



GRADUATE COUNCIL Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 15, 2019, 1:30 am – 3:00 pm, Maryland Room

In attendance: Fetter (chair), Avilez, Xie, Long, Enriquez, Lawley, Sachdeva, Sayer, Lu, Carpenter, Duncan, Zhu, Kirmani, Fernandez, Rabenhorst, Sprinkle, Toboada Barber, Tambe, Mullin, Moser Jones,

Staff: Strausser, Kotzker, White, Enekwe

1. Welcome and introductions
 - a. We started the meeting at 1:32
2. Approval of minutes of 9/10/19 meeting
 - a. Meeting minutes were approved with no changes.
3. Announcements
 - a. Graduate School personnel: interim COS, search for assistant dean, counselor
 - i. Bev Rodgerson is serving as the GS interim Chief of Operations. We are currently searching for the Assistant Dean and Chief of Operations.
 - ii. We are currently reviewing applicants for the Graduate Academic Counselor position.
 - b. Red Folder distribution
 - i. The Red Folders have been distributed across campus. Please email astraus3@umd.edu if you have not received them or need more.
 - c. Collection and publication of career outcome data for Ph.D. students
 - i. The Graduate School is moving forward with a contract with a company to do collect career outcome data for our PhD graduates. We would like to start doing this by the end of the academic or calendar year. This will help you advise applicants and applicants can make better choices about their graduate study.
 - d. Events
 - i. Candidacy Tea Reception: **RESCHEDULED** to November 20 / May ??, 4-6 pm, University House.
 1. The President's office sent out an invitation, so please check your inboxes! All graduate councilors are welcome to attend, but please make sure you RSVP. If you did not receive an invitation or have questions, please email astraus3@umd.edu.
 - ii. Celebration of Doctoral Graduates: Dec 11 / May 11, 12-2 pm, Riggs
 - iii. Fellowship and Award Celebration: May 13, 3-5 pm, Grand Ballroom Lounge, Stamp
 - iv. GradTerp Exchange: Nov 12 / Dec 3, 5-7 pm, MilkBoy
 1. <https://gradschool.umd.edu/gradterpexchange>



ACTION ITEM

4. Proposed revision in policy for Dean's Representative
 - a. We wanted to make it clear that the dean's representative cannot be from the students department or the advisors department. It can be from a different program in that college.
 - b. This policy was approved by all councilors.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Grading policy for thesis and dissertation research credits
 - a. 799/899 are not used in the computation of the GPA.
 - b. Feedback:
 - i. S would indicate satisfactory progress. The alternative to S would be a fail. If you fail, then you are not making satisfactory progress, so you are not making progress and policy indicates you could be terminated from your PhD program.
 - c. Councilors seemed concerned with "incompletes".
 - d. There was general agreement with standardizing the grading for each program.
 - e. The continuous registration is on hold when a graduate student takes a leave of absence.
 - f. Most Councilors agreed with the S-F-I and a standardized system. There is some support for having this at the department/program level. We would be eliminating the A-F letter grade option all together.
 - g. We will come back to this for a final decision and vote at the next meeting.
6. Health insurance for graduate students
 - a. Currently, there is no requirement for graduate students to have health insurance.
 - b. Academic Health Plans came to answer questions about SHIP. They represent 150 Universities across the United States.
 - i. Academic Health Plans started their contract at UMD this semester. The carrier for this product is Carefirst.
 - ii. This plan is very affordable and one of the best rates they see across the country.
 - iii. They want to do more to educate the campus.
 - iv. This is a comprehensive 12 month plan. Rate wise and benefit wise, this plan would be superior to many at other Big10 institutions.
 - v. Academic Health Plans verifies coverage for undergraduates at UMD. There is a webpage that you can purchase the coverage or you can waive insurance. They then can verify the coverage.
 - vi. We talked about how students can only enroll in SHIP at the beginning of each semester. You have about 45 days from the start of the semester to enroll.



- vii. Councilors asked questions about the following topics:
 - 1. Most universities do not offer an employee health plan to graduate students, but UMD does provide this option.
 - 2. Students who are parents: about 5% have their spouse/dependent covered. A spouse does not have to go to the health center. They can go to an approved Carefirst doctor, but there is a higher cost.
 - 3. A new student would have coverage for a full year with SHIP- they would enroll at the beginning of the fall semester.
 - c. Dean Fetter presented data on a graduate health insurance survey that the Graduate School conducted after the last GC meeting.
 - i. There was a significant response bias that left Dean Fetter estimating the uninsured rate of 20%.
 - ii. One clear take away is that we need to do a better job informing our students about SHIP.
 - d. Cost of attendance: Currently health insurance is not included in the calculation of cost of attendance for graduate students. Dean Fetter wants to work with the Office of Student Financial Aid to include health insurance at the SHIP rate in the cost of attendance. This would allow students to borrow more to cover these costs.
 - e. Question: Are students going to be grandfathered in? Or can we just impose this on future graduate students. Dean Fetter will look into this.
 - f. Dean Fetter is also going to investigate who can make this decision. More information will be forthcoming.
 - g. The Graduate Council unanimously agreed to require health insurance for all graduate students.
7. Dean's Fellowship budget and distribution formula
- a. Dean Fetter presented slides on the history of the Dean's Fellowships.
 - b. Current allocation: Fixed allocation to colleges for 3 years (fall 2018-20) based on 50% degrees, 50% new students.
 - c. Dean Fetter discussed restoring funds to previous levels. There has been an erosion of funds for graduate students.
 - d. This is about making funding graduate students a high priority. Are we losing our ability to offer competitive packages to the best students? Dean Fetter can work on advocating for this across campus. We need you to advocate too!
 - e. Comments from councilors
 - i. Dean Fetter was asked to provide the text from the slide "Focus on Making the Pie Larger". Below is the text from that slide:

Rather than spend time debating a new allocation formula that would shift funds between colleges, with little prospect of consensus...



1. *Let's focus on restoring funding to previous levels:*
 - a. *\$1.5 million would restore total budget to FY05 peak*
 - b. *\$2.0 million would restore number of fellowships to FY05 peak*
 - c. *\$2.3 million would restore fellowships per student to FY99 peak*
 - d. *\$3.4 million would restore fellowships per degree to FY03 peak*
 - f. Approved unanimously: Going forward with the same allocation model that was used in the last 3 years.
8. Other agenda items for AY19-20
- a. Mandatory fee structure
 - b. Training and certification of teaching assistants
 - c. gradSERU
 - d. GA time-use study
 - e. Graduate student mental health
 - f. Faculty mentoring of graduate studies
9. The meeting adjourned at 1:05pm.
10. The next meetings are on November 12 from 9:30-11:00am and February 11 from 2:00-3:30 - both held in the Maryland Room (0100) in Marie Mount Hall.