

Graduate Council Minutes

January 11, 2018

Attendance: Brian Armbruster, Amy Bishop, Gaylord Candler, Thomas Caswell, Chad Learch (for Albert Colom), David Hoppey (for Elizabeth Gregg), David Jaeger, John Kantner, Chau Johnsen Kelly, Megan Kuehner, Christopher Leone, Richard Patterson, Campbell McDermid (for Sherry Shaw), Karthikeyan Umapathy, Brenda Vose, Brian Zoellner

Dr. Kantner called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. After welcoming the Graduate Council members, he proceeded to discuss the listed topics on the distributed agenda sheet:

Announcements:

Allocations of graduate assistantships to colleges finalized.

Dr. Kantner informed everyone that this year's graduate assistantships for the colleges have been finalized. He went on to briefly describe the actual process for awarding graduate assistantship funds. In October, all the Deans were sent the amount of stipend that would be available for their colleges and they decided how they would like to allocate the funds. Those results were sent back to The Graduate School, where the amount of waiver authority available to cover each of the graduate assistantships was calculated. Dr. Kantner relayed that there is a fixed amount of money available and the goal was to stretch that sum as far as possible. Once this step was completed, everything was sent back to the Deans in late December. Dr. Kantner stated that, like for FY18, 75% of in-state tuition for any of the GAs working at least 20 hours a week and receiving at least \$5000 a semester will be covered for FY19. He also informed everyone that the timeline for this process had been moved forward. This was done in order to allow colleges the opportunity to use this as recruiting tool well in advance of the next academic year, when the money actually becomes available. Although UNF has had the same amount available every year (and this is not likely to change), Dr. Kantner stressed that when students are notified of their award, there should always be a caveat that the money is contingent upon funding.

(Special Announcement.)

Dr. Kantner also took the opportunity to report that there has been a steady increase of graduate enrollment over the past several years. AY 2017-2018 figures have increased by 9%. Thanks to new programs like MSM, Communications Management and others, as well as the great work of programs to recruit more students, The Graduate School is "looking good".

Special Guest:

1. Amanda Kulp (Director of Assessment): Introduction and updates on UNF program assessment and GALCs.

Dr. Kantner introduced Dr. Amanda Kulp to the Council. She arrived two months ago from the Office of Institutional Research at the University of Kansas and her background is in higher education. Dr. Kulp greeted everyone and opened her remarks by saying that she has had an opportunity to meet with the Deans to talk about program development assessment, but has not had much of a chance yet to meet many of the faculty members and chairs. She sees two main components to her responsibilities. The first is program assessment at the program level, specifically working together with faculty on program level assessment. Secondly, she will also be executing a variety of institutional level surveys (graduating senior surveys, campus life surveys, national student engagement surveys etc.). Dr. Kulp offered to assist faculty members in any areas, whether it is related to program development assessment or any of the broad institutional surveys. She also welcomes any feedback on how assessment or survey data are completed. Dr. Kulp closed her remarks by providing her personal approach to program level assessment. She commented that she prefers an inquiry model rather than a compliance model and stressed that the inquiry model really focuses in on “questions that we care about”.

2. Linda Howell (Director of the Writing Program/Writing Center).

Linda provided an update on the Center's resources that provide assistance for graduate students. The Center is located in the Department of English and she mentioned that they actually utilize graduate assistants as part of their program. As a result, graduate education is important to her on a number of levels. Through her own traffic in the Center, Linda recognizes that there are a range of challenges for graduate students. She understands that it is not as easy to create a more standardized approach to assist graduate students as it might be for a first-year writing class. There are different requirements that graduate professors want their students to complete. There are also unique skill sets that may be needed for the different disciplines and many writing issues are often tied directly to research. Linda remarked that she would like to start receiving feedback from the Graduate Council, but also wanted to make everyone aware of some things the Center is currently undertaking.

One of the first things that the Center has implemented was to provide assistance for those disciplines that utilize American Psychological Association (APA) citation. The Writing Center purchased a license for APA Style Central, which is housed in the library. APA Style Central was developed by the APA. It is a place where guides and sample papers are located, from first year and all the way up to professional documents. Because UNF owns a license, students can create their own account and store materials in APA. There are two ways to access APA. Students can use the Canvas site that has been put together for APA Style Central or an easier way is to visit the library and access the APA Central link.

