

Graduate Council
Minutes
President's Conference Room, 1/2800
October 25, 2016

Attendance: Ahmed, Alloway, Baffour, Bruey, Caswell, Christie, Eggen, Guardino, Gilg, Jaeger, Kantner, Kim, Mattice, Nies, Parkison, Pascale, Provost, Robin, Stone, Swanson, Vose, Webb.

Dr. Kantner called the meeting to order at 12:15 pm by welcoming the members of the Graduate Council. As the first order of business, a motion was made to approve the April 2016 Minutes. All Graduate Council members were in favor with none opposed.

Dr. Kantner opened his main remarks by reminding everyone in attendance that UNF is entering the SACS reaccreditation phase and highlighted some of the key stages of that process. The materials that must be submitted are due in September 2018 and there is an off-site as well as an on-site review process, which will occur in the Fall and Spring 2019. Although this is still some time away, the materials that must be provided are two years retroactive from the date of submission. UNF is now entering the period, where there will be increased scrutiny on its procedures. Dr. Kantner stressed that it will be important that our policies match our practices. Part of the accreditation process is to see how UNF is meeting the accreditation standard, the policies that are in place to meet that standard, and how the University demonstrates compliance with the policies and accreditation standards. Consequently, it is timely that the process was started a year ago to review many of the policies and to put the necessary changes in place. There are several policies that still need to be examined. The first three items on the agenda today address minor policy adjustments. These changes are intended to capture current practices that are not currently included in the policies:

The first is the Graduate Admission Policy (handout provided). This is a policy that has not really been reviewed in depth until now. Dr. Kantner commented that it is not completely consistent with what the Graduate School has actually been executing. The policy was first initiated in 2012, so it is not new. The one aspect that is not in line with current practices is in regard to the language requirement for international students. Dr. Kantner pointed to Paragraph (6) of the policy, which lists the TOEFL or University of Cambridge IELTS minimum test requirement. One item that is not included here, but has been part of general practice in the past, was to also accept minimum language proficiency for those students that achieve level 5 of the "Pre-University English as a Second Language Course". A certificate from this course is generally considered to be equivalent to the TOEFL score. Both The Graduate School and the International Center would like to add this to the policy. This would then match what is already posted on the admission's website page. A short discussion then ensued among some of the council members concerning

referred files with satisfied language testing requirements. Dr. Pascale confirmed that the Graduate School does not make an evaluation of the TOEFL, IELTS and ESL scores when a completed file is sent to the Program Director for a decision. The Graduate School only verifies that the applicants have a completed test score on their checklist. She also reaffirmed that the language requirement for foreign students is also satisfied if they have attained their bachelor's degree from a U.S. Institution. All Graduate Council members approved a motion to add a statement citing ESL certificate completion as another possible English language proficiency option to Paragraph (6) of the policy. Dr. Kantner then informed everyone that he will also make an additional minor editorial change on the front page of the same policy. Since references to non-U.S. institutions in all of the other places in the policy is worded as "international", he plans to change the words "foreign institution" to "international institution" in Paragraph (1)b as well.

The second Policy discussed (handout provided) was the Graduate School Readmission Policy for students, whose active status has lapsed. Dr. Kantner proposed to eliminate the previous Graduate School Readmission Policy in favor of the Enrollment Services Policy, since both documents are basically the same. Enrollment Services had actually revised their policy recently to include graduate students. Dr. Pascale addressed a question on the actual policy, which calls for a student to reapply after missing three consecutive terms. She stated that the three term number is tied to an IT job and it would likely be difficult for ITS to alter this in order to accommodate programs that do not admit applicants in the Summer term. Dr. Kantner added that one of the reasons to comply with the Enrollment Services policy is that the Graduate School has also successfully implemented the ability for graduate student admission fees to count for an entire year. As a result, if students apply to one semester and later want to defer their admission to another term, it would not be necessary to pay the application fee again. Dr. Pascale also interjected that the Readmission Policy would not be a change in procedure. All that is being proposed is to combine the undergraduate and graduate policies into one. She also clarified that when the policy states that students "must submit a new application", this refers strictly to the on-line application. This is necessary because there are a few items like residency that still need to be updated after a year. Unless the Program Director wants all new application materials, a short email to the Graduate School would suffice to accept previously submitted checklist items already on file. All Graduate Council members approved a motion to utilize the Enrollment Services Policy and eliminate the Graduate School Readmission Policy.

The third policy discussed (handout provided) was the Graduate Faculty Membership and Review Policy. Dr. Kantner stated that this was just reviewed last March and some adjustments were already made. This policy centers primarily on the approval procedure for graduate faculty. In the previous policy, the Graduate Council had to approve all of the appointments and renewals of graduate faculty. It was decided that this was more oversight than was needed and would slow down the process of appointing graduate faculty. As a result, the Graduate Council was removed from the approval cue. However, there is another minor change being

