

Graduate Council 2023-2024

Feb 1, 2024

Members present: Andrew C Wilber, Benjamin Richardson, Courtney Simpkins, Chris Wienke, Heidi Bacon, Hale Yilmaz, Iraklis Anagnostopoulos, Jeremy Allen, John Pollitz, Jennifer Spreng, Karen Jones, Kelly Bender, Khaled Ahmed, Kim Parr, Liliana Lefticariu, Lisa Brooten, Matthew Young, Mark Pease, Mandeep Redhu, Myla Burton, Nwamaka Anaza, Rolando Gonzalez, Rhonda Kowalchuk, Scott Collins, Sheryl Tucker, Tomas Velasco

Executive-Officio: Juliane Wallace, Julie Dunston

Guests: Elaine Jurkowski, Jennifer Horton, Michelle Kibby

Meeting started at 8:00 AM

Consideration of the minutes of the previous meetings:

The minutes of Dec 7, 2023, meeting Vote:

Approved (Majority-0-0)

Remarks from the Chancellor: Austin Lane

- Absent

Remarks from Provost: Sheryl A. Tucker:

No Show Grades:

- Issue: Difficulty in faculty reporting for students not attending class but still enrolled, affecting federal audit compliance and financial aid eligibility.
- Fall Situation: 26 no show grades reported, putting the university out of compliance.
- Spring Resolution: No show grade option removed; faculty to use WF or an upgrade (W upgrade) with the last time of attendance.
- Concerns: Emphasizes the need for accurate reporting before the census date for federal audit compliance.
- Future Improvements: Aiming to streamline the reporting process by fall.

Health Insurance for International Graduate Students:

- Past Practice: Students could submit individual health insurance plans for review.
- Proposed Change: International graduate students required to take the university health insurance plan and prohibited from dropping it.
- Rationale: Ensures adequate coverage; past incidents highlight the need for proper insurance in emergencies.
- Target Group: F1 scholars.
- Ensuring Coverage: Vital to avoid situations where medical costs are uncovered, especially in cases of accidents or student deaths.
- Open for Questions: Encourages queries and discussion.

Salary Study Update:

- Progress: Received RFPs have been scored by the committee.
- Next Steps: Vendors will present to the committee to complete the RFP process.
- Ongoing Effort: Demonstrates the commitment to assessing and potentially adjusting salary structures.

Remarks from Vice-Chancellor for Research/Dean of the Graduate School:

Costas Tsatsoulis

Spring Enrollment Numbers:

- Positive Growth: Added 239 new graduate students, indicating a 41% yield.
- Increase in Applications and Admissions: Recognizes the efforts of everyone involved in the admissions process for the rise in applications and admissions for spring.
- Overall Enrollment Increase: Currently, enrolled graduate students show a 3.5% increase (3.7% with medical and law school included).
- Notable Growth in Certain Areas: Highlights significant growth in engineering, computing technology, and math programs, particularly at the master's level.

PhD Student Admissions:

- Concern: Expresses concern about the slow admission process for PhD students.
- Importance of Timely Admissions: Emphasizes the crucial role of PhD students in driving research.
- New Program: Reminds about a new program allowing colleges to bring in top PhD applicants for campus visits, funded by the university.
- Request: Urges for the acceleration of the evaluation and admission of PhD student applicants.

Research and Development (R&D) Report:

- Achievement: Congratulates the community for achieving a record-breaking R&D report of \$58 million, up from \$46.9 million last year.
- Implications for Ranking: Anticipates a potential upgrade in ranking to an R1 school by 2025 based on Carnegie Foundation proposals.
- Criteria for R1 Status: Explains that R1 status requires \$50 million in expenditures through the R&D report and at least 70 PhD students, both of which SIUC now fulfills.

