GRADUATE ADMINISTRATORS’ COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, October 13, 2022
8:30am – 10:30am
Via Zoom Meeting ID: https://odu.zoom.us/j/92937685226?from=addon


Welcome
Robert welcomed attendees.

Approval of Minutes
The minutes for September 8, 2022, were approved. Move to approve – Regina Karp first, Lamar Reams second.

New Business
- Office of Educational Accessibility – Courtney Gipson, Director
Courtney gave a presentation explaining the 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disability ACT (ADA) and how University Policy 4500 and 5406 comply with providing accommodations to students. Policy 4500 ensures that each student can obtain appropriate accommodations to enable their success in attending and completing their graduate courses. University Policy 5406 focuses on ensuring that accommodations for faculty and staff allow for participation in the job application process and/or perform the functions of the job.
She stressed the importance of uploading course content to Canvas that is fully accessible with captioning and transcriptions and providing the same accessibility in the classroom. She added that purchased course content should meet ODU’s technical standards. If a faculty member or teaching assistant needs additional assistance, the Office of Educational Accessibility can provide the necessary resources and training.
At the end of Courtney’s presentation, Robert added that it is a good idea for professors to add language to their syllabi that point to the Office of Educational Accessibility and their contact information for those students who need it.
- Enrollment Update – Jane Dané
Jane said that the numbers are not very different from her last update. She reminded attendees that they have access to all the numbers on their dashboards if they wish to dig deep into their programs.
• Cayuse – Graduate Education Manager
Robert shared that the Graduate School has met with Cayuse, a software vendor, and is looking at a product called the Graduate Education Manager that could complement Degree Works. The program allows tracking a student from admission into early benchmarks and on to exams and coursework for both master’s level and doctoral level students. It also allows communication between staff and the student on everything from exam scores to dissertation proposals and defenses. Robert pointed out that the aspect missing from the current tracking system is an oversight on the staffing of thesis and dissertation committees. The program would intersect with Banner and Degree Works. Robert also said to the attendees that if there was any interest in seeing a demonstration of the software, it could be coordinated for GPDs to attend.

• Forms & Policies Committee – Robert Wojtowicz
  o Post Doc Policy Draft – Preview for discussion at a later meeting
The Provost asked for policies to be drafted regarding post-docs. While they are on campus, Robert said that it is difficult to have an accurate count and consistent guidance for them. He asked everyone to review a preliminary draft of a policy borrowed from George Mason University (with their permission) but asked that the colleges of Sciences and Engineering & Technology, especially review it. Robert believes there may be an existing policy for the university and a separate policy on the Research Foundation side. He asked everyone to review it and note their suggestions.

  o Continuance Policy – Bryan Porter
Bryan brought up the early suspension policy that had been difficult to find easily in the continuance policy in the Graduate School catalog. He shared the edit with the attendees. It
brought the Early Suspension policy out of the text and into a section on its own that will be easier to find for both students and staff. The edit was unanimously approved.

- Policy on Graduate Financial Awards (GA policy) – Robert Wojtowicz
  The policy was recently revised due to the increased number of GAs this fall. Immediate goals were to do an editorial clean-up, clarity regarding minimum stipend levels, and the ability to divide assistantships. The preliminary changes in some of the introductory paragraphs are mainly editorial – reduced repetitive language, corrected the virtual location of the GA informational page, and how many hours constitute a full-time graduate load.
  Also under review is the requirement that a student needs to be full-time to hold a GA position. The new language will feature “on campus”. Dale Miller commented that the possibility of an online student with a GA position should be considered since, in AL specifically, support and/or tutoring GAs work virtually with online students. Robert then said that digital learning will become a separate division with separate admissions and coding and noted that he is for preserving assistantships for those students admitted to programs on campus – whether the student can work remotely should be determined by the supervisor. Missy Barber asked if digital learning students will have a separate GPD and/or advisors for their digital learning program. Dale asked if the universities GA budget will be affected by the new digital learning GAs. The discussion began with Miltos Kotinis asking if existing remote GAs will be affected and Karen Eck asking if language could be added giving a program the option of requesting special permission from the Graduate School. To all the questions, Robert said that everything is still being determined and that the subject was brought up for everyone to consider but suggested striking “on campus” from the GA policy language.
  The editorial changes in the policy were briefly reviewed for everyone’s consideration. Especially the division of GA responsibilities during the 20 hours allotted to the student. Any extraordinary divisions must be approved by the dean/designee of the college and the dean/designee of the Graduate School. Also, part-time assistantships of fewer than 20 hours can only be awarded during the summer. Another important revision is the language regarding off-campus employment – any student holding a full-time position off-campus is ineligible to hold an assistantship position. Extra-income jobs are discouraged but not prohibited. After discussion and suggestions on this section by attendees, the language will be reordered and brought back for review.
  Minimum stipend levels were also discussed - $5000 for master’s students and $6500 for doctoral, with those working half the summer receiving $2500 or $3250. There was an edit regarding tuition waivers specifying that only students enrolled full-time are eligible for waivers. The discussion regarding full and part-time students and full or partial waivers prompted Robert to suggest taking it back to the Forms & Policies and then back to GAC for a final review. The revisions to the policy will be regarding outside employment and the section on waivers.
Announcements

- Program Handbooks
- New Graduate Administrators Orientation via Zoom, Tuesday, October 18, 2022, from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. RSVP via https://bit.ly/ODUGS10182022.
- Brown Bag Series Event – Strategies to Promote Student Success, Wednesday, November 16, 2022, from 12:00 noon to 1:30 pm. Please RSVP via https://ets.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJIrcOqrpjsrE9aQ4lraODepnjeX4xe8iT.
- Advanced Degree Luncheon – Save the Date – Thursday, December 15, 2022
  - Speakers Needed – Please let Missy know by the next GAC meeting if you have a student who is graduating in December and is willing to speak about their graduate experience at ODU.