

Graduate Council Minutes

February 15, 2018

Attendance: Tiffany Baffour, Amy Bishop, Gaylord Candler, Catherine Christie , Chad Learch (for Albert Colom), Matt Gilg, Rob Haley, David Jaeger, John Kantner, Chau Johnsen Kelly, Megan Kuehner, Christopher Leone, Sherry Shaw, Brenda Vose, Zhiping Yu, Robert Zeglin

Dr. Kantner called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. After welcoming the Graduate Council members, he reminded everyone that the Council does not normally meet during the summer months and that there are two more meetings (after today), which are scheduled for the remainder of the spring term. He went on to say that he still welcomes any proposed topics from the Council members. However, if it appears that there are no additional agenda items to discuss, Council members would be notified in time if any of the upcoming meetings will be cancelled.

Dr. Kantner then went on to discuss the listed topics on the distributed agenda sheet:

Announcements:

➤ **AY17-18 FTE up 7%; headcount up 9%**

Dr. Kantner informed everyone that UNF is showing continuing growth in both FTE and Headcount for graduate students. Both areas are tracked because some programs are not counted toward FTE, such as cost recovery market rate programs (mostly found in BCOH). Additionally, some programs expect students to enroll in fewer credit hours per semester than is expected by the “full-time enrollment” calculation used by UNF (It was mentioned by one of the Council members that market rate programs cannot accept tuition waivers because they are considered to be self-sustaining and this has been a problem for those programs.)

➤ **Graduate Grants closed for this semester**

Dr. Kantner stated that in the recent GPD newsletter that was distributed, it was announced that graduate research grants were now closed for the semester. He went on to explain that these grants were a combination of money within The Graduate School and TLO funds dedicated exclusively for graduate students. These grants provide students with the opportunity to receive \$500 (This was more recently increased to \$750.) to support a broad range of research possibilities. These could include costs associated with an internship, participant recruitment incentives for a research project, travel to conferences etc.

In order to make the process for accessing funds quicker, there is no internal review process in The Graduate School except to check for eligibility. Instead, programs are only

asked to affirm to the Graduate School that the student will benefit from the use of this money and the funds are disbursed accordingly.

Dr. Kantner went on to explain that the pot of money available is divided into the academic year's three semesters and at the beginning of each term grants are approved until the funds are exhausted for that term. Because the grants have been so well received, Dr. Kantner plans to request an increase of funds in the next budget cycle. He also stressed again to everyone that there will likely always be a finite amount of money available each semester.

When queried, Dr. Kantner stated that research grant money will be available for the summer term as well and the next round of applications for disbursements can be submitted beginning on May 9.

Dr. Kantner also responded to another question by clarifying that research grants cannot currently be utilized for a study abroad course (they can be used for independent scholarly work abroad, such as travel to an international conference or to support research outside the US). However, in the next budget cycle money will be requested specifically for graduate research grants. If The Graduate School can obtain dedicated funds for these research grants, then the TLO money that we are currently using for the grant program can be returned to the TLO office, and they can disburse them to graduate programs for study abroad opportunities, if they wish.

- **Research Week SOARS abstract submissions at <http://www.unf/our/SOARS.aspx>**

Dr. Kantner announced that the abstracts for SOARS (April 13) are open for both the undergraduate and graduate students to submit. Based on the abstracts, the Graduate School selects up to seven graduate students to participate in the Statewide Graduate Research Symposium, which will be held in Tallahassee one week later (April 20). He asked that the Council members continue to encourage students to submit their abstracts.

Special Guest:

- **Caron Johnson (Assistant Director of the Military and Veterans Resource Center)**

Dr. Kantner introduced Caron Johnson to the Council. Caron provided several handouts as part of a comprehensive presentation on the responsibilities and tasks of the Military and Veterans Resource Center (MVRC), as well as some specifics concerning the Post 9-11 GI Bill. Some of the highlights of her remarks are provided below:

- Currently, UNF averages over 1300 military affiliated active students, with almost a 50-50 breakdown between actual veterans and dependents of veterans.