Upcoming Events and Deadlines:

- Reach Program: Notifies that the Reach program application deadline is closing and requests volunteers for reviewing student presentations.
- Award Deadlines: Mentions the closure of the Foundation Award for Arts and Humanities and the proposal for portfolio development support.
- Reach Reviewers: Calls for volunteers to review Reach presentations, highlighting the importance of faculty involvement.
- Spring Research Workshops: Teases upcoming workshops covering various aspects of research and encourages faculty to attend and advertise.

Closing Remarks:

- Future Announcements: Teases the upcoming "Let's Talk Research" workshops in spring and urges faculty to participate.

Remarks from Associate Dean and director of the Graduate School Karen Jones

New Student Orientation and Meet-and-Greet:

- Success: Highlights a successful new student orientation for spring students, followed by a well-attended meet-and-greet.
- Praise for Students: Commends the outstanding quality of the participating students.

Fellowship Season:

- Panel Appreciation: Expresses gratitude to panelists and colleagues involved in fellowship season.
- Awards Announcement: Some awards have been established, but announcements will be delayed due to ongoing competitions.
- Teaching Award Winners: Announces winners of teaching awards at the doctoral and master's levels.
- Doctoral Level: Sierra Kraal from Animal Science.
- Master's Level: Haley Jensen, a human nutrition student.
- Advancement: Mention of advancing winners to the Midwest Association of Graduate Students (MAGS) for the regional competition.

Graduate Student and Professional Student Career Fair:

- Date and Purpose: Announces the fair on April 5th, inviting academic programs to set up tables, and external institutions to discuss their graduate programs.
- Coordinated Events: Aligns the career fair with the MAGS meeting in St. Louis, encouraging extended stay for participating institutions during the eclipse weekend.
- Call to Action: Encourages program directors to get the event on their calendars and emphasizes a strong showing of programs.

3-Minute Thesis Competition:

- Date and Format: Tomorrow's event (2-4 pm) where students present their research in one slide within a 3-minute time frame.
- Intensity and Interest: Describes the intense yet interesting nature of the competition.
- Audience: Invites everyone to attend, emphasizing that presentations are designed for a lay audience.
- Location: Student Services building, Room 150.
- Judges: External and internal judges will evaluate the presentations.

Closing Remarks:

- Encouragement to Attend: Invites participation in the 3-Minute Thesis Competition.

Remarks from Dean of Library, John Pollitz

Compact Shelving Closure:

- Safety Concerns: Basement closed indefinitely due to safety issues with the compact shelving.
- Equipment Collapses: Frequent collapses led to safety concerns, prompting closure for staff safety.
- Collaboration: Meetings held with Facilities, Engineering, and Maintenance (FEM) to address the issue.
- Bids from Vendors: Two vendors providing bids for fixing the compact shelving.
- Timelines: No clear timeline, but hopes for resolution within the next year.

Temporary Solutions:

- Call System: Books and bound journals can be called up from the catalog every 2 hours.
- Limited Access: Does not allow browsing in the stacks, impacting the ability to physically explore the collection.
- Virtual Browse: Catalog enables virtual browsing, showing holdings before and after a selected book.
- Book Smell Experience: Acknowledges the unique experience of browsing physical books but provides alternatives.

Solutions for Humanities:

- Impact on Humanities: Recognizes the impact on humanities research due to limited physical browsing.
- Solutions: Offers virtual browsing options and the possibility of arranging book displays for browsing.

Positive Outlook:

- Collaboration and Understanding: Collaboration with FEM demonstrates commitment to addressing the issue.
- Importance Acknowledged: Recognizes the significance of the situation and the impact on researchers.
- Graduate Student Consideration: Pledges efforts to make the situation as smooth as possible for graduate students.

Report from Council Chair: Scott Collins

Committee Collaboration:

- Interaction with Committee Chairs: Ongoing collaboration with committee chairs on various discussion points.
- Faculty Senate Engagement: Regular attendance at Faculty Senate meetings, providing reports and staying informed about their initiatives.
- Collaboration on Emeritus Policy: Working on aligning the Emeritus Policy between Graduate Council and Faculty Senate to ensure congruence.

