
Graduate Council Minutes (Uncorrected)

The University of Alabama

February 6, 2018

The regular meeting of the Graduate Council was held in Room 3700 (Ferguson Forum) of the Ferguson Student Center on Tuesday, the 6th day of February at 3:00pm.

Members Present:

Dr. Ajay Agrawal
Dr. John Blitz
Dr. Joy Burnham
Dr. Andrew Graettinger
Dr. Angelia Paschal
Dr. Thomas Baker
Dr. Karri Holley
Dr. Amy Lang—present by Proxy
Dr. Jeffrey Lozier
Dr. Mary Meares
Dr. Brenda Smith
Dr. Lucy Curzon
Dr. Sharif Melouk

Dr. Daniel Riches
Dr. Debra Whisenant
Dr. William Evans
Dr. Dawn Williams
Dr. Steve Shepard
Dr. Vivian Wright
Dr. Linda Knol
Dr. Albert Pionke
Dr. Douglas McKnight
Dr. Daniel Avery
Dr. Mesut Yavuz
Dr. Alexandra Cook

Members Absent:

Dr. Karen Salekin
Dr. Sarah Tomek

Ex-Officio Members:

Dr. Susan Carvalho, Dean of the Graduate School

Graduate School Representatives Present:

Dr. Cathy Pagani, Associate Dean
Mrs. Beth Yarbrough, Registrar
Ms. Kelly Burns
Mrs. Lesley Campbell
Dr. Andrew Goodliffe

Student Representatives Present:

Ms. Kat Robison—Proxy for Ms. Shelby Brooks

Guests Present:

Dr. Ginger Bishop
Dr. Steve Miller
Dr. Ann Graves
Dr. Steven Tomlinson—Proxy for Dr. Joy Burnham

I. Welcome and Introduction

Minutes Approved

II. Reports from Graduate Council Committees

A. Admissions and Recruitment: Dr. Andrew Graettinger, Chair

- i. Pair of Proposals for AMP in Mechanical Engineering and Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics
 - a. Proposals would allow students in Mechanical Engineering program to count six hours of Aeronautical Engineering courses toward their degree, and allow students in Aeronautical Engineering to count six hours of Mechanical Engineering courses toward their degree.
 1. Question was raised as to why there were only six hours of overlap. It was determined that the department thought that was all that was necessary.
 2. Vote was held, and the proposals were approved unanimously.
- ii. GRE Waiver for Book Arts Program
 - a. Proposal for a GRE waiver for the Book Arts program. The department feels that knowing the GRE score does not give an accurate measure of future success in the program, but rather a good relationship between applicants and the department indicates future success.
 1. Steve miller indicated that the faculty in the Book Arts program was very thorough in vetting students
 2. Vote was held, and the proposal was approved unanimously.

B. Fellowships and Scholarships: Albert Pionke, Chair

- i. Andrew Goodliffe stated that the first round of awarding GCF and NAA fellowships both had acceptance rates of one hundred percent. The number of fellowships in each category was 22 and 6, respectively.
 - a. Round two has awarded 38 Graduate Council Fellowships and 7 National Alumni Association.
- ii. Council of graduate schools has a rule that deadlines for a response to a financial offer cannot be before April 15th.

C. Teaching, Research, and Service Awards: Dr. Vivian Wright, Chair; Dr. Cathy Pagani presenting

- i. The committee has decided to change the process by which students are nominated for awards.
 - a. The committee will now require a letter from a faculty member that has worked closely with the student.
 - b. The committee will also seek to expedite the nomination and review process by reaching out to all faculty involved in the nomination process at the beginning of the nomination period.
- ii. Awards were announced the winners are as follows:
 - a. Outstanding Teaching by a Master's Student: Jenna Graham
 - b. Outstanding Teaching by a Doctoral Student: Kirstin Bone
 - c. Outstanding Research by a Master's Student: Dinuke Munasinghe
 - d. Outstanding Research by a Doctoral Student: Mohamed Mulla
 - e. Outstanding Service by a Graduate Student: Amy Williamson

D. Program and Degree Requirements, Research, and New Programs: Dr. Daniel Riches, Chair

- i. NISP for a PhD in Addiction and Recovery Sciences.
 - a. This program would be the first of its kind in the state.
 - b. The department believes the program will be in great demand.
 - c. Vote was held and the proposal was approved unanimously.
- ii. Proposal for Certificate Program in Literacy Research, Theory, and Pedagogy.
 - a. No questions were raised.
 - b. Vote was held, and the proposal was approved unanimously.
- iii. Certificate Program in Social and Cultural Studies in College of Education
 - a. No questions were raised.
 - b. Vote was held, and the proposal was approved unanimously.
- iv. New degree proposal: Doctorate of Social Work with 2 concentrations
 - a. There is a high demand for practitioners with higher degree.
 - b. The program would consist of online courses through the fall and spring semesters with a few in-person seminars and an on-campus summer residency.
 - c. A vote was held and the motion carried unanimously.
- v. New degree proposal: Master's of Science in Human Development and Family Studies
 - a. This would be a resource neutral proposal.
 - b. The proposed degree would have 3 concentrations
 - 1. Albert Pionke asked for clarification of a chart that indicated that Auburn University has the only certified program of this kind in the state of Alabama. It was stated that this was true for one of the concentrations of this program.
 - c. A vote was held, and the proposal was approved unanimously.
- vi. New Degree Proposal: Master's of Art in Biology
 - a. This degree program would be aimed at students interested in teaching—high school, etc. It is less research-intensive.
 - 1. Andrew Graettinger asked if the program had a thesis requirement. Daniel Riches stated that the program would have a thesis requirement, but the thesis would not be lab-based.
 - b. Albert Pionke asked if there was room in the classrooms to take on the expected higher enrollment. Jeffrey Lozier stated that the classrooms have ample room, but the labs do not. This program would theoretically create an increase in enrollment without crowding the labs.
 - c. Voted was held, and the proposal was approved unanimously.
- vii. Dual Degree Proposal: Master's in Business Administration and Master's of Sciences in Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics
 - a. Also proposed a STEM program version of the dual degree program.
 - b. No questions were asked, the vote was held, and the proposal was approved unanimously.
- viii. Joint degree with University of Alabama in Huntsville: PhD in Nursing Science
 - a. This program would serve to meet growing demands in the state and across nation, and would likely attract out of state students.
 - b. Since the institutional minimums for credit hours at UAH are lower than at UA, the proposal has been amended to adhere to the more strict requirements of UA's graduate catalog. No UA institutional requirements have been lowered to accommodate the program.
 - c. Upon graduation, students will receive diplomas with the seals of both Universities on them.
 - d. Andrew Graettinger asked what benefit this partnership provided, as opposed to simply having this program at UA. It was stated that each campus has different areas of expertise, so this partnership will allow

