

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL
August 25, 2021

The Graduate Council met on Wednesday, August 25, 2021, at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Members present: Jill Anderson, Ford Ballantyne, Suchendra Bhandarkar, Sundar Bharadwaj, Merrily Dunn, Melissa Fahmy, Tim Foutz, Rachel Fusco, Cari Goetcheus, Ruth Harman, Ed Kellough, Elizabeth Knight, Kyser Lough, Christof Meile, David Mustard, Luke Naeher, Kristen Navara, David Peterson, Kaori Sakamoto, Jacek Siry, Shavannor Smith, Elizabeth St. Pierre, Seth Wenger, Catherine White, Dayton Wilde, and Teena Wilhelm. Ron Walcott, Anne Shaffer, Robert Scott, Cheri Bliss, Robin Bingham, and Olivia Myers represented the Graduate School.

Members absent: Swarn Chatterjee, Jennifer Elkins, Dan Johnson, and Jennifer Samp.

VP/Dean Ron Walcott called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Minutes of the April 14, 2021, Graduate Council meeting were approved as posted on the Graduate School website.

Dr. Walcott began by having Council members introduce themselves, indicating their school/college, program, and new/returning member. He continued with an orientation to Graduate Council to clarify the role of members with clear expectations and how to execute those responsibilities. Members have the opportunity to deliberate, discuss, and even vote on changes to policy. Members also serve as conduits of information from the graduate education community to the Graduate School and back again. See accompanying PPT document.

Graduate Council Committee Reports and Action Items

- A. Administrative Committee
Ron Walcott, Ex Officio Member
No business to report.

- B. Appeals Committee
Shavannor Smith, Chair
Since the last report to the Graduate Council, the Appeals Committee has met once on August 17, 2021 for an Expedited Appeal hearing. Committee members present were Shavannor Smith, Jennifer Elkins, Tim Foutz, Rachel Fusco, Ruth Harman, Kyser Lough, David Mustard, and Kristen Navara. Jamie Smith, Anne Shaffer, and Olivia Myers from the Graduate School were present. The appeal was a Graduate School dismissal, and the committee voted to reinstate the student.

- C. Program Committee
Seth Wenger, Chair
Since the last meeting of the Graduate Council, the Program Committee has reviewed and approved one proposal via Microsoft Teams. The Program Committee would like to bring the following action item to the Graduate Council for its approval.

Action Item: From the Mary Frances Early College of Education, a proposal to terminate the face-to-face Graduate Certificate in Dyslexia at the Athens Campus. *(Vote to be held*

via electronic vote after proposal review by Council members.)

D. Policy and Planning Committee
Kaori Sakamoto, Chair

The PPC last met on 4/5/21 with two action items that went to the 4/14/21 Graduate Council meeting. The action items were approved by Council (one on student representation/voting on Graduate Council and the other on setting agenda items). The items went out for a vote by the overall Graduate Program Faculty, but a majority vote was not obtained. This was due to a lack of voting rather than lack of support for the proposed actions. The request will have to go out for a revote once we settle into the semester.

Old Business

No old business.

New Business (Open Discussion)

The last year has been challenging for graduate students and the graduate education community. While we do a lot of business that seems quite rote, we would like to create an opportunity for more open dialogue where time permits amongst the Graduate Council, so we might get a chance to talk about broader issues affecting graduate education. Also, to provide updates on what we are doing in the Graduate School with regards to supporting students.

Over the last year we have been working to support graduate students in terms of financial assistance and policy adjustments to help them deal with the challenges presented by COVID-19. How are some of the things we are doing affecting students in your areas? What are things we need to hear that we might not be aware of?

Comment Summary: What is the Graduate School doing in particular for our TA's? This is a really challenging topic and not all of it is on the shoulders of the Graduate School, but it is a central unit that can help. Comment on activities taken to ensure the safety of our graduate students. Faculty have more authority to enforce things than TA's.

Response Summary: In the Graduate School we do not have that much purview over TA's, except for the fact they are graduate students. We have been trying to ensure they are at least equipped with the KN95 masks. We talked internally about how best to get those masks distributed to students. You can order the KN95 masks from UGA Mart if they are in supply. The most effective way is to encourage departments to order them. Delivering masks to a class sets expectation that (1) students should be wearing masks and (2) gives TAs a higher quality mask. The onus is on the departments and the colleges to order and distribute those masks. In regards to other safety mechanisms in the classroom, we operate under the guidance of the USG and the University. TA's like all other instructors abide by those policies as well. Those that need ADA accommodations should pursue those avenues. Communicating options are the best we can do at this point.

Comment Summary: To what extent has the Graduate School gone out proactively and reached out to departments with options?

Response Summary: We are working across colleges, across departments. We send out notifications about masks and offer them, free of charge, to programs that request them. We will provide resources to units as on demand, but, at the same time, we expect programs to express what their needs may be because these needs vary across units. In other words, some units may be providing adequate support and may not need our assistance.

Comment Summary: One program provided TA's in labs with face shields so they could wear those when they were getting close to students to observe what they were doing or to help with lab. Program was told that University money would not purchase those, so program purchased shields with their own money for TAs. Program was told they were not on the list of items that could be purchased with personal protection money. Will discuss this further offline.

Response Summary: To update, the Graduate School has distributed around 5000 personal hand sanitizers and 4800 cloth masks outside of those distributed at orientation. We will continue to push these supplies out while they last. Please communicate with anyone you engage with so we can best support our students.