Ongoing Discussions:

- 4 Plus Ones and Concurrent/Sequential Degrees: Ongoing discussions within committees regarding these topics.

Acknowledgment and Thanks:

- Appreciation for Volunteers: Expresses gratitude to those who volunteered for committee work in December.
- Importance of Responding: Emphasizes the significance of responding to Dr. Velasco's outreach for volunteer opportunities.

Encouragement for Participation:

- Call for Volunteers: Encourages everyone to consider volunteering for committee service to ensure representation across campus.
- Importance of Representation: Stresses the importance of having a well-represented Graduate Council team in various entities across campus.

Remarks from GPSC: Myla Burton

Meeting Update:

- No Meeting Yet: GPSC hasn't had a meeting this semester due to a scheduled meeting on a snow day without actual snow.

Upcoming Event:

- Tax Issues for International Students: Planning an event in collaboration with the International Student Government and the College of Accountancy to address tax issues for international students.
- Seminars and Assistance: Organizing seminars and providing a program for international students to submit their tax returns at a different university, free of charge.
- Dates: The event is scheduled for February 12 and February 14.

Information Dissemination:

- Future Communications: Commits to sending out more detailed information once the exact times are finalized.

Remarks from Council Vice-Chair: Tomas Velasco

University Committees Update:

- Early Career Faculty Excellence Award: Reports on the 2024 University Level Early Career Faculty Excellence Award committee. Dr. Bacon volunteers to represent Graduate Council on this committee.
- Salary Equity Study: Updates on the committee for the Salary Equity Study, with Dr. Fakuri volunteering to represent Graduate Council.

New Committees:

- University Level Teaching Excellence Award for Tenure and Tenure-Track: Announces the need for representatives for this committee.
- University Level Teaching Excellence Award for Non-Tenure Track: Announces the need for representatives for this committee.

Volunteer Request:

- Call for Volunteers: Encourages individuals to volunteer for the two new committees.

- Contact Information: Requests those interested in volunteering to reach out to him.

Remarks from the Dean's Council Cecil Smith

- Absent

Report from Faculty Senate: Elaine Jurkowski

- No Updates

Report from Program Review Committee: Iraklis Anagnostopoulos

Master of Science in Geography, Environmental Resources:

- Postponement Request: The program requested to postpone the review until 2024-2025.
- Approval: The request was approved, and the review is rescheduled for the mentioned period.

Master of Science in Cybersecurity and Cyber Systems:

- Completion: The program review for the Master of Science in Cybersecurity and Cyber Systems has been completed.

Master of Science in Ideological Sciences:

- Self Study Submission: The self-study for the Master of Science in Ideological Sciences has been submitted.
- Reviewer Identification: The committee is currently in the process of identifying reviewers for this program.
- Anagnostopoulos concludes the report, indicating progress in the program review process and the ongoing work of the committee in supporting the evaluation of the Master of Science in Ideological Sciences.

Report from New Programs Committee: Heidi Bacon

Resolution to Expand Accelerated Master's Programs:

- The resolution involves a modification to a previously approved Review of a Master's Program (RME) by the Graduate Council and the New Programs Committee.
- A key change in language was made, specifying that shared courses can include 400 level undergraduate courses if approved for graduate-level credit, in addition to 500 level graduate courses.
- The RME went through a thorough review process, and the modified version reflects the language change proposed by the APAPs office.
- The New Programs Committee approved the modified RME, and it is now recommended for approval by the Graduate Council.

