



Graduate Council Meeting
Wednesday, February 15, 2023, 11:00-12:30 pm
[Zoom](#)

ATTENDEES:

GC Members: Debabrata Biswas, Lindsey May, Laura DeMaria, Alexander Williams, Jason Rudy, Ken Elpus, Paulo Prochno, Patrick Wohlfarth, Eun Kyoung Choe, Steve Mount, David Van Horn, Doug Julin, Leonid Korolov, Jeffrey Shultz, Paul Gold, Helim Aranda-Espinoza, Rob Wells, Lucy Qiu, Edmond Shenassa, Paul Turner, Joey Haavik, Lauren Cain, Lizzie Irlbacher, Nicole Menkart, Andrew Elby, Matthew Nessian, Michelle Tan, Steve Fetter, Evelyn Cooper

GS Staff: Brent Hernandez, Robyn Kotzker, Sparkle Lonesome, Yi Hao, Patty Woodwell, Blessing Enekwe, Marion D'Aurora, Fan Tsao, Heather Kissinger, Naima Ben Ali Shameem, Teddy Wu

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Approve [November 16, 2022, Graduate Council](#) meeting minutes
 - a. Approved with no changes.
3. Updates and announcements
 - a. GS personnel updates.
 - Steve Fetter is stepping down as Dean at the end of the academic year.
 1. Contact Steve/Evelyn to recommend candidates.
 - Sparkle Lonesome, the new assistant to the Dean.
 - Welcome Naima Ben Ali Shameem, Business Manager, Finance and Administration.
 - Sabrina González, Postdoctoral Associate for Academic Support.
 - Yi Hao, Program Director for Career and Professional Development.
 - b. [TerpTax](#) opened February 6 – GS supported free tax prep help for grad (international) students.
 - c. DGS/CGS orientation
 - The GS held our first orientation session on January 24th, with 38 CGS/DGS in attendance, where GS Staff gave presentations and answered questions.
 - We plan to hold another orientation in the Spring and provide workshops.
 1. Workshop topics: LOA, Assistantships/Fellowships/Financial Awards, Continuous Enrollment, Probation, etc.
 - a. Series of workshops to roll out covering the topics above.
 - d. Mentorship expectation statements and program awards.
 - Requirement for statement/guidelines for faculty mentoring of student research.



- Final statements are posted online, with student manuals, course software where students go for information, etc.
 - We plan to recognize departments that have done a great job (2-3) with a new award.
 1. Contact Jason Farman and/or Spencer Benson for follow-up.
 - e. Fellowship updates.
 - f. [Update](#) on proposal development management services.
 - We partnered with VPR in the second year of this service.
 - Achieved Steve's goal of submitting more requests than the service can handle, giving attention to these, particularly as it relates to writing.
 - g. gradSERU
 - Survey launching 2/27/2023.
 - The survey's significant benefit is comparing results with peer institutions (25) across fields.
 - h. Data project
 - An exit survey was collected for years, each year, sitting in an unused repository, and we plan to make this data available.
 - Each Ph.D. graduate is invited to complete the survey yearly.
4. Policy Changes (refinements)
- a. [Emeritus faculty serving as Dean's Representative](#)
 - Background: Automatically retain full membership in graduate faculty for 5 years after retiring. Dept can request to renew for another 5 years.
 1. They can chair or serve on dissertation committees.
 2. We do not recommend having long-retired faculty serve as Dean's Rep because Policies change occasionally. It is not fair to assume Emeritus faculty keep up with policy changes. The dean's rep's primary role: enforce rules/policies and/or invalidate defense to protect students and the integrity of the defense, which could be burdensome for emeritus faculty.
 - Discussion: Is this a reasonable limitation vs. unnecessary or not restrictive enough?
 1. Q1: Can the possibility of exceptions be stated explicitly in the policy?
 - a. Answer: Exceptions to policy can be made by GS, as noted in the proposed change.
 - Poll, do you support this: Yes/No/Abstain (add language to catalog).
 1. Yes: 20
 2. No: 1
 3. Abstain: 2
 - b. [Deferrals for Combined Bachelor's-Master's degrees](#)



- Background: Received requests recently from students/programs for Students to defer the official beginning of GS part of a 4+1 Bachelor's/Master's program.
 1. Student completes 9 credits of Grad program in Senior Year (and applies to grad program during senior year). After completing their Bachelor's, they become admitted to GS.
 2. There was never intended to be a break in-between Bachelors and official admission to a Master's program. 9 credits are usually foundational courses.
 3. Want to take a year off? Take a year off or more, apply to GS, and enter the Master's program later, but if in 4+1, must continue immediately.
 4. Do not want to allow deferrals, but life events create the need for LOA.
 - a. Don't normally allow LOA for 1st semester and usually just defer, but deferral isn't an option for the 4+1
 5. This may have implications for students paying back undergraduate loans.