- The MVRC, located in Building Two, provides many different services and resources for veterans. Some of those highlighted were free coffee, periodic luncheons, guest speakers, individual lockers for storage, computers for student use, free printing, a conference table for collaboration between students, tutoring and personal counseling.
- All veterans are eligible for in-state tuition in Florida.
- The MVRC has secured some scholarships for veterans already, although mostly for undergraduates, and will continue to search for new opportunities.
- The vast majority of veteran graduate students at UNF use their Post-911 GI Bill benefit.
- Most veterans have the ability to transfer their Post-911 GI Bill benefits to their family members and this number has been steadily increasing over the years.
- For those veterans using the Post-911 GI Bill, it will pay 100% of the in-state tuition and fees.
- At UNF, all degree and certificate programs are covered under the Post-911 GI Bill except the pre-med certificate.
- Veterans using the Post-911 GI Bill can receive up to a \$1500 per month housing stipend if they are in a full-time status during a term per the published UNF catalog. Veterans attending less than full-time credit hours in a semester would have their housing allowance reduced by a certain calculated percentage each month in that term. At UNF, nine credit hours in both the fall and spring terms is considered full-time for graduate students. For the summer semester, only three credit hours in each of the A and B terms (totaling 6 credit hours) would be considered full-time.
- Another stipulation to receive the full housing allowance each term is that at least three of the nine credit hours taken must be designated as an in-classroom course. At the graduate level, hybrid classes are also considered to be an in-classroom course.
- The MVRC certifies schedules for GI benefits for those veterans that are using their Post-911 GI benefits.
- Caron Johnson is the best point of contact for any scheduling, certification and general veteran questions. Program Directors are welcome to contact Caron (Tel. X5132/email: c.johnson@unf.edu) any time for guidance, should there be any questions or issues concerning military veteran students.

Agenda Items:

➤ **Approve January minutes**

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

➤ **Graduate faculty policy revision**

Dr. Kantner mentioned that this topic was already discussed at great length during the last Council meeting. He provided the Council members with a follow-up draft handout

containing revisions of the graduate faculty policy and reviewed again that this proposal is to create two categories of graduate faculty. One, the title of which the Deans recommended, would be named “research graduate faculty”. The second category would be designated as “teaching graduate faculty”. This would roughly mirror tenure-line faculty vs. instructors and lecturers who are teaching graduate courses.

One of the reasons for this proposal is that The Graduate School and the graduate programs have had to handle a large amount of exception approval paperwork for faculty who are otherwise not on the graduate faculty but are scheduled to teach graduate courses. The purpose of this revision is to create a mechanism where an officially recognized graduate faculty category is established to cover the most common exceptions: those who are not tenure-line, do not necessarily have research responsibility, and who intend to regularly teach professional or specialist graduate courses.

Dr. Kantner stated that the information presented and discussed during the last meeting has been integrated in the draft policy (handout) with little change. He asked for a motion to approve this policy change in order to move the document forward to the Deans for their approval. The motion was unanimously approved by the Council members.

➤ **Campus Climate and Graduating “Senior” surveys and graduate questions**

Dr. Kantner relayed that The Graduate School is looking to participate in some of the climate surveys conducted on campus in order to ensure that graduate students are also represented. The Graduate School plans to submit some questions for the campus climate survey, as well as the graduating senior surveys to make sure that graduate student opinions are captured as well. Dr. Kantner commented that he will provide programs with the opportunity to review and provide input to the questions as they are developed. The goal is to submit a small number of questions (about five) in order to keep it as simple as possible.

➤ **Summer enrollment and graduate assistantships**

Dr. Kantner reviewed again that students serving as graduate assistants are normally required to be enrolled in a full-time status. Under the current guidelines, this requires enrollment in nine credit hours per semester. He announced that The Graduate school will no longer enforce this requirement over the summer term for all graduate assistants (this also includes university-funded assistantships). In the past, any student that was not meeting the full-time requirement in the summer term was required to file an exception form.

Under this change, an exception form will no longer be required. Dr. Kantner commented that this should simplify the overall process and that the new procedure is actually typical for most universities. He also stressed that this is not considered a policy change since it was never committed in policy. The applicable forms and guidelines will be updated to support this modification. In the future, when programs create a summer EPAF and it is

routed to The Graduate School, we will only check to see if a student is active. A minimum credit hour enrollment requirement will not be enforced.

➤ **Continuous enrollment policy update**

Dr. Kantner assured the Council members that we are still working on the continuous enrollment policy. In particular, he is focusing in on what should count as full-time for students that are finishing up their thesis and dissertations. Nine credit hours is considered to be full-time for students, regardless of what they are doing, but typically it is not required for graduate students to enroll in nine credit hours when they are working on their thesis and dissertations. Dr. Kantner reiterated that The Graduate School is continuing to work this issue, but it also involves financial aid. As a result, this will take some additional time to coordinate.

Dr. Kantner ended the meeting at 1:15 PM.