Linda stated that she understands that one of the big issues is for students to be working on professional citation systems within their disciplines and to learn how to use those. For example, her Center had a history student, who works with other history students using Chicago style citation. Currently, her Center is working on a program to use graduate students to be specifically dedicated to provide peer tutoring for other graduate students.

Linda mentioned that her Center is also in the process of putting workshops together. Realizing that many graduate students are working and unable to come to campus, these will be virtual workshops that can be placed on the Canvas site. Students can also draw from the Center's expanding data bank on Canvas named the FOWL (Faculty Online Writing Lab). If faculty members want access to this resource, they should let Linda know and she can enroll them into the course. This was created, because there are many resources for students, but there was not much available for faculty members that wanted to integrate writing into their course or curriculum. David MacKinnon, the Assistant Director of the Writing Center/Writing Program, has taken the lead for this. He is currently attending the Ed.D. Program and has been developing a pilot program with them to focus on some of the issues that they are having.

The last initiative Linda relayed touched on "one on one" tutoring. Melinda Rojas is one of her instructional coordinators. More and more of Melinda's time has been dedicated to working with graduate students over a longer period of time. Linda stressed that her Center's tutors are not editors. Instead, they are trying to encourage graduate students to attend multiple training sessions.

Linda stated that she would really like to have more in-depth conversations with the programs to discuss how her Center can address their particular discipline specific needs and issues. She mentioned several possible subjects such as the development of diagnostics to test writing skills at the beginning of a course or using and integrating data into writing.

Agenda Item:

Approve November minutes.

Dr. Kantner called for a motion to approve the November minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved by the Graduate Council members.

Discussion Items:

1. New grad student funding: Key Bradbury Endowed Nursing Fellowship and Key Bradbury Endowed STEM Fellowship. Do we need a "student support" standing committee of the GC?

Dr. Kantner introduced a new endowed fellowship program that developed and unfolded quickly at the end of last semester. The donors are Robin and Sharyn Bradbury. Mr. Bradbury is a retired hedge fund manager, who has been involved in health philanthropy and was on the board of the Baptist Health Foundation. Dr. Kantner mentioned that he is scheduled to meet with the donors in the next week to receive further information on their intent. He also stated that they not only provided endowment funding, but also cash ready to spend on two fellowships for two individuals. One is for a graduate nursing fellowship,

which will be managed out of the Brooks College of Health. The Graduate School will have no purview over that scholarship.

The second is a STEM fellowship, which will be managed out of the Graduate School. The fellowship is for \$5000 per semester and the awardee would also be eligible for out of state tuition reduction under the university tuition regulation. Dr. Kantner stressed that there are not many funding opportunities managed out of The Graduate School. The major ones, besides graduate assistantships, are the graduate scholarships, which are from financial aid fees; the Auzenne Fellowship; and graduate grants, which support expenses for students to do research.

Dr. Kantner explained that, because his office actually does very little scholarship management, there is no real mechanism in place to select the one STEM fellow nominated each year. Therefore, he was seeking Graduate Council advice on how best to do this. Dr. Kantner mentioned that he is not sure how the donors are interpreting the term STEM. When he meets with them, his intent will be to make that description as broad as possible. Once the eligible programs are clarified, the next thing would be to narrow down the selection process.

Dr. Kantner described two possible processes, which may represent the outer extremes. One possibility, which is currently used for the both the graduate scholarships and graduate grants, students would complete a fairly simple form and The Graduate School works with the program directors. Currently, for these scholarships, simple rankings are established and graduate scholarships are randomly assigned. For graduate grants, money is spent until it runs out for the academic year. This method would be difficult to use for just one fellowship. Dr. Kantner suggested that if the form is very simple for a student to complete, there will be many fellowship applications to manage and this will make the selection process much harder. Alternatively, with the other extreme, if a much more rigorous selection process and form are created, the student must spend a lot of effort preparing applications for which they are highly unlikely to be awarded. This could lead to great frustration.

As a way to mitigate the two extreme scenarios summarized, Dr Kantner proposed having the program directors nominate candidates, who then would be invited to apply. This would likely ensure that weaker candidates do not waste their time applying. It also gives the program directors some input on who should be nominated as a viable candidate for the fellowship. At this point, Dr. Kantner mentioned an additional small detail that the donors stimulated in their offer. Not only should this be a potential excellent STEM candidate, but the nominee must have exhibited leadership qualities during their undergraduate years. These were specified as possibly being athletic team involvement, school club leadership, Greek organization officer, youth group leader, volunteer service leadership etc. Dr. Kantner noted that this would also need to be a piece of the application.

