



## GRADUATE COUNCIL Meeting Notes

Monday, April 19, 2021 from 1-2:30 via zoom

Attendees: Cohen, Dasgupta, DeMaria, Duncan, Fetter, Gold, Haring, Kim, Laffin, Lawley, Lay, May, Qu, Sayer, Shea, Sheaff, Sprinkle, Turner, Vera, Waguespack, Washington, Williams, Xie

Staff and ExOfficio: Ambrosi, Beise, Benson, Fisher Liu, Gittens, Koch, Kotzker, Martin, O'Connell, Palmaira, Perez, Strausser, Rhine, Roberts, Strausser, van Son, Warrick-Bell, Woodwell

### AGENDA

Dean Fetter welcomed attendees and started the meeting at 1:01 PM.

1. Welcome to new members and gratitude to members who have completed their term

**Thank you to all of the councilors whose term is ending:**

Marty Rabenhorst (AGNR)

Kellie Robertson (ARHU)

Liana Sayer (BSOS)

Min Xie (BSOS)

Larry Washington (CMNS)

Gang Qu (ENGR)

Christopher Hanson (JOUR)

Dan Laffin (graduate student representative)

Simon Sheaff (graduate student representative)

Nancy Vera (graduate student representative)

Eric Gao (graduate student representative)

Michelle Lay (graduate student representative)

**Welcome to these new members for the AY 21-22:**

Debabrata Biswas (AGNR)

Patrick Warfield (ARHU)

Christina Getrich (BSOS)

Patrick Wohlfarth (BSOS)



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- Jeffrey Shultz (CMNS)  
Sennur Ulukus (ENGR)  
Susan Moeller (JOUR)  
Autumn Perkey (graduate student representative)  
Aaron Roth (graduate student representative)  
Tamara Allard (graduate student representative)
2. Approve 3/8 meeting minutes
    - a. No comments or corrections were made to the minutes and they were approved unanimously.
  3. Updates and announcements
    - a. [Doctoral Career Pathways Conference](#) - April 30
      - Event is designed to introduce doctoral and postdoctoral associates to careers outside of academia. Staff and faculty are encouraged to attend.
      - There are networking events through affinity groups.
      - Please encourage your students to register using this [link](#).
      - All panelists are listed on the website.
    - b. gradSERU update: response rate = 30%
      - This is almost double our previous response rate, putting UMD at the top of our consortium.
      - The graduate school plans to publish the results to the public and hopes that this will lead to conversations throughout departments.
    - c. Plan for return to in-person classes in the fall
      - [Remote defenses in fall 2021](#) (UMD login required)
        1. Starting with the Fall 2021 semester, we will return to in-person thesis and dissertation defenses.
        2. During the 2020-2021 academic year, the University allowed for remote defenses during a public health emergency without request for an exemption to our standard policy.
        3. Thesis and dissertation defenses during Spring and Summer 2021 can continue remotely without prior approval.
        4. Starting on August 30, 2021, all thesis and dissertation defenses must occur fully in person unless an exemption has been granted by the Graduate School.
      - [Message to students](#) (UMD login required)



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1. This email has been sent out to students on the morning of April 19th. All DGS and CGS also received a copy of the message.
2. This included a survey but it is too early to report the results of the survey.
  - Students who are unable to return in fall
    1. The US embassy in Delhi is prioritizing student visas so they can return in the Fall.
    2. The Graduate School is trying to keep track of how many requests to defer another year due to COVID related exceptions. Deferring another year is a policy exception, so please contact the Graduate School as soon as possible if your students are considering another deferral.
  - IIE report: [Do Chinese students still want to study in the US?](#)
- d. HEERF-II emergency grants application
  - The University has received this funding and there is an application for graduate students. Only US Citizens are eligible for these funds.
  - The graduate school is making a limited amount of money for international students with extreme financial need from their own funds.
- e. Summer and Fall COVID-delay fellowships: [go.umd.edu/gs-f21-cfr](https://go.umd.edu/gs-f21-cfr)
  - [Email to CGS/DGS](#) on April 2 (June 1 deadline).
  - Seems to be only a modest number of doctoral students whose dissertation research has been delayed due to the pandemic.
  - These are for doctoral students whose research has been significantly delayed due to the pandemic.
- f. MEI tuition scholarship
  - Each year there are many applicants recommended to take the Bridge program or writing program. We have some promising applicants who are unable to pay and we are put into a position of possibly losing the student. The Graduate School in cooperation with the Provost's office are offering scholarships.
  - For the next admission cycle, we will have this available. Funds are offered in a limited first come, first serve basis.
- g. AY20-21 report on [Exceptions and Exceptional Appointments](#)



