

GRADUATE ADMINISTRATORS' COUNCIL (GAC) Minutes  
May 2, 2019  
Education Bldg., Room 3306  
8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

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Attendees: Dr. Wojtowicz, Chair; Bryan Porter, Richardean Benjamin, Dale Miller, David Chapman, Tisha Paredes, Wie Yusuf, Holly Gaff, Bill Heffelfinger, David Swain, Karen Vaughan, David Cook, Paul Currant, Gail Dickinson, Khan Iftekharuddin, Chunsheng Xin, Caroline Neal, Humberto Portellez, Helen Jacobson, Kelsey Kirland, Courtney Nishnick, and Genny Conwell

**Welcome**

Dr. Wojtowicz welcomed the Council.

**Approval of Minutes from April 4, 2019**

Minutes approved as submitted.

**Announcements/Updates**

Missy will not be attending today's GAC meeting.

**Advanced Degree Luncheon:** Council reviewed the information about the Advance Degree Luncheon from the attached April 4, 2019 minutes. They were reminded that everyone was invited to attend the luncheon on Thursday, May 9, 2019 at 11:30 am. An announcement was made that speakers are still being confirmed.

**Graduate Administrator's Workshop:** Council was informed that a reminder of the Graduate Administrator's Workshop will be sent to everyone with the specific time.

**Save the Dates- New Graduate Student Orientation and the GTAI:** Council reviewed the save the date handouts provided. Council was informed that Graduate Student Orientation will be held in the University Theatre this year and the New Graduate Student Orientation format will most likely change in August 2020.

**3MT Competition:** Council reviewed the agenda and reminder that the 3MT Competition is scheduled for Thursday, November 21, 2019. It was announced that Barbara Hamm Lee will be the emcee again this year. Council was also provided with updates from the NSU 3MT Competition.

**Degree Works Update:**

- Helen Jacobson provided Council with an update and overview of the upcoming changes to Degree Works and informed Council that a demo of the Degree Works version 5.0.2. will be released June 2019. She provided information comparisons of the current vs. new version during her Ellucian/Degree Works forum and presentation. She also informed Council that the information in the new version will be the same as the current version and that the desktop and mobile dashboard will have the same functions. A training session of the new version of Degree Works was suggested for the Graduate Program Directors.

- Helen Jacobson informed Council that Degree Works is not up to date for each program, that each program has eight years of active catalogs, and that all catalogs will need to be updated in Degree Works before it is considered complete.
- She also informed Council that required concentrations are recorded in Banner and displayed in Degree Works (but tracks/emphasis areas are not) and there is not a way to follow tracks/emphasis areas in Degree Works until track-specific courses are taken. She asked if she could be provided with a list of thesis students enrolled in track-specific courses so that an indicator could be uploaded in Banner early on and the correct track could be reflected in Banner. This would especially help to identify thesis vs. non-thesis tracks. Khan Iftekharruddin volunteered to be the first participant during this roll-out process.
- Contact Helen Jacobson to learn how to set up tracks/emphasis areas in Degree Works.

### **Form & Policies Committee:**

#### **Faculty Senate Policy Update:**

- Dr. Yusuf provided Council with an update from the Faculty Senate and reported that the changes to the graduate catalog and the Enrollment Status policy name change was approved.
- There was open discussion about the Tuition Grants/Waivers policy for graduate students and declaring Virginia residency. Dr Yusuf asked Council to be consistent and clear with the language related to the Tuitions Grant/Waivers policy. Humberto Portello informed Council of the code of Virginia's legal requirement and that proof of students attending school in Virginia is sufficient to establish residency eligibility and the present intent to remain in the state.
- Council was informed that the changes to degree requirements was passed successfully.

### **Thesis and Dissertation Committee Composition:**

- Dr. Porter informed Council that the Thesis & Dissertation policy is more than 30 years old and the language for the Thesis and Dissertation Committee Composition is inconsistent. He also informed Council that we would need to edit this language for clarity and present it to GAC once it is complete.
- There was open discussion about the details of forming the Thesis and Dissertation Committee, the number of members allowed on this Committee, and the value of having outside committee members. After open discussion, Council agreed that the Forms and Policy Committee will need to review this further.
- There was open discussion on the usage of the word "should" in the catalog and that it implies that there is an exception. Suggested edits were made, and the Forms and Policy Committee will need to review this further.

### **Chain of Command and the Graduate Program Director (GPD):**

- There was open discussion about the Chain of Command with Chairs and Graduate Program Directors policy. After open discussion, Dr. Wojtowicz directed Council that the Forms and Policies Committee will need to review the way that this policy is currently written because it does not clearly state how to resolve GPD and department Chair disagreements.

### **Other Topics for Discussion:**

- Kelsey Kirland shared her ideas and best practices for tracking certificates with the Committee. She also provided an update from the Modeling & Simulation certificate meeting and reported that they have a good process in place for tracking non-degree students. Bill Heffelfinger suggested that we create a separate student type for non-degree students, so he will set-up a meeting with Dr. Porter, Kelsey Kirland, and the Registrar to start this process and adjust these policies.
- Humberto Portellez will contact the Office of Financial Aid to find out the criteria for a certificate program to be approved for financial aid. Dr. Yusuf volunteered the PPCM certificate as a trial run.

Meeting adjourned.