- Communications – the current GradPost newsletter has been put on hold as the Graduate School tries new ways to communicate with graduate students. Increased updates are being sent to graduate students informing them of upcoming workshops. Information is also sent regarding fellowships and awards. Manager Byington asked Council members to send her information they would like to include in communications to graduate students.
- An art walk and tour of the campus is being scheduled for graduate students.
- Once a month, the Graduate School sponsors a family coffee hour for graduate students, their partners and children.

Manager Byington said that next term there will be a “speed-dating” event for graduate students to learn about what other students are interested in presenting at this year’s Graduate Student Research Forum and to possibly develop panels.

Manager Byington asked Graduate Council members to send her any ideas/feedback. Associate Professor Bovilsky said she would like to see the Transferrable Skills workshop presented again.

The Council adjourned at 5:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shanka Chakraborty
Graduate Council Secretary