proposed regarding the word “full-time” (highlighted in yellow on the actual policy). There are a number of programs across campus that have tenure track faculty (like BCOH) that are technically not full-time, because they may have clinical practices outside of UNF. The current verbiage in the policy does not allow for an exception. Dr. Kantner proposed that the words “full-time” be removed from the policy, leaving only “tenured or tenure-earning”, with the possible exception being shown as is stated in the follow-up sentence, which refers to “non-tenure-earning faculty”. Dr. Kantner addressed a question on appointing faculty by saying that the Graduate School has relied upon the Departments to initiate and make those nominations. Usually, those nominations can be made and turned around quickly. Dr. Kantner added that he really did not want The Graduate School to keep track of all the positions that are coming in, because his office would not be able to see all the hires and this would likely create even more problems. Dr. Kantner believes that it has worked well having the Department’s responsible for this. Several Graduate Council members brought up appointment issues within their organizations. Dr. Kantner stressed that this policy, like most that come from The Graduate School provide minimum requirements. Every College has its own requirements and procedures for graduate faculty appointments. Because these may vary quite a bit across the University, The Graduate School has tried not to insert itself too much into the process. Upon a recommendation by an attendee, Dr. Kantner agreed to send a reminder to Department Chairs that when they hire new faculty and plan to have them teach graduate classes, this information should be sent to The Graduate School for administrative processing. Dr. Kantner answered a question about adjuncts by saying that when hired, they are routed through Academic Affairs for credentialing purposes and, if they are slated to teach a graduate course, they are automatically routed through the Graduate School for approval. This must be done every semester, because adjuncts are not on recurring contracts. Dr. Kantner replied to another query by saying that per policy, instructors cannot be graduate faculty. Graduate faculty must be tenure-track unless they obtain an exception. He added that there have been such exceptions in the past. These were instructors, who on their own accord, were actively engaged in research and/or they had a research assignment of some sort even though they were not tenure track. This is something that should not be done routinely, but is possible. Otherwise, graduate teaching candidates would need to go through the same process as those coming from outside of UNF. All Graduate Council members approved a motion to remove the words “full-time” from the policy in order to allow graduate teaching eligibility for clinical faculty that are otherwise tenure or tenure-track.

Dr. Kantner’s last formal item was to discuss the revised Graduate Assistantship Program (handout provided). He relayed that last year it was revised quite substantially. This was done for a number of reasons and some of those are briefly highlighted at the top of the handout. The intent of the changes that took place was to try to build packages to support graduate assistants for recruitment purposes. To accomplish this, GA stipends and waivers were pooled together and those were later allocated. Part of the goal for doing this was not only to better serve the graduate assistants and the Departments and their Programs, but also as a way to obtain

more resources from the University to support graduate students. The Graduate School was successful last year in obtaining a nice bump in stipend and (in particular) waiver authority. The Graduate School was able to package graduate assistantships together and secure those monies again for this coming year. The only changes outlined in this particular document (handout) are some tweaks that must be made on how waiver is allocated. Dr. Kantner then briefly reviewed how this will unfold in the next few weeks. The Graduate School will look at graduate headcounts and the undergraduate FTE for each College averaged over the past three years and that will be used to proportionally allocate graduate stipend money. That dollar amount will be sent to each of the Deans and they can decide how they want to package GA assistantships within their Colleges. If the package assistantships are for full-time graduate assistants (at least 20 hours per week), then they are eligible for the fullest allocation of tuition waiver that can possibly be provided. (The other stipulation is that they must receive at least \$5000 in stipend to be eligible for those funds.) If their workload is less than 20 hours, then the in-state waiver would be allocated in proportion to that. Soon, Dr. Kantner expects to complete the calculations and provide the “soft” numbers to each College. Dr. Kantner asked the Graduate Council members for any input, concerns or anything that did not work within their Colleges. There were none and Dr. Kantner stressed that his goal would be to deploy this as soon as possible, so that everyone has the packages needed to recruit students for the upcoming academic year. In reference to a concern among some Graduate Council members about the timeline, Dr. Kantner reiterated that he expects to calculate and distribute the allocation money to the Colleges very shortly. He also added that each College allocates their funds within their organization differently and the Graduate School has no control over the pace of those processes.

Dr. Kantner then mentioned some possible future topics that may need more discussion. The first is the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy. During several past meetings, there were some significant revisions made to that policy (The main change was to focus on the program GPA for satisfactory academic progress rather than the overall GPA for all graduate courses taken at UNF.). This policy is in place now, however the procedures still need some work with ITS in order to acquire properly formatted data to monitor the policy efficiently. At the end of the semester, will likely be tested and by January an outcome is expected.

The other suggested topic recommended by Dr. Kantner concerns continuous enrollment for thesis completion. UNF does not have a general policy and many programs with thesis requirements handle this differently. Dr. Kantner stated that The Graduate School does not necessarily want to interfere with existing program procedures, but perhaps there may be confusion about what the actual rules are and it may be worthwhile to discuss whether there is a need for a more centralized policy.

A Graduate Council member posed a question about a possible increase in scholarship money. Dr. Kantner explained that the scholarship program is funded

through the financial aid fees that graduate students pay for each credit hour. The Graduate School was able to get access to the entire pool of funds and draw from the maximum amount available. He added that the number of graduate students (and fees collected) would need to increase in order to acquire more scholarships.

Another Graduate Council member asked if graduate students were able to come to ORSP for advising assistance, if they want to apply for outside grants. Dr. Kantner explained that it is rare that graduate students seeking to submit proposals for external funding have come to ORSP. He commented that it could be supported, but the timeline is often too truncated to be able to take full advantage of the resources available. Dr. Kantner stated further that he had once considered the idea of hiring a liaison between the two Departments (ORSP and The Graduate School) to help students to identify fellowship and grant sources, but the resources for this are not available. He followed up by saying that ORSP can certainly look over grant applications, but it does not do much grant writing assistance. Instead, its expertise is mainly on things like budget preparation and compliance with sponsor's expectations. Grant writing is often very discipline specific and ORSP does not really have the wide-ranging expertise to assist with this. Dr. Kantner agreed to add graduate student grant preparation assistance to the list as a possible topic to discuss in the Spring.

Dr. Kantner responded to a last question about in-state tuition for international students. He stated that the International Center and Tom Serwatka are actually looking at implementing different programs to financially support international students by giving waivers or some kind of support for their tuition, regardless if they are distance learning or on-campus students. Because this discussion is currently ongoing, Dr. Kantner had no further information to provide at this time.

There were no further issues raised by the Graduate Committee members and the meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.