

GRADUATE ADMINISTRATORS' COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, July 9, 2020

via Zoom Meeting ID: 999 0766 1499

Attendees: Robert Wojtowicz, Bryan Porter, Missy Barber, Genny Conwell, Courtney Nishnick, Chris Glass, Craig Bayse, Dale Miller, David Chapman, David Cook, Dorothy Lockaby, Gail Dickinson, Holly Gaff, Jane Dane, Kasie Reyes, Khan Iftekharuddin, Lamar Reams, Muge Akpinar-Elci, Paul Currant, Regina Karp, Renee Felts, Tisha Paredes, Wie Yusuf, Bill Heffelfinger, and Humberto Portellez.

Welcome

Robert Wojtowicz greeted council members and guests.

Deadlines for Submission of Theses & Dissertations for Fall 2020 – Humberto Portellez

The initial deadline for fall 2020 thesis and dissertation submissions was Wednesday, November 25, 2020 for a degree conferral date of Saturday, November 28, 2020. There was discussion about moving this deadline to allow students more time to get their work submitted. There are currently no updates on winter term. However, it is possible students can wait to have their degrees conferred at the end of winter term. If this is the case, a second degree conferral date will not need to be created for fall graduates. This raised question about tuition implications, but there are no final answers. Winter term is expected to extend from Monday, December 7, 2020 to Wednesday, December 23, 2020. Solidified dates will soon be announced.

SACS requires that all changes to the academic calendar to be reported by July 1st; however, there is potential flexibility due to the pandemic. It was noted summer deadlines for submissions of theses and dissertations have not been changed, and students should be advised that the University's fall deadline is November 25th. Individual college due dates also need to be pushed out to students.

International Student Issues for Fall Semester – Kasie Reyes

Kasie Reyes is the Deputy Director of International Programs in the Visa & Immigration Services Advising (VISA) Office. She reported that students received announcements from the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs, Austin Agho, and Interim Vice President of SEES, Don Stansberry on the new ICE updates. There are also forums regularly hosted to answer students' questions. According to ICE, international students are required to take at least one in-person course. It was not indicated that this course must be three credit hours, and although students can take more than the regular online course load, students cannot be fully online. Fully online students are at risk of being deported. Some universities are creating one credit courses for their international students to enroll in. It is required for international students to report in-person to campus regularly at a designated meeting place, even if it is simply a conference room and instruction is streamed via teleconferencing. It was advised to be as flexible as possible, while meeting ICE requirements. Since students can be anywhere in the world for a fully online course load, the goal is to have them tied to campus for safety concerns. ABD students taking one dissertation are considered on-campus due to the component of meeting with advisors.

The add/drop date for fall is Tuesday, August 25, 2020. Departments may give students permission to arrive late to campus, but the Office of International Admissions needs to be notified. Students

cannot register for courses until they are on campus. For students choosing to enroll as an online student for fall 2020 and come to campus in spring 2021, directory information needs to be changed and new VISA documents need to be reissued. I-20s for VISA applications are permitted to be scanned and sent. The VISA Office is carefully tracking students, so departments should relay any information about students to VISA. A fact sheet will be sent out to graduate administrators with clarifying information on international student requirements.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the Thursday, June 11, 2020 meeting were approved.

Announcements

- **Media Relations Outreach:** Contact Keith Pierce (klpierce@odu.edu) if there are any stories on graduate education that can be published.
- **Graduate Assistantship Survey/Spreadsheet Deadline:** Due today, July 9, 2020.
- **Associate Deans' Welcome Videos:** Due next Wednesday, July 15, 2020. Videos will be separated by college.
- **Volunteer Evaluators for Day 2 of the GTAI Institute:** The presentation portion of the GTAI Institute will be in Zoom format. Reply by July 31st if interested in volunteering to be a faculty evaluator.

Career Pathways Update & Annual Report – Wie Yusuf

Career Pathways will be put on hold this year due to the increase in faculty teaching workload. Events from the past year are now available online for students to access. There is hope the program will get fully running again in 2021–2022.

Forms & Policies Committee

Graduate Certification Policy Update. Language was added to section D1 to approve extensions to a tenure-seeking faculty member's probationary period to automatically extend their graduate certification by the same period. Language was also added to section D2 to indicate when the University offers an extension of the probationary period for tenure, graduate certifications will be automatically extended by the same length of time for all faculty. There was discussion about the language. It was suggested to add language for section D2, "Under circumstances that hamper the performance of all scholarly and/or creative activity (e.g., a public health emergency) the Provost of designee may extend the duration of graduate certifications for all faculty." Section D1 was approved with deleting the word "normally" to un-contradict extraordinary. Policy language was then approved by committee

M1 – Appointment of Master's Thesis Committee, D1 – Appointment of Doctoral Advisory Committee, and D2 – Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee. All forms were updated to include boxes to check if a committee is being changed. Language will be made consistent among all three forms after the meeting. Committee approved changes. It was noted that the Graduate School tried to work with ITS in past to improve efficiency of forms, but declared Adobe was most effective. The Graduate School is continuing to work with Academic Affairs and ITS to improve workflow process of forms.

Other Topics for Discussion

University Libraries. The University Libraries is gradually reopening with abbreviated hours from now through Saturday, August 8, 2020. The general public will be admitted again on this date. Books are not being pulled for reservations, but instead can be sent to students digitally (e.g., e-book, scanned chapters, etc.) to eliminate contact. Support services are still being offered by request.

Fall Admissions. Official numbers will be sent out. FTEs are up by 16% and enrollments are up by 11.8% for fall 2020. However, this could be a false alignment due to not addressing the new semester start date of Saturday, August 15, 2020. It was noted that late registers are typically by international students, which we expect these numbers to take a significant hit.

New Graduate Student Orientation. Blackboard modules will be made available the week of August 10th through the end of the semester. Students can self-register. All students will be sent information about registration and can access the Orientation information as needed. The virtual format allows for ongoing refreshers of the material throughout the semester.

Big Round of Applause. This will be Gail Dickinson's and Holly Gaff's last Graduate Administrators' Council meeting. Appreciation and praise were given for their commitment to graduate education.

Meeting adjourned.