

DEANS COUNCIL
January 11, 2022
Minutes

The Deans Council met on Tuesday, January 11, 2022, from 8:30-10:00 a.m. via Zoom. Those present were Austin Agho (Chair), Tammi Dice, Gail Dodge, Stuart Frazer, Kate Hawkins, Khan Iftekharuddin, Jonathan Leib, David Metzger, Brian Payne, Jeff Tanner, Bonnie Van Lunen, and Robert Wojtowicz. The following agenda items were discussed.

1. Approval of the December 14, 2021, Minutes

The December 14, 2021, minutes were approved.

2. Criteria for Selection of External Reviewers for Personnel Actions Such as Promotion and Tenure

Kate Hawkins asked for input on whether the guidelines for external reviewers should change now that the University has received R1 classification. She noted that the guidance comes from the Provost and is not included in the Teaching and Research Faculty Handbook. After discussion, Council members agreed that the guidelines should not change for current faculty but may change over time. At some point soon, the list of ODU's Peer Institutions needs to be reviewed and potentially revised, as it has not been reviewed since 2016.

3. Graduate Student Advisor/Mentor Relationships

Robert Wojtowicz discussed an issue from the International Student Advisory Board. The students expressed concern that they are not receiving adequate mentorship and advising and are being pressed to perform duties that do not advance their research. Council members discussed ways to encourage faculty to be good mentors and make them aware of best practices regarding mentorship.

- Conduct an internal survey of all graduate students on advising/mentoring and/or an internal survey by college.
- Provide programming for faculty. The Graduate School will work on this with Annette Finley-Croswhite and Narketta Sparkman-Key.
- Share information on best practices with faculty.
- Conduct internal focus groups in each college and share the feedback with the other colleges.
- Review the One Virginia Plan to see how it can inform our response and our Strategic Plan.
- Conduct and review exit surveys of graduate students.

Austin Agho asked the Deans to consult with graduate students in their college on their concerns and issues. The issue will be discussed again prior to the next meeting with the International Student Advisory Board.

4. Minimum Graduate Assistantship Stipends

Students on the International Student Advisory Board also raised the issue of graduate assistantship stipends. Robert Wojtowicz noted that the minimum stipend required by policy is \$3,200. However, a minimum stipend of \$5,000 in fall and spring semesters makes the student eligible for the health insurance subsidy. Dr. Wojtowicz hopes to be able to address the minimum stipend when allocations for graduate assistants are made for next year. He will work with the Graduate Administrators Council on how to keep the minimum stipend at \$3,200, which is needed in some cases, but ensure a minimum of \$5,000 in all other cases.

Gail Dodge expressed support for charging in-state tuition for out-of-state graduate students who have assistantships.

5. COVID Tenure Deferral Bonus Proposal

Austin Agho described the proposal for a COVID-19 tenure deferral bonus and asked for input. The proposal would compensate tenure-track faculty who opted in for the tenure extension by paying that missed year of salary increase as a bonus when tenure is awarded. Faculty would need to opt-in to the retroactive compensation (bonus pay) option because there are constraints, such as summer pay, that faculty need to be aware of before opting in. Funding for the proposal will come from the retention funding pool. The total maximum cost is \$304,000 paid out over seven fiscal years.

The Deans supported the proposal. Dr. Agho will inform the faculty members affected.

6. Announcements

A. Kate Hawkins reported that the tenured faculty annual review workflow has launched. It was discovered that the list provided of faculty who had left ODU did not include those faculty members who retired. Retired faculty have been removed and this will be taken care of in the future.

B. Austin Agho announced that the breakfast to be held for SCHEV outstanding faculty nominees has been postponed due to COVID-19.