

The second meeting of the Graduate Council for the 2015-2016 year was held Tuesday, October 6th at 3:30 p.m. at Biotech Place, Room 153. Dwayne Godwin chaired the meeting.

Present: Dwayne Godwin, Brad Jones, Hui-Wen Lo, Ed Swords, Tim Howard, Steve Walker, David John, Leah McCoy, Mike Furr, Nichole Allred

Absent: Steve Messier, Sarah Lafferty, Gloria Muday, Steve Robinson, Ralph D'Agostino, Ronald Nelson

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Minutes from the September 1, 2015 meeting (Attachment)

Minutes from the September 1, 2015 meeting were discussed and unanimously approved.

2. GSA Report

Neither of the GSA reps were able to attend and no report was provided to the Deans for discussion. However, they did meet with the Policy Committee on Thursday, October 1, 2015.

3. Committee Reports

A. Curriculum (Tim Howard, *Chair*)

1. Course Change Proposals

Course Number	Course Name	Action
CHM 752	Protein Chemistry	Change
LBS 727	The African Atlantic	Delete

Tim Howard put forward the change proposals. The Protein Chemistry course change was with regard to hours due to teaching loads. The formal offering of an African Atlantic course is requested for deletion. This course will be part of the Special Topics course if offered in the future. The Curriculum Committee made a motion to approve all course changes. The motion was seconded. All course changes were approved unanimously.

B. Credentials (Ed Swords, *Chair*)

1. Nominations for Graduate Faculty

Name	Department/Graduate Program Affiliation
Joseph Andrews, PhD	CPTS
Mir Yarfitz, PhD	Liberal Studies

Ed Swords put forward the nominations. The Credentials committee moved to approve the Graduate Faculty nominations with the exception of Joseph Andrews.

Regarding nomination of Dr. Andrews, there continues to be some confusion about whether his nomination is appropriate. The endorsement of Dr. Andrews was previously signed by Paula Means who is in an Academic Department Chair and now includes the signature of Dr. Robert Byington, the CPTS Program Co-Director. It was discussed that guidelines for appointment to Graduate Faculty include teaching, thesis committee membership and mentorship. Teaching in the Graduate curriculum can be done without appointment under a temporary status renewed annually. Committee membership does

not require Graduate Faculty appointment. The aspect of mentorship was the primary concern, i.e. what students will be mentoring and what type of research will the student engage in. It was noted that the CPTS Program is an MS program and that he may be involved in research around bioethics. The nomination was tabled. Ed Swords will contact Dr. Andrews and the CPTS Program to gain a better understanding of the necessary mentorship component. The committee agreed to make a final decision at the November meeting.

C. Policy Committee (David John, *Chair*)

David John presented a summary of the Leave policies developed to date (Attachment).

1. Family Medical Leave (FML) Policy:

Background: The committee began looking at a FML policy in the spring by comparison with other Graduate Programs, i.e. state, private, and other. Broadly speaking there is a lot of diversity with state programs having legislature written guidelines versus private programs with “we will do our best” and occasional reference to funds held by the Provost. In the summer, government agencies cleaned up most of the language, e.g. definition of spouse, and Wake Forest (WF) wrote a FML policy for faculty and staff which was used as the starting material for the proposals.

Proposal: The FML policy in its current form defines who is qualified, duration (8 weeks was taken from the WF policy), circumstances, support mechanism, and distinction from LOA.

Concerns:

- The main concerns raised were with regard to support mechanisms. It was noted that the language is specific to include “subject to availability of funds” and that NIH and NSF have funds (supplements) to support additional effort in the interim. Foundations were noted to have shorter timeframes, e.g. AHA is 6 weeks and the Dept. of Energy does not support FML. The wording “stipend support may continue subject to the availability of funds” was suggested for clarification. This raised concerns over the PIs designation of the availability and allocation of funds. Dwayne Godwin stated the Graduate School would leave this to the discretion of the PI.
- Absences that extended beyond 8 weeks. At which point the council suggested that it would transition to a leave of absence.
- Distinction of students and postdocs. Postdocs are not mentioned however some, e.g. NRSA, are not classified as staff.
- Classes. How will classes/credits in progress be handled? The student has the opportunity to withdraw without penalty with medical justification.
- Documentation. There is a need for appropriate forms and medical documentation.
- Return to lab. The council proposed that there needed to be language allowing the student to return to the lab with continuation of stipend.
- Proposed clauses.
 - Leave requests must be arranged with the faculty advisor a minimum of 60 days in advance in the case of the birth or adoption of a child and when possible.
 - This policy should not be interpreted as superseding applicable federal laws or VISA policies.
 - This policy should not be interpreted as assigning employee status or rights to a student, including superseding federal or state tax requirements as applied to students.
 - This policy is not an extension of federal or state leave rights or requirements. It is a unique policy that extends additional rights to students. Changes in federal or state laws or regulations that impact aspects of this policy will be considered by revisions of this process by graduate council.

2. Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy:

David John provided a summary of the LOA policy. Very simplistically, “a student can walk away for a year but they lose everything and they apply to come back”

The council raised concerns of how this differs from the LOA policy in the Graduate Handbook and associated internal document with an outline of why, signature of advisor, anticipated date of return, and schedule of updates with notice of return. This document will be reviewed for comparison. There was also some debate over reasons for a LOA and necessity for justification by the students.

Conclusions. The policy will continue to be an active discussion. It was suggested that David John speak to Dina Marty (University Council) to assist with language.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Documentary Program, which was previously cancelled, is planned for rebranding to Sports Story Telling. The proposal will come to council next month.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Graduate School Research Day is tentatively scheduled for March 3, 2016 (Thursday). This date was selected a little later in the spring to avoid weather. March 4, 2016 (Friday) is the start of Spring Break and has potential conflicts. The Graduate School will review course conflicts before a final decision is made.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 pm.