Comment Summary: Have things changed for this academic year as far as how accessible resources are at other universities? Libraries specifically, archives, that sort of stuff?

Response Summary: No update. Whatever was planned for this fall is probably in disarray again. Will make note and follow up with Toby Graham.

In terms of communication, we have recently hired a communications director, Ms. Kristine Groft. Once she is settled, we expect to improve dramatically our ability to communicate policy changes and all the other things we need to communicate to the community more effectively.

Information Items

- A. Curriculum Report: Since April 2021, the Graduate School has approved 54 new courses, 64 course revisions, and 1 deletion.
- B. Next meeting: Wednesday, September 22, 3:30pm, via Zoom.

Overall meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m., and members went into breakout groups by committee.

Graduate Council Orientation



Graduate School
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Role of Graduate Council

- ❑ Represent the Graduate Program Faculty (GPF) in all policy and procedure matters pertaining to graduate education at UGA
- ❑ Policies adopted by the Graduate Council are administered by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- ❑ The Graduate Council functions on behalf of GPF in all matters within the authority of the GPF.
- ❑ The GPF may supersede any action of the Graduate Council.
- ❑ *All members of the Graduate Council represent the entire GPF, not only the GPF of the department/program/college/school from which they come.*
- ❑ Graduate School Dean chairs the Graduate Council but only votes to break ties.
- ❑ GSA President serves as an ex-officio member of Graduate Council**



Graduate Council Operation

- Graduate Council is comprised of 30 members (one representative from each school/college (totaling 15)) and 15 member-at-large representatives elected by the GPF.
- Each member serves a three-year term.
- The agenda for each meeting with supporting documentation will be distributed at least 10 days prior to scheduled meetings and posted on the Graduate School website.
- Items may be placed on the agenda by the Graduate School Dean, the Administrative Committee, or by a two-thirds vote of members present at Graduate Council meetings.
- Graduate Council meetings may be cancelled if there are no agenda items



Responsibilities of Graduate Council members

- Attend Graduate Council meetings (proxies are not allowed)
- Review materials and be prepared to discuss and vote on motions
- Remember that you are representing **all GPF** and not just those in your academic units
- Communicate changes in Graduate School policies and procedures back to your units and the UGA graduate education community
- Bring agenda items and concerns from the UGA graduate education community back to Graduate Council
- Actively participate in the committees to which you have been assigned



Graduate Council Committees

Administrative Committee:

- Review Graduate Council processes and recommends modifications as needed
- Hear petitions for exceptions to Graduate School rules **other than those relating to admission and retention**
- Hear appeals of administrative decisions relating to any aspect of the graduate program **other than admission and retention.**
- Advance Graduate council agenda items
- Make recommendations to the dean and report its activities to the Council.

Members:

Kaori Sakamoto
Shavannor Smith
Seth Wenger



Graduate Council Committees

Policy and Planning Committee

Work with the Dean to:

- Develop strategic initiatives to enhance and re-envision graduate education at UGA.
- Recommend to the Graduate Council new Graduate School policies and policy revisions for consideration.



Graduate Council Committees

Policy and Planning Committee Members

Swarn Chatterjee	FACS
Merrily Dunn	MFE-COE
Melissa Fahmy	Franklin
Elizabeth Knight	Franklin
Christof Meile	Franklin
Luke Naeher	CPH
David Peterson	CVM
Kaori Sakamoto (Chair)	CVM
Teena Wilhelm	SPIA
Subhraleena Deka	GSA



Graduate Council Committees

Appeals Committee

Hear appeals from:

- applicants denied admission to graduate study.
- students denied a change of degree objective by the Graduate School.
- students dismissed by the academic unit and / or the Graduate School.
- students denied an extension of time requests.
- students who have violated the Continuous Enrollment Policy.
- students contesting a course grade.
- faculty whose membership in the Graduate Program Faculty has been removed or revoked.

The committee shall make recommendations to the Dean and report its activities to the Graduate Council.



Graduate Council Committees

Appeals Committee members

Jennifer Elkins	SSW
Tim Foutz	CENGR
Rachel Fusco	SSW
Ruth Harman	MFCOE
Edward Kellough	SPIA
Kyser Lough	Grady
David Mustard	Terry COB
Kristen Navara	CAES
Jennifer Samp	MFECOE
Shavannor Smith (Chair)	CAES



Graduate Council Committees

Program Committee

- Review proposals for new degree programs and changes to existing programs
- Make recommendations to the Council concerning the approval, revision, continuation, or termination of all graduate programs.



Graduate Council Committees

Program Committee members

Jill Anderson	Franklin
Suchendra Bhandarkar	Franklin
Sundar Bharadwaj	Terry COB
Cari Goetcheus	CED
Dan Johnson	Warnell SFNR
Elizabeth St. Pierre	MFECOE
Seth Wenger (Chair)	OSE
Catherine White	Pharmacy
Dayton Wilde	CAES



Graduate School Staff

- Ron Walcott (Vice Provost/Dean)
- Anne Shaffer (Associate Dean)
- Bob Scott (Director of Special Projects)
- Cheri Bliss (Director of Admissions)
- Robin Bingham (Executive Assistant to the Dean)
- Olivia Meyers (Administrative Assistant to the Associate Dean)