- Discussion
 1. It was intended that students do the tight 5-year. What is the drawback to allowing a maximum 1-year deferral, aside from the original design?
 - a. Answer: primary rationale: student has already begun the graduate program, don't allow students to take a year in the middle of the program. Program approved in PCC with the understanding that it would be continuous, not stockpile 9 credits for "someday" pursuing Master's. Courses probably specified which programs are 9-credit double-counted, typically foundational courses, not electives. When do you draw the line and say knowledge is a little stale?
 2. How many requests to defer in that window are we getting? Major problem? Scope?
 - a. Answer: Very few, 5-6 requests a year at the most. The Computer Science program is preparing for a flood of inquiries from interested undergrads and wants a clear answer. If we say yes to a few, numbers could grow.
 3. What do we consider the first year of the Master's program in a 4+1?
 - a. Currently, the student is not formally a graduate student until they receive undergrad and change their objective to a Master's.
 - b. Suggested General Guidance: want to take a year off for work/travel, do that, and we'll welcome a regular application. But if you want to continue, then you are a candidate for 4+1



4. For once-in-a-lifetime grants, can students take a year off and then come back? Consider that one student decided not to apply to 4+1 because of the Fulbright.
 - a. Hesitant because they will be taking a year and doing something different, and it would be hard to explain why we are allowing that for the Fulbright but not other experiences.
 - b. Not all exceptions need to be in policy. Once in a lifetime situation, we can look at students individually to determine case-by-case if a rare exception is possible. Steve would like to leave the proposed policy as it is. Open to petitions for rare exceptions.
 - Poll
 1. Yes: 16
 2. No: 4
 3. Abstain: 1
- c. Incorporate all [course-related policies](#) in Graduate Catalog [[Google Doc with proposed layout](#)]
 - Background: Undergraduate studies have a page on course-related policies. We have a similar page on GS Website, and many of those but not all are in the graduate catalog.
 1. Just proposing to move material into Graduate Catalog, not change the policies.
 - Poll
 1. Yes: 25
 2. No: 0
 3. Abstain: 0
5. Discussion
 - a. [Code of Academy Integrity](#) and [Senate Bill 21-22-22](#)
 - Comments should be reflective of the broader judgment of the graduate council.
 - Student conduct committee interviewing constituents across campus, including Steve. The discussion has been focused on undergrads rather than graduates (over 90% of violations are at the undergraduate level)
 - The focus is almost exclusively on undergraduates, and there are no distinctions between graduate students.
 1. Standard sanction for a graduate student: dismissal.
 2. Only a tiny fraction have resulted in dismissal. (8%) Partly because most violations have been course violations, such as improper citations and self-plagiarism.



3. Rare but not unheard of: violations on theses/dissertations, Ph.D. comprehensive exams
 - Propose that code clarifies that there is a higher standard for graduate students than undergraduate students.
 1. Specifically concerned about Ph.D. students. They will be future faculty and researchers who should be held to higher standards.
 2. Wanted to be more explicit in the code: which violations warrant which sanctions.
 3. Some proposed mitigating factors considered like visa status and health insurance access.
 - a. Argument: if we dismiss the student on an F-1, they can no longer remain in the United States and will be deported. The concern is that this creates a double standard between US Citizens vs. international students, both found responsible for the same violation, but lesser sanctions given to the international student.
- b. [GA-related violations of Code of Student Conduct or Code of Academic Integrity](#)
 - If GA violates the code of conduct or code or the research assistant violates it by fabricating or falsifying data, these are severe sanctions.
 1. Currently, the code doesn't allow for employment-related sanctions.
 - Severe sanctions should result in the termination of GA.
 1. Does this belong in the graduate catalog vs. the code of conduct/integrity?
 - Discussion:
 1. Comment: Concern about penalties on employment may be subject to employment laws. Historically has not been in the purview of the Graduate Council.
 - a. We already have a clause for the termination of GA for the cause.
 - b. If found responsible for GA violation, could use this as the basis for termination.
 2. Question: Academic dishonesty is threatened in relation to GA studies. Their GA appointment is in jeopardy. Would the outcome be different if the Ph.D. violated academic dishonesty policy unrelated to their GA studies? Would they only lose their GA position and could still continue as a student?
 - a. If Honor Board finds the student responsible for the violation, and the sanction is dismissal, the student is not eligible for GAship because they are no longer a student.



- b. If the violation is unrelated to GA duties, entirely related to coursework, and does not dismiss the student as a student, this would not affect the GA appointment.
- c. We had a case where the honor board found the student responsible, the violation was related to GA duties, but the honor board felt they could not sanction related to the GAship/Employment.
 - i. Department wanted to terminate GAship.
- d. The proposal is if the student is not dismissed but the violation IS related to GA duties and responsibilities. Department wanted to terminate. The proposal is to add language where this is a cause for termination.
- 3. Comment: A minor point about wording, in describing the idea, Grad Students being “held to a higher standard” should be the “consequences are different.” This could cause an unintentional message: “dalliance with academic integrity violation is just part of youth,” which we do not want to send.
 - a. The Standard is the same, and the code is the same, but the difference is that the sanctions should be more substantial for a graduate student.
 - b. The notion is that the standard sanction for some violations for graduate students should be dismissal. The concern is that proposed revisions may take that away.
 - Steve’s takeaway: broad consensus.
- 6. New and Future Business
 - a. No new business.
 - b. Steve encourages GC members to contribute questions and ideas for discussion, so this isn’t entirely driven by Graduate School but is also responsive to department questions/concerns.