

GRADUATE ADMINISTRATORS' COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, June 11, 2020
via Zoom Meeting ID: 964 9398 6051

Attendees: Robert Wojtowicz, Bryan Porter, Missy Barber, Genny Conwell, Courtney Nishnick, Craig Bayse, Dale Miller, David Chapman, David Cook, David Swain, Dorothy Lockaby, Elaine Ross, Gail Dickinson, Holly Gaff, Jane Dane, Karen Eck, Khan Iftekharuddin, Muge Akpinar-Elci, Paul Currant, Regina Karp, Tisha Paredes, Wie Yusuf, and Yuzhong Shen.

Guests: Denisse Thillet, Steve Risch, and Kasie Reyes.

Welcome

Robert Wojtowicz greeted council members and guests.

General SOS Updates & Graduate Student Issues – Denisse Thillet

Denisse Thillet is the Director of Student Outreach & Support (SOS) and also chairs the ODU Cares Team. She presented on services and supports provided to students by SOS. SOS assists students with issues that cannot be resolved elsewhere, such as grade appeals, extended absences, administrative withdraws, medical emergencies, and more. They also provide students with emergency grants as necessary. The PowerPoint presentation will be distributed via email to attendees.

International Students, Fall Assistantships, & Deferrals – Steve Risch & Kasie Reyes

Steve Risch is the Director of International Admissions. He reported that international enrollments are up, and interests are still there. However, some students are currently faced with issues regarding the issuance policies for VISAs because embassies and consulates remain closed. Travel restrictions are another obstacle international students are facing. Some students have asked to defer. Students have three options: 1) Arrive to start fall semester face-to-face if VISA and necessary paperwork is obtained and travel can be arranged accordingly, 2) Start fall classes online within home country at the international distance rate and transition to face-to-face instruction upon arrival to campus in the spring, or 3) Defer admission until spring, summer, or fall. Mentors are encouraged to stay in contact with students and include the Graduate School in conversations. It should be noted that international students are required to quarantine for 14 days after travel. Fifty spaces have been reserved at a local hotel for students arriving to campus this fall. Students must spend \$1,000 for room and board.

Kasie Reyes is the Deputy Director of International Programs in the Visa & Immigration Services Advising (VISA) Office. She reported that they are looking into the rules for international student requirements for online and in-person courses. Students have the option to enroll in a reduced course load their first semester. They could do classes online and maybe transfer to in-person instruction, but various options rely on faculty. Reyes noted that international students are resilient and more resources can be found online at <https://www.odu.edu/international/resources>.

Jane Dané, the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, indicated that classes that are essential to be taught in-person will be offered face-to-face (e.g., labs, clinicals, studios, machine shops, etc.). Other face-to-face courses may be offered with safety precautions taken. Robert Wojtowicz intends to draft communication with Risch, Reyes, and David Cook that can be

sent out to administrators, Graduate Program Directors (GPDs), and students that clarifies the three options. It was mentioned that master's students can delay campus arrival for up to a week for fall semester, and doctoral students may have more grace depending on the GPD. Also, students who plan to defer may require readmission. Additionally, the SPEAK test will be offered in both July and August. There will be a distance offering.

Fall Assistantships Start Dates

There was discussion about the early start to fall semester and what this means for Graduate Assistants' pay schedules. Options were provided: 1) Stipends could be spread out into smaller disbursements to cover the months of August through December to prevent students from going an extended period of time without pay, 2) Start dates could be adjusted for August 10th to match the early semester start with the last paycheck being dispersed in November when the semester ends, leaving students without December funding, or 3) Start dates could remain as August 25th extending through December 9th, meaning students beginning work in early August would not get their first paycheck until mid-September. Regular fall hiring typically begins August 25th; however, it was confirmed students can be hired starting August 10th. The goal is to send all students home in December for the extended winter break. For Graduate Administrative Assistants, there is potential for telework if necessary. Students' roles and responsibilities, as well as their full schedules, should be detailed in the G9 form. It was noted that students being funded through ODU Research Foundation are on a different pay schedule with much more flexibility.

Enrollment Updates – Jane Dané

Graduate enrollments are up in every way for summer and fall. It is common for graduate enrollments to increase with the economy is struggling. This is the first report in many years where everything is up, likely due to the online offerings reaching a wider audience. It is hopeful budget decisions may go a different direction as it was originally projected enrollments would be down. It is possible some students held back from registering for courses until ODU announced fall decisions. The enrollment report presented will be emailed to all members.

Approval of minutes

Minutes from the Thursday, May 14, 2020 meeting were approved.

Announcements

- **Let's Talk Grad Life.** Chats and workshops will be offered again this summer. Courtney Nishnick will also be presenting at the Student Success Conference on Monday, June 22nd at 10:00 am on the series.
- **Graduate Summer Awards Program.** A media piece has been posted on the ODU website on winners and the award program.
- **Forms Reminders.** T1 forms and G9 forms need to be submitted to the Graduate School. T1 forms are used for accreditation purposes for SACS. G9 forms allow the Graduate School to track assistantships and responsibilities.
- **Continuance Reports.** The Graduate School sent out continuance reports to the Associate Deans. Graduate Program Directors need to be notified of students put on probation and suspension.
- **Electronic Theses & Dissertation Guide.** Updates are being made to the Electronic Theses & Dissertations Guide. The Office of the University Registrar is no longer doing

the final review before they are uploaded. The Graduate School needs a list of contacts who will be final reviewers per college or department by Wednesday, June 17th.

Excessive Credits Report

Bryan Porter reported that students with more than 50 credits at the master's level and 90 credits at the doctoral level need to be flagged so we can gather information as to why students have not yet finished their degrees. There is additional concern with students receiving financial support, such as tuition waivers.

Updating E1-SG & EPAFs for Fall 2020

Missy Barber reported that sub-object codes are being created to track Graduate Administrative Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants. Forms are being revised to reflect new codes. A training will be scheduled to go over new codes and descriptions. A survey will be sent out to gather information from budget directors on assistantships being offered within departments. The goal is to accurately identify graduate assistants going forward.

GTAI Institute

The Graduate School needs brief welcome messages from Associate Deans to include in the Graduate Teaching Assistant Instructors' Institute (GTAI) online course. Both the GTAI and the New Graduate Student Orientation will be offered online as organizations through Blackboard. Students must complete the day one modules for GTAI before they receive notification for day two. Day two will be offered via Zoom so students' teaching can be evaluated. Volunteers are still needed for day two. Departments will be notified after the event of students who passed and Banner will be updated so students can be assigned to courses.

Other Topics for Discussion

There was discussion about whether the Office of the University Registrar would be moving deadlines for submission of theses and dissertations. It was noted that deadlines are not likely to change. It was also mentioned that degree awarding dates may possibly move up to match the adjusted fall academic calendar. Clarification will be given once this is confirmed.

Meeting adjourned.