

Minutes of the Graduate Council (GC) for December 10, 2015

Present: Bauer, Beise, Bruck, Caramello (chair), Cork, Cowdery, Dalglish, Delwiche, DeShong, Hemingway, Long, Lucas, Maddox, Simpson, Sosnowski, Sprinkle, Wilkins, Wilkinson, Yaros, Wang, Wong

Staff: Chen, Franke, Leone, Shayman

I. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of September 30, 2015 were approved with no emendations.

II. Updates

Dean Caramello updated the GC on the professional development initiative to prepare doctoral students for multiple career paths, an initiative recognized by President Loh in his State of the Campus address in November. The GS has scheduled a forum and series of three workshops for Spring 2016 focusing on careers in the public, private, and educational sectors. The forum will feature three distinguished speakers from those sectors, and the workshops will feature panels of external speakers and UMD faculty members. The GS also recently received approval from the Provost's office to activate the search, previously put on hold, for Coordinator of Professional Development and Career Services, to be appointed jointly by the GS and the Office of Career Services in Student Affairs.

Assistant Dean Franke reviewed the implementation of U Achieve and the updating of the Graduate Catalogue to streamline degree audits and ensure that all program requirements are correct and consistent. Substantive program changes will still need to be vetted through the PCC process, but minor program changes to ensure consistency and accuracy in the Graduate Catalogue and U Achieve will be grandfathered in during the U Achieve implementation process.

Councilor Simpson updated the GC on efforts to establish an Office for Postdoctoral Scholars in the GS. An environmental scan of what other CIC institutions offer postdocs was completed, as well as a survey of postdocs on the UMD campus. The campus survey identified several issues to be addressed, including professional development, classification of postdoctoral positions under current HR guidelines, and "ownership" of postdocs by colleges and/or programs.

Councilors Wilkinson and DeShong commented that HR classification and appointment issues are a real concern as they impact the funding.

Councilor Hemingway commented that many issues for postdocs and graduate students are similar and that current GS initiatives, such as multiple career paths and PI/RA agreements, could be extended to postdocs.

Councilor Beise commented that an Office for Postdoctoral Scholars would need to be aware of and address the needs of postdocs who do not reside on campus.

III. Discussion

Assistant Dean Chen and PCC Chair Yaros introduced a discussion on the PCC Review of the Doctorate of Professional Studies proposal. The DPS proposal creates a framework for a degree that would accommodate many disciplines and differing contents. Such a generic DPS provides flexibility for programs to respond in a timely way to market trends. Many professionals are seeking a degree beyond the masters, but different from a research PhD. A DPS would complement the Graduate Certificate of Professional Studies and Masters of Professional Studies and complete the sequence. It also would ensure the integrity of the PhD by differentiating professional doctoral studies from original doctoral research.

A proposal for such a generic DPS together with a proposal for a content specific DPS from the iSchool—DPS in Executive Leadership of Information Organization (ELIO)—had been sent to the Graduate PCC Committee. Following review of the proposal, the PCC Committee requested that the proposal be brought to the Council for further input that would help inform PCC deliberations.

Councilor Wilkinson stated that the key element in creating a successful DPS in ensuring the quality of the degree. Councilor Delwiche stated that a Professional Doctorate must add gravitas to the institution by satisfying rigid standards. The key issue in developing professional doctorates is demonstrating a demand that a current masters degree or research PhD is not meeting and developing such a degree within robust guidelines.

Councilor Beise expressed concerns with respect to submitting a generic DPS proposal to MHEC. She recommended that the GC and GS develop a set of internal guidelines for DPS degrees and move only content specific degree proposals through the review process on and off campus.

Dean Caramello noted an approved generic DPS proposal would streamline the review process for content specific iterations of the DPS and allow programs to create degrees with fewer approval steps beyond campus. Otherwise, each iteration of a DPS will require approval through all steps including MHEC.

Discussion followed on the relative advantages and disadvantages of proposing the DPS as a generic degree together with the ELIO as a specific iteration or of proposing ELIO as a specific degree while developing generic internal guidelines. The question was tabled for further consideration.

IV. Reports

Councilor Sprinkle reported that the Working Group on Graduate Certificates met with departments across campus to assess the state of graduate certificates. The committee found that there are approximately 115 certificates that vary widely from department to department. Policy areas that need to be addressed include the difference between graduate certificates and citations and their relation to degree programs, the funding and finances of graduate certificates, the status of Advanced Special Students with respect to graduate certificate programs, and comingling of students. The working group will report its findings and recommendations to the GC later this year.

Councilor Bruck informed the GC that the Fellowship Allocation Working Group has been charged by Dean Caramello and has met and reviewed the history of fellowship allocation to its current state. Next steps are to consider allocation models that will align fellowships more closely with campus strategic goals allow the GS to maximize the effectiveness of this resource for program and student success. Dean Caramello added that keeping fellowships and graduate education at the forefront of the University's capital campaign is critical given the limited pool of UMD fellowship funding compared with UC-Berkeley, U Michigan, and other aspirational peers.

Councilor Delwiche reported on the progress of the PI/RA Agreement Working Group, which has been charged by Dean Caramello. Councilor Delwiche met with the legal office to discuss legal issues that might constrain such agreements. The Working Group is reviewing similar agreements at peer institutions. It plans to complete its information gathering prior to Spring Break and to make recommendations to the GC toward the end of the academic year. The Working Group is in consultation on this issue with the GSG.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 12 Noon.