

Minutes
Graduate Academic Affairs Committee
September 16, 2016

Members in Attendance: R. Wood, A. Miller, A. Albert, A. Kent, A. Kaikati, A. Trees, C. Werner, D. Hall, D. Roby, H. Ardizzone, J. Barber, J. Fu, J. Martin, J. Nichols, L. McLaughlin, L. Willoughby, M. Mancini, K. Ravindra, S. Jordan

Guests: J. Haugen, S. Tebb, C. Wallace

Call to Order: Dr. Wood called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

I. Approval of Minutes from the August 19, 2016 meeting: Motion made to approve the August 19, 2016 meeting minutes - unanimous approval.

II. Old Business:

- A. **Policy change for outside work for grad assistants:** There is currently nothing in the grad catalog that prevents grad students from having outside employment. There is a need for a university policy that states that if the student is on a full-time GA, TA or RA, with benefits they are excluded from doing any outside work. There is a policy in the graduate handbook which states: "Students appointed to an assistantship or fellowship may not engage in any concurrent employment without the expressed consent of the department or program and/or dean or director. Request for an exemption must be in writing. Discovery of employment will result in immediate withdrawal of the assistantship."

The new policy cannot be implemented because it suggests that a student can have an assistantship as well as a student worker appointment. This is impossible because one is exempt and one is non-exempt. The IRS says no to this.

Currently we have no way to track employment. A. Rellergert is having changes made to the eGAR (electronic graduate assistant recommendation) system. It will require the department to list the number of hours that the student will be working and what type of FTE it is. This will allow us to track exactly how many hours a student is working, and know whether they are on half or full-time assistantships.

We need to get away from the half and quarter appointments. It does a disservice to the students and slows down their time to degree.

III. New Business:

- A. **Certificate Gerontology Proposal:**

M. Mancini outlined the proposal. C. Wallace and S. Tebb have worked hard on this seventy-five page proposal to form a certificate program in gerontology. It will be housed in social work but it is actually an interdisciplinary program that uses courses from nursing, law, communication, health care ethics, health management policy, and one or two other already existing courses in the program, in helping social workers specialize in working with older adults. The

population is aging and social work is on the cutting edge of gerontology work. Nineteen percent growth is expected in the next few years or so in this area. This is expected to be a relatively modest certificate program. There is no additional cost associated with it. No additional courses will be created and no courses will be cast aside. Social work students will go through their usual program with a practicum and then will select from a range of courses across the university. Some courses are required within social work and some in other disciplines as well as shown on page seventeen of the proposal. Everyone involved in the courses have been contacted, have signed off, and are very enthusiastic.

C. Wallace reported that this certificate requires four courses and a practicum and requires no accreditation. There are three different competency areas and the program was built based on those areas so that we are prepared if they accreditate these programs in the future.

Motion to endorse with unanimous approval.

B. Chemistry revisions to credit hour requirements:

This is an externally mandated problem and came through the board of grad ed. Several years back they got approval to reduce the credit hours for their masters in both research and non-thesis to twenty-four hours which is not in compliance with HLC accreditation. HLC expects that a masters will have a minimum of thirty credit hours beyond the baccalaureate. They have revised both degrees, non-thesis and thesis so they now both consist of thirty hours. That simply brings it in compliance with HLC common practices.

Motion to approve - Unanimous approval

C. Joint Degree Program Form:

SLU does not have a joint degree program form so one has been made for the participating programs. This came up because the Theology department is now proposing a joint master's degree with the School of Education. This certificate program is open to community members as well.

Motion to approve - Unanimous approval

D. Time to Degree issues:

The mandate from the Provost is that we have to get a handle on time to degree. It is measured by a number of external groups and ours is too long. Some of our programs are egregious violators of national norms. We need to make students degree within the stated time frames. This issue comes up today as students whose time to degree has expired are not eligible for any university support and the Office of Grad Ed gets numerous requests to waive this rule. This includes fellowships and grants. It was requested that members of the committee bring ideas for proposed wording to the upcoming ADD meeting on September 28th.

E. By-laws and GAAC member responsibilities:

Some changes to the by-laws have occurred to adjust the language to reflect our administrative structure. The committee is empowered to change the by-laws when necessary. The members are to go over the by-laws and this subject will be revisited at the October meeting.

IV. Announcements

- A. The next meeting is on October 21, 2016 at 8:30 a.m. in the Vitale Boardroom.
- B. P.E.O. Scholar Awards application Deadline is October 14th. This is for women in their last year of study who are giving their dissertation.
- C. Morgan Book Fund Award application deadline is October 14th also. This is a monetary award for books. Students would be given an amount of money that they can spend towards books. Applicants have to write an essay that has to do with contribution towards diversity. It is not based on financial need.
- D. Dissertation Fellowship applications are due December 1, 2016.
- E. Presidential and Diversity Fellowship applications are due January 31, 2017.
- F. There is a Distinguished Master's Thesis Award that is conferred by Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools, to which we belong. They are a subsidiary of the Counsel of Graduate Schools. We would like to find out if people are interested in pursuing this. The thesis is due by October 28th. To be eligible, a student would have had to have finished their thesis between July 2014 and June 2016. Each university submits one thesis in each of the two broad categories: social sciences and physical sciences engineering. The distinction isn't awarded until after the degree is achieved. The winners receive an all-expense paid trip to the meeting and present their work.
- G. R. Wood has a list of policy ambiguities, problems, wording, etc. This year, his goal is to systematically work through a few of these each month ADD meetings.
- H. Reports have been received from 4 units regarding how they use zero credit courses. This subject was brought up in CADD this week so deans were notified also. Once assembled, a list of the most common ways zero credit courses are used will be distributed to committee members.
- I. Investigation will be made regarding the number of Presidential and Diversity Fellowships to be awarded. Once received, this information will be distributed for conversation at a future meeting.

The next meeting is on October 21, 2016 at 8:30 a.m. in the Vitale Boardroom.

Adjourn 9:15 a.m.