Upon questioning, Dr. Kantner confirmed this scholarship would be used as a recruiting tool. He also stated that he did not interpret any restrictions against awarding this scholarship to international students.

Dr. Kantner also mentioned that this scholarship would be awarded yearly and asked the Council members if they thought that this should be a two-year fellowship. A discussion ensued that touched on several aspects of the scholarship (pairing it with other incentives like graduate assistantships; the effect on students that complete their studies in three terms; the inclusion of the summer term for the scholarship; suggestions on advertisement possibilities and the requirement on the application etc.) Based on the exchange, Dr. Kantner deduced that there seemed to be a general consensus that this scholarship should be available for two years.

Dr. Kantner then asked the Committee about the actual selection process. Should a new committee be assembled for every selection, as is done with the Auzenne scholarship? Or, should something like a student funding or fellowship and support standing committee of the Graduate Council be established? He added that one of its responsibilities could be to include making selections from applications. A small discussion ensued among the Graduate Council members, but no final decision was made on what should be implemented.

2. Graduate faculty policy redux. Create 2-tier grad faculty, tenure-track and non-tenure-track?

Dr. Kantner referred to the Graduate Faculty Membership and Review Policy (handout) and stated that this topic also unfolded late last semester. The current policy had always limited graduate faculty membership to tenure track faculty. Non-tenure track faculty could be appointed to the graduate faculty through an exception process. Over the past year, there have been more Deans nominating instructors and lecturers to be on the graduate faculty through the exception process. Particularly in the professional programs, many of the instructional staff for the graduate programs are actually not on tenure-track lines.

Dr. Kantner conveyed that he feels uncomfortable routinely approving the nominations of instructors to become graduate faculty, because the number is continuing to grow. He believes that there is now possibly an opportunity to consider having two types of graduate faculty. The document (handout) was prepared after discussions with the Deans and the Provost team and it shows what this may look like. The Deans prefer that the two categories be named "research graduate faculty" and "teaching graduate faculty." The research graduate faculty are those that are on a tenured line. They are permitted to teach graduate courses and have certain opportunities that the teaching graduate faculty would not possess, such as serving on graduate committees. The teaching graduate faculty would be required to undergo the same nomination process as all graduate faculty and would be limited to teaching clinical, professional courses. However, they would not need to have the Deans complete the complex paper exception chain every semester. The intent is to allow these instructors to always teach graduate courses. Upon questioning, Dr. Kantner relayed that this is only for permanent

instructors and not adjuncts and added that this would not be for visiting lines either. Dr. Kantner closed this discussion by saying that he would revise the current policy to implement the two tiers and review again with the Graduate Council when everything is pulled together.

3. Admissions policy, minimum undergrad GPA requirement.

Dr. Kantner provided an update on the possible changes to the Graduate Admissions policy (handout). He reviewed again that there was an extensive discussion at the November meeting to see if the Graduate Council wanted to alter the current university graduate admission policy requiring a 3.0 for the last 60 undergraduate credit hours. After considering the different options provided during and since that meeting, Dr. Kantner recommended pulling all the suggested changes off the table and leaving the current policy as is. The Graduate Council had no objections to this decision.

4. Continuous enrollment policy update.

Dr. Kantner stated that The Graduate School will move forward with the policy that graduate students finishing their thesis or dissertation must be continuously enrolled. He mentioned that there are still some other moving parts to this that also need to be considered. As an example, if a student must be enrolled, but they fall below what is considered to be full-time enrollment, they would no longer be eligible for financial aid and this would inadvertently punish the student that relies on that aid. Dr. Kantner mentioned that the university can change the full-time enrollment requirements for a student in that category, but it has to be done in coordination with the financial aid office. The Graduate School is working through that now. Dr. Kantner commented that he thought the consensus from the Graduate Council was that the continuous enrollment policy was a good thing, but it is important to make sure that it does not have unintended financial consequences for students. Dr. Kantner promised that more on this topic will be coming in the future.

Before finishing, a last question was raised about incomplete grades and the withdrawal of financial aid. A short discussion ensued and some personal student experiences were shared by the Graduate Council members. Megan Kuehner offered to assist faculty members with individual financial aid student issues that they are currently working. Additionally, she proposed inviting a representative from financial aid to provide a short presentation and answer questions at a future Graduate Council meeting.

Dr. Kantner ended the meeting at 1:20 PM.