



GRADUATE COUNCIL Meeting Minutes Tuesday, April 23, 2019, 9:30am – 11:00am, Maryland Room

Attendance: Steve Fetter, Jeff Franke, Amanda Strausser, Kerry Green, Annie Rappeport, Wayne Slater, Larry Washington, Betsy Beise, Ann Weeks, Min Xie, Casey Dawkins, Liana Sayer, Sheung Lu, Ana Taboda Barber, Jessica Fernandez, Binbin Peng, Ashwini Tambe.

- I. Welcome
 - a. The meeting began at 9:40. Steve welcomed everyone to the final meeting of the year. Thank you to everyone whose terms are expiring. We appreciate your service. We will be holding elections in colleges who have terms have expired.
 - b. Dean Fetter is looking for councilors who are interested in co-chairing the Graduate Council. You can help set the agenda and run the meeting. Please let Steve know if you are interested.
- II. Approval of the minutes for March 6, 2019 meeting
 - a. The minutes were approved with no changes.
- III. Announcements
 - a. Thank you to everyone who attended the March 27, 2019 Graduate School Centennial Celebration. During the event we had a group discussion at each of the tables. We have typed up these notes along with the questions and posted them on our website (<https://www.gradschool.umd.edu/centennial/celebration/reports>). Please review these notes. We hope to use this feedback to inform future events, policies and practices.
 - b. gradSERU
 - i. The survey is open until May 3rd. Please encourage your students to fill out the survey!
 - c. Individual faculty and faculty-student research award
 - i. We made 70 flagship offers. We have 18 accepted flagship fellows. We increased the amount of the award for this year. We awarded 70 Wylie awards.
 - ii. RASA and CAPAA awards: We now require that the faculty research includes supporting graduate students. Some departments had concerns because it is not always possible to include graduate students. In response to these concerns, the Vice President of Research is now offering an award for faculty in fields where there is less external funding.

This new award is called “Independent Scholarship, Research and Creativity Awards (ISRCA). The VPR and Graduate School award guidelines have been posted.

1. For more information about FRSA, please go here:
https://gradschool.umd.edu/sites/gradschool.umd.edu/files/uploads/Awards/Guidelines/fsra_program_ay_20-21.pdf
 2. For more information about ISRCA, please go here:
<https://research.umd.edu/development/independent-scholarship-research-and-creativity-awards-isrca-0>
- d. Graduate Assistant Stipends: The 3% COLA effective July 1st has been extended to all graduate assistantships. The Graduate School has increased the stipend levels by 4% for the coming academic year. It is important to note that the stipend levels are now at the level of the cost of attendance at UMD.
- i. A memo on the minimums can be found here:
https://gradschool.umd.edu/sites/gradschool.umd.edu/files/uploads/docs/fy20_ga_fellow_stipend_memo_final.pdf.
- e. Course-related graduate policy web page
- i. UGST has created a webpage for all policies related to the syllabi. There is one webpage that has all of the official policies and faculty link to this page on their syllabi. The Graduate School now has an equivalent page (https://go.umd.edu/Course_Related_Policies) that we are going to ask graduate faculty to link to this page in their syllabi.
- f. Data regarding graduate programs
- i. One of the recommendations of Alan Leshner’s report is to share data related to different graduate programs. Steve shared information related to the Coalition for Next Generation Life Sciences. Big10 institutions have data available through the Coalition’s website:
nglscoalition.org/coalition-data/
 - ii. We will be working with IRPA to implement this apart from joining the coalition. The first data we will be looking at is regarding admissions and current enrollment by gender, race and ethnicity. This would be at the program level. Currently that data is not publicly available. Other data is PhD time to degree by gender, race and citizenship. We will keep you posted on the progress of this project.
- g. Upcoming events:
- i. Candidacy Tea: May 13, 2019 from 4-6 at the University House. All graduate councilors have been invited. Please be sure to fill out the RSVP.
 - ii. Fellowship and Award Celebration: May 14, 2019 from 3-5 in the Grand Ballroom Lounge in Stamp.
 - iii. Campus Celebration of Doctoral Graduates Luncheon: May 20, 2019 from 12-2 in Orem Hall at Riggs. The save the dates have gone out.

