

Minutes of the Graduate Council (GC) for February 26, 2018
12:00pm-1:00pm in the Maryland Room

Present: Franke, Fetter, Robertson, Martin, Hacquard, Weeks, Dawkins, Ahmad, Goodman, Bakhshi, Taboda -Barber, Klauda, Maddux, Mclver, Beise, Steiner, Zambrana, Rabin, Lucas, Besharov

Staff: Strausser, Long

- I. Welcome
 - a. The meeting started at 12:03. We went around and introduced ourselves.

- II. Approval of the minutes for December 11, 2017 meeting
 - a. Minutes of the meeting of December 11, 2017 were approved with no emendations.

- III. Proposed Graduate Policy Changes
 - a. GPA Probation Policy (modification)
 - i. Jeffrey Franke gave background information about this policy. We would like to eliminate the policy that stated, "A student whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 will not be placed on probation until s/he completes 12 credits or 2 terms, whichever comes first...". Please see the attachment that was digitally distributed to the Council for the entire policy.
 - ii. Council members asked for some clarification on different parts of the policy. One question asked about how this new policy would be practically applied. Jeff Franke and Steve Fetter discussed that students who have taken just one class for 3 credits and got a C and they would get a warning. This policy helps the appropriate people catch issues with students sooner.
 - iii. This policy change only applies to the fall and spring semesters and not summer.
 - iv. The Council also discussed how the student would be supported once they get their warning. The policy states that once a student reaches below a cumulative 3.0, they work with their departments and have to turn in a plan on how to remedy their GPA issue.
 - v. People asked questions on this process with the warning or dismissal. Jeff Franke stated that, The Graduate School contacts the department before they do the dismissal based on a cumulative GPA that falls below the 3.0 and the student has been on probation for 1 semester already.

If there is a student who cannot get to the 3.0 by the end of their probation semester, then a DGS can petition to have an exception to policy.

vi. This policy was approved with the changes that were added at the meeting.

b. Graduate Assistants Policy

i. Clarification of expectations (modification)

- First the Council discussed how expectations are now built into the policy. With this new policy, there should be a discussion of the expectations at the beginning of each semester. You are not required to complete a Statement of Mutual Expectation, although the Graduate School strongly encourages everyone to, but the conversation between student and PI, Instructor, Faculty member or Supervisor, etc. The first edits in the document are addressing expectations around graduate administrative assistant, research assistant and teaching assistant.
- We discussed the issue between the required work for a dissertation and statements of mutual expectations. There were some concerns that there are issues between what is expected for the dissertation/research versus what is expected. This policy now says that the conversation is required and it should be clearly stated for the expectations.
- Enforcement mechanism for these policy changes: It was asked: "How do we enforce people to meet with students to fill out these expectations?" It was asked the next steps if a student approaches their supervisor and they refuse to have the expectation conversation. Jeff and Dean Fetter said that the student or DGS can go to the chair or ombudsman. There are concerns from students that if this goes to the chair and ombudsman, then there is a power dynamic and students may have additional issues. Dean Fetter said that at least now we can now point the supervisor to the policy. It was suggested by Council members that we include something about faculty responsibility. Perhaps the Graduate School should take this to the Office of Faculty Affairs to include in the Faculty Affairs handbook.

ii. Voluntary assistantship policy (new):

- The second part is about volunteer graduate assistants. This has come out of situations where students have been asked to do volunteer work. The Graduate School wants to have in the policy that volunteer assistants are not acceptable on this campus. This causes a lot of additional demands.
- We talked about what it means to be a volunteer for extra

activities versus being forced to volunteer. Council members pointed out that there might be situations where the line is very blurry between someone being told they have to do these volunteer activities (the student can pick the activity) and forced assistantship work. A Council member asked us to be aware of this blurry line. It was pointed out that this policy is supposed to be in place so people can refer to how this is not tolerated.

iii. The entire policy was approved with the additional issues mentioned above.

c. Graduate Student Grievance policy (new)

i. This policy does not apply to graduate assistants or grading issues. We already have policy for these.

ii. This policy is modeled from other grievance policies at other Big10 Institutions.

iii. This policy is something that the Graduate School can take to work with the Office of Faculty Affairs and the Provost. Once we figure out all of the details, then this is something the Graduate School should take to Senate so we can have a larger campus discussion.

iv. This is the beginning of the conversation and we will continue this discussion at upcoming meetings.

v. Next steps: We are hoping that in one or two more meetings, we would be ready to go to the Senate. Then the Senate would review it in the Fall. Please carefully review this policy and bring your feedback to the next meeting.

vi. Please review the President's policy?

IV. Discussion on 898/899 credits

a. The 12 credits of 899 premise is required to reflect the effort that goes into a dissertation.

b. We sent a draft around and asked you to please review it. Every department looks at these credits differently.

c. A council member says they really like combining the 898/899 because people have very different expectations of what it means to defend a dissertation or proposal.

d. Please review the policy and bring it to the next meeting.

V. New Business

a. A Council member asked if we could please consider adding a few minutes to these meetings. Perhaps if they could be 75 minutes we could get through more agenda items.

b. A council member added that if we want to know more about graduate students' experiences, please check out the Fearless Student Employees. They have about 100 stories of students experience.

VI. Closing Remarks

- a. We ran out of time and there were no closing remarks except to review the policies as noted throughout these minutes.

VII. Adjourn

- a. Dean Steve Fetter adjourned the meeting at 1:08 pm.