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- This is a list of graduate faculty that were exceptions to the graduate faculty membership process for the AY20-21.

## 4. Policy Revisions

- a. [Qualifications](#) for a graduate assistantship (UMD login required)
  - Students that are enrolled in a dual degree program with another University of Maryland Campus can have a Graduate Assistantship on the College Park Campus.
  - Unanimously passed by the Graduate Council.
- b. [Policy](#) on restricting online publication of theses or dissertations (UMD login required)
  - Currently you can embargo your dissertation after you defend it for 1 year, 6 years or indefinitely.
    1. Currently those who chose to have an embargo are evenly split between 1 and 6 years, with rare applications for an indefinite embargo.
    2. Indefinite embargos should only be used in rare occasions such as national security concerns and involvement in legal matters.
      - a. An indefinite embargo has not been granted in the last six years.
  - Most of our BIG10 peers do a 2 year embargo.
  - We propose taking away the 1 year embargo and convert that to a 2 year embargo. A two year embargo is automatically approved.
  - Students can still have the option for a 6 year or indefinite embargo. These require approval by the Graduate School.
  - Currently the Graduate School requires Graduate School approval for indefinite embargos.
  - Currently there are no examples in the policy which may confuse students.
  - Advisors now need to write a letter supporting a 6 year or indefinite embargo.
    1. Currently advisors only have to check a box on a form for an embargo request.
  - This policy applies for both Masters and Doctoral dissertations
  - Unanimously passed by the Graduate Council.

## 5. Discussion

- a. New Graduate Council Executive Committee? Call for Graduate Council AY 21-22 volunteers (3 faculty and 1 student)
  - Goal is to get more people involved in the making of the agenda of the Graduate Council.



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- This group would meet about 1 week ahead of each council meeting
- If you would like to volunteer please email Brooke or Dean Fetter (only FY21 council members may be on the committee)
- b. Strategic goals for graduate education (diversity, completion, time to degree, funding, etc.)
  - The last [strategic plan](#) was released in 2016
  - Dean Fetter expects for a new strategic plan to be made in the near future and wants the Graduate Council's input.
  - Some things to consider
    1. Competition rate for the PhD program is much lower than the Masters program
    2. PhD program is not as diverse as the Masters program
    3. Faculty mentoring circles to promote best practices
    4. Goal of measuring the share of students who publish one or more article in professional journals
  - Numerical goals may be tricky as programs vary greatly in many different aspects
  - Degree completion by minority status (idea of a leaky pipeline)
    1. Currently the Graduate School does have retention programs offered by the [Office of Graduate Diversity and Inclusion](#)
  - Job placement in both academic and non academic positions
  - Time to Degree Goals
    1. There are compelling reasons for students to take longer than their funding but departments often feel hamstrung by the connection to funding
      - a. Hiring deadlines may make it so a student takes an extra year
    2. Some departments take longer than others for time to degree
    3. Possible Goal: set a time to degree goal within each department that includes a funding guarantee for the time to degree goal.
  - Dean Fetter welcomes members to email the Graduate School with any other potential goals for a strategic plan.

The meeting adjourned at: 2:19 PM.

***These minutes were unanimously approved at the 9/17/21 Graduate Council Meeting.***