Resolution Approved (23-0-0)

Resolution to Establish a Center for Virtual Expression:

- The College of Liberal Arts aims to establish the Center for Virtual Expression on a temporary status to support educational research and outreach programs in virtual reality, augmented reality, gamification, game development, and AI within the humanities and social sciences.
- The current SIUC Digital Humanities Lab will be integrated into this new center, addressing issues related to space and administrative capabilities.
- Concerns were raised during the meeting, particularly regarding potential overlaps with existing programs, notably in the College of Arts and Media, which offers programs in gamification, game development, and related areas.
- Members of the meeting expressed the need for collaboration with other colleges, and there was a suggestion to include deans from relevant colleges in the discussion to ensure a more comprehensive perspective.
- A question was raised about the meaning of "temporary status," and it was clarified that this status is granted to allow centers time to grow and become self-sufficient before applying for permanent status after five years.
- The resolution for the establishment of the Center for Virtual Expression was deferred until the next meeting to allow time for collaboration, addressing concerns, and obtaining input from relevant deans and stakeholders.

Defer Vote on Center for Virtual Expression resolution until next meeting

Resolution deferred (19-0-0)

- There was a suggestion to involve Girish, indicating that the draft of the proposal should be given to him for review, considering system-level policies for the establishment of centers.
- The importance of meeting specific criteria outlined in the system-level policy for center establishment was emphasized.
- The New Programs Committee, in collaboration with relevant parties, will work on addressing concerns and ensuring a collaborative approach before presenting the resolution for approval in the next meeting. The recommendation is to include deans from other colleges and to involve Girish in the review process.

Additional Points:

- The meeting highlighted the need for collaboration and consultation with various stakeholders, including deans from relevant colleges, the associate deans council, and Girish for system-level review.
- The overall goal is to ensure that proposed programs and centers align with both the university's strategic plan and system-level policies.

Report from Educational Policies Committee: Andy Wilber

Resolution to Require a 3.00 GPA in All Graduate Work for Awarding of Certificates – In Progress:

- The committee is currently working on a resolution that proposes a requirement of a 3.00 GPA in all graduate work for the awarding of certificates.
- The resolution is still in progress, and further details will be provided as it develops.

Resolution to Withdraw from Participation in the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) – In Progress:

- There was a request to draft a resolution to withdraw from the CGS, which led to confusion during the meeting.
- The intended action is not to withdraw from CGS membership but to remove the institution's name from a specific resolution related to the April 15th deadline for accepting financial offers.
- The CGS resolution currently obligates institutions to give accepted graduate students until April 15th to accept financial offers, which is considered late in the enrollment process.
- The Provost clarified that the intention is to remove the university's signature from this specific resolution while maintaining overall membership with CGS.
- The objective is to enable the university to make financial offers in a timely manner rather than waiting until April 15th.
- The committee will work on drafting a resolution to cease adherence to the April 15th deadline resolution, while ensuring that there is no negative impact on the university's CGS membership.
- Andy Wilber will work on drafting this resolution and will tentatively draft the resolution for the 3.00 GPA requirement. Further discussions and reviews will take place in subsequent meetings.
- The committee will address any questions or concerns that may arise during the drafting process and subsequent discussions.
- The overall goal is to streamline the process of financial offer acceptances and align with the university's enrollment timeline.

Report from Research Committee: Liliana Lefticariu

Representation of Students:

- Lefticariu raised a question regarding the representation of students.
- Jeremy was mentioned as a potential representative for students in future committee meetings.
- Jeremy was invited to the next meeting, and contact information was requested for coordination.
- Jones offered assistance and expressed willingness to help as needed.

Improvements to Committee Processes:

- The committee discussed ways to enhance its processes for better efficiency and effectiveness.
- The focus was on identifying areas for improvement without proposing fundamental changes.
- Lefticariu emphasized the need to explore how the committee can function more effectively.

Benchmarking with Other Universities:

- The committee investigated the practices of other universities to gather insights on potential improvements.
- Comparisons were made to understand how similar committees at different institutions operate.

Next Steps:

- The committee will continue discussions on potential improvements without making fundamental changes.
- Jeremy, as a potential student representative, will be included in the next meeting.
- Lefticariu will explore insights from other universities to inform the committee's approach.
- Any further questions or concerns will be addressed in subsequent meetings.
- The focus is on optimizing the committee's processes and ensuring effective representation, with ongoing collaboration and input from relevant stakeholders.