students a wider range of options.

e. A vote was held, and the proposal was approved unanimously.

E. Policy proposal: Change the time limit to complete a PhD degree from 7 to 9 years

- i. Proposal to increase the time limit for earning a PhD from seven (7) to nine (9) years. Individual departments may enforce more stringent requirements if they wish.
 - a. Dawn Williams asked if departments would need Graduate School approval before implementing more stringent requirements. It was determined they would not.
 - b. Linda Knol brought up the issue of six-year recency. Beth Yarbrough clarified the recency policy, stating that her understanding was that credits do not expire while enrolled.
 - c. Albert Pionke asked if this proposal would apply to current and future students or just new enrollments. It was stated that the program would apply to all students, current and future.
 - d. It was stated that this proposal would also take into account that currency is defined very differently for different areas of focus, and afford to departments more freedom to determine the best time requirements for their students.
 - e. Kat Robison stated that this new policy could allow students to transfer smoothly into job market and allow for more flexibility for students with families.
 - f. Susan Carvalho stated that in terms of taking qualifying exams, it will be very important for departments to have a stated policy on time limits for PhD students.
 - g. A vote was held, and the proposal was approved unanimously.

III. Reports from the Dean's Office and Academic Affairs

A. Graduate Awards

- i. Cathy Pagani announced the winners of the Outstanding Thesis and Outstanding Dissertation Awards.
 - a. The winners for Outstanding Thesis and Outstanding Dissertation were Gregory Brenn and Blake Ball, respectively.
 - b. Dr. Pagani stated that the process for nominations would likely change in the coming year to make it easier to keep track of updated versions of the nominations.

B. Publisher in Residence

- i. Dr. Pagani stated that the feedback for the Publisher in Residence program has been overwhelmingly positive. She said that group sessions with our Publisher in Residence are likely for next fall.

C. Report on Admissions

- i. Dr. Goodliffe stated that enrollment numbers are going up, thanks largely to the School of Social Work.
 - a. He warned, however, that application numbers are dropping, which means that the Graduate School's selectivity is decreasing.
 - b. The College of Arts and Sciences and Culverhouse College of Business are both down in admission numbers, while Nursing, Social Work, and Engineering are all up in admission numbers.
 - c. A question was raised about the application fee at the Graduate School, and it was stated that the application fee is about equal to those of comparable schools.

IV. Reports from Standing University Committees

A. None to report.

V. New Business

A. Policy Proposal: Increase the Size of the Graduate Council

- i. Proposal to increase the number of Graduate Councilmembers from 29 to 40.
- ii. One major issue is that the Program and Degree Requirements, Research, and New Programs committee is too large and has too many responsibilities.
- iii. A Policy Committee will also be formed to look over Graduate School policies.
- iv. Dan Riches made a motion to approve the expansion of the Graduate Council
 - a. Albert Pionke stated that it would be best if there was a policy or by-law that explicitly stated the size of the Graduate Council
 - b. Susan Carvalho agreed, and she suggested that one of the Policy Committee's first tasks would be to create such a by-law.
 - c. Cathy Pagani mentioned that the Policy committee would be more able to deeply assess current issues in the Graduate School than the Program and Degree committee currently can due to being overworked.
 - d. Andrew Goodliffe stated that the Fellowship and Scholarship committee could also use another couple members.
 - e. Beth Yarbrough recalled that the Program and Degree Requirements, Research, and New Programs committee used to be two separate committees, but was combined into one due to small work load at the time. Since this time the University's growth and New Program addition has increased dramatically.
- v. A vote was held, and the proposal was approved unanimously.
- vi. There was a motion from Andy Graettinger to form a Policy Committee
 - a. There was a vote, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Full Graduate Faculty Renewal

- i. This should automatically renew, where it is only not renewed if departments opt-out of renewal.
- ii. Albert Pionke asked to what degree the Graduate School currently approves requests for faculty renewal. This was said to be 100% approval so far.
- iii. Albert Pionke proposed an amendment that states that the department chair cannot independently decide not to renew a faculty's appointment, but rather he must have greater approval of the department.
- iv. There was a vote on forwarding this proposal to the Dean's Council for their input. The vote passed unanimously.

VI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:31pm.