IV. Discussion Topics

The Graduate School, University of Maryland

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- a. Professional doctorate policy:
 - i. Graduate PCC discussed the professional doctorate and we discussed their overall conclusions. At this point, they have no additional recommendations to this policy. They are considering making a template for professional doctorate programs.
 - ii. We opened the discussion up for everyone to talk about the policy.
 - iii. Final vote on professional doctorate policy
 - 1. The policy has passed. To view the policy in the Graduate Catalog, please go here:
<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/professional-practice-doctoral-degrees-policies/>
 - b. Vote to establish committee to make recommendation on English proficiency standard
 - i. Steve presented several slides regarding data and TOEFL scores. Steve would like to form a small committee to review this data and make recommendations on the TOEFL standard. This committee would examine if the Graduate School should modify the minimum TOEFL score, what would the new score be and how are exceptions made. The committee would present these recommendations at the first meeting of the GC in fall 2019.
 - c. Graduate Outcome Assessment
 - i. We have decided to go ahead with a pilot program of about 8 programs.
 - ii. Ann Weeks shared her great experience with GOA and reducing time to degree.
- V. New business
- a. We discussed the idea of a flat fee structure for graduate students. The issue stems from graduate students taking more than 8 credits and being considered full time or half time. Often students will audit classes instead of registering to avoid having to pay the full-time rate. This is not a great practice for the students or the faculty teaching the course. Steve wanted to raise this issue again to get councilors views on having a flat fee structure and the arbitrary break point between full time and half-time credits.
- VI. Adjourn
- a. The meeting adjourned at 10:37am

GRADUATE COUNCIL NOTES FROM SUMMER VOTE

On July 8, 2019, Dean Steve Fetter emailed current Graduate Councilors to vote on the proposed change in English proficiency standards for graduate admission. These changes were recommendations from a committee Dean Fetter formed to review the standards. Below is a summary of those changes as outlined by Dean Fetter.

Accordingly, I propose the following changes in English proficiency standards for graduate admission. These changes have been reviewed and are supported by the deans and the associate deans for graduate education for all colleges.

For full admission: A TOEFL superscore total of 96, with superscores of 22 for speaking, 24 for listening and writing, and 26 for reading (the current subscore requirements).

For admission to the MEI Bridge Program: A TOEFL superscore total of 88 to 95, with superscores of 18 for speaking, 18-23 for listening, 20-25 for reading, and 26 for 20-23 for writing (the current subscore requirements).

Applicants with TOEFL superscore totals below 88 would be eligible for admission to the MEI Intensive English Program.

Applicants with writing superscores below 24 are required to take the MEI Advanced English Writing Class.

Other aspects would remain unchanged:

The Voxy Bridge program will remain available for applicants not meeting the requirements for full admission. After completing the program, applicants must retake the TOEFL and achieve the scores listed above to qualify for full admission.

We will continue to accept IELTS and PTE as alternatives to TOEFL. Concordance tables will be used to make appropriate changes in the standards for these tests.

There would be no change in the assessment or standards for international teaching assistants.

Colleges and programs are free to set standards of English proficiency above the minimum standards set by the Graduate School.

Dean Fetter called for a vote of councilor members. The following councilor's voted in favor of the proposed changes: Larry Washington, Liana Sayer, Christopher Ellis, Casey Dawkins, Christopher Hanson, Anna Toboada Barber, Abhimanyu Sachdeva, Robert Sprinkle, Jessica Fernandez, and Gang Qu. There were no recorded objections or abstentions. Voting closed on July 12, 2